

inspection report

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

Bramfield House School

Walpole Road

Bramfield

Halesworth

Suffolk

IP19 9AB

2nd – 4th March 2005

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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

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

The role of CSCI is to:

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

Inspection Methods & Findings

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

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

Bramfield House School

Address

Walpole Road, Bramfield, Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 9AB

Tel No:

01986 784235

Fax No:

01986 784645

Email Address:

BRAMFIELDH@aol.com

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

Mr and Mrs Anstes

Name of Head

Mrs D Jennings

CSCI Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Residential Special
School

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

25/02/04

Date of Inspection Visit		2nd March 2005	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		14.00	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Bridget Forrest	075526
Name of CSCI Inspector	2	Joe Staines	
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	
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)		N/A	
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Mrs Dee Jennings - Head	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to determine whether the welfare of children (i.e. those aged under 18) is adequately safeguarded and promoted while they are accommodated by the school.

Inspections assess the extent to which the school is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools, published by the Secretary of State under Section 87C of the Children Act 1989, and other relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 as amended. Residential Special Schools are not registered as children's homes unless they accommodate, or arrange accommodation for, one or more children for more than 295 days a year.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Bramfield House School.

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

The report will show the following:

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

INSPECTION VISITS

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

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

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

Bramfield House was established as a School in 1970. In 1986 it became approved as a school suitable for the admission of pupils for whom statements are maintained, and has kept this status and remains approved by the Secretary of State under Section 347(1) and (3) of the Education Act 1996.

The School is in the private ownership of Mr and Mrs Anstes, who have a flat on the first floor, and who spend some of their time living on site. Neither of them are involved in the routine running of the School, although more recently, their son Mr M Anstes, has become increasingly involved in the financial / business side of the School's operation. The School is run on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher Deirdre Jennings, supported by senior staff, teachers, and a team of pastoral and ancillary staff. Since the last inspection of the School in February 2004, there have been changes in personnel including a recently appointed Head of Care.

The School is situated in a rural setting, on the outskirts of Bramfield – a small village in the northern part of Suffolk. The actual location of the School is between the villages of Bramfield and Walpole. The nearest towns are Halesworth, Beccles, and Southwold.

The School premises comprise the main Hall, which includes the boarding accommodation, and a range of separate school buildings used for teaching and recreation. The School is set in 10 acres of grounds used for sports and recreation, and there is also an indoor swimming pool.

At the time of this inspection, a total of 38 boys were on the Roll, and being educated at the School. Of these, 33 were boarders, with a further 5 attending the School on a daytime basis only. The School is open weekdays Monday to Friday, during term times. All boarders returned to their own homes at the weekends, and some boarders also went home for overnight stays, during the school week.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The Inspectors found that the School worked well in collaboration with parents, with placing authorities, and with other professionals. There was evidence that parents were consulted about the needs of their children, and that the School worked hard to include parents in decision-making processes, and keep them informed. There was also evidence that the School took many positive steps to keep children in education at the School, including doing visits to their family homes, if necessary in term time, and also in the school holidays. This was felt to be a valuable way of maintaining contact and stability.

The boarders who completed a Questionnaire said many good things about the School. They liked the building and grounds; the activities being offered; the food; and many spoke of positive relationships with staff, including members of the Senior Staff team. The activities offered during the evenings were also praised, as were the catering arrangements.

The environment was warm, comfortable, and homely, and there was a sense of 'ownership' in the dormitories where the boys not only slept at night, but also used later in the evening, to relax and unwind, before bedtime. The fact that these dormitories included comfortable chairs / settees, and televisions, was felt to be of positive value, as it gave these areas a sense of greater personal identity and somewhere that boarders could belong.

Although quite recently appointed, the new Head of Care demonstrated to the Inspectors a real commitment to addressing the outstanding recommendations from previous inspections of the School. He was clear about his priorities for moving the pastoral care within the School, forward.

The majority of relationships between boarders, and between staff and boarders were noted to be positive, warm, and caring. The Inspectors found there was an appropriate balance - between staff enforcing rules and boundaries and responding to significant challenges in behaviour from boarders - to being more relaxed and spending time with boarders during periods of pastoral activity and non School time.

The fact that a forum for boarders to meet and express their views had been reintroduced was also reported as having positive benefits, with boarders feeling that their views had been listened to, and the fact that some things had been changed as a result of things that they had said.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The majority of recommendations made arising from this inspection related to outstanding recommendations made when a different Head of Care was in post. The Inspectors acknowledged that these changes in personnel had inevitably led to some areas not having been addressed, and they were assured from an interview with the new Head of Care that these matters would now be addressed with priority. It was the Head of Care's intention to have the majority of recommendations met before the start of the next School year (September 2005).

Whilst the levels of bullying were not excessive, bearing in mind the schools works with challenging young people, the School needs to address issues and perceptions associated with bullying in a more proactive way as, whilst the Inspectors felt assured that incidents of bullying were addressed; the systems in place at the time of the inspection were reactive, rather than proactive. The Inspectors recommended that the School introduced an Anti Bullying campaign that involved pupils (including boarders) in the process.

The School still needs to strengthen the process for inducting, supervising, and appraising staff, together with ensuring that staff training and development opportunities are identified and met. The School should provide each member of staff with a Personal Development Plan.

Written information for boarders still needs to be developed in an appropriate format that boarders can relate to and understand, and which gives the key messages about the philosophy and operation of the School.

The pastoral staffing arrangements (including staff levels) should be subject to ongoing review, to ensure that the School meets its obligations in respect of Care Plans, Risk Assessments, and Key worker roles.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

Overall, the findings from this inspection were positive. The School was well managed by the Head and Senior staff team, and the Inspectors were impressed by the hard work and commitment of staff to provide positive outcomes for the boarders being educated and cared for. A number of new staff had been appointed since last year, and this was seen to be having a positive impact on the group of young people.

The School provided a warm safe and homely environment, where boarders had the opportunity to live together, study together, and share things together, as well as having opportunities to personally develop and gain more skills and confidence on an individual basis.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

Is Notification of any failure to safeguard and promote welfare to be made by the Commission for Social Care Inspection to the Local Education Authority or Department for Education and Skills under section 87(4) of the Children Act 1989 arising from this inspection?

NO

Notification to be made to: **Local Education Authority**
Secretary of State

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

N/A

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

Recommended Actions from the last Inspection visit fully implemented?

NO

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

No	Standard	Recommended actions	

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

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

RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	RS1	<p>The School should develop specific information in the most suitable format for children / young persons to understand.</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	1 September 2005
2	RS2	<p>The School should introduce policy guidance for staff about their role and responsibilities for seeking the opinions and views of children / young persons boarding at the School.</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	1 September 2005
3	RS3	<p>The School should expand its policy guidance for staff in respect of the issues of respecting boarders privacy, in particular in terms of their working practices when supervising arrangements in dormitories, and bathroom, shower and toilet facilities.</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	1 September 2005
4	RS5	<p>The School should produce a written policy in respect of Lone Working, for those members of staff who work alone (day or night) or are involved in 1:1 contact with a boarder.</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	1 September 2005

5	RS6	The School should adopt a more proactive approach to the issues of bullying, in terms of developing an Anti-Bullying campaign, designed to raise awareness about bullying, whilst clearly stating the School's position, and having strategies for dealing with boarders who are either the perpetrators or victims of bullying incidents. Such a campaign should include discussion with and the involvement of boarders, in order to raise awareness of the consequences and repercussions of bullying, and to raise the profile of bullying as not being tolerated, at Bramfield School.	1 September 2005
6	RS9	The School should address the perception by boarders regarding a member of staff who boarders felt less positive about, both in terms of general attitude / personality, and in terms of that persons robust response to challenging behaviour, including their restraining techniques.	1 April 2005
7	RS10	The School should ensure that each episode of restraint includes the opportunity for a meaningful debriefing after the restraint has been applied. This both for the benefit of the boarder who has been restrained, and the member(s) of staff who have been involved in the application of restraint.	1 April 2005
8	RS10	The School should provide restraint training (Team Teach) and updates on this training at regular / annual intervals. This both to ensure that any new members of staff are included in the training, and that existing staff are updated on best practice and latest techniques.	1 September 2005
9	RS10	The School should include information in the Children's Guide (see Standard 1 above) about expectations of behaviour, school rules, and sanctions and physical interventions that might be used. This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.	1 September 2005
10	RS11	The School should include information in the Children's Guide (see Standard 1 above) about the process used at the School for introducing and admitting new children / young persons to the School. This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.	1 September 2005

11	RS17	<p>The School should develop information gathered about children / young persons into formal written Placement Plans / Care Plans, for each boarder. These Care Plans to capture the assessed needs of boarders and how these needs will be met and supported by staff working at the School.</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	1 September 2005
12	RS17	<p>The School should ensure that staff with Key working responsibilities are given a more significant role in the development and maintenance of Care plans for those boarders for whom they hold Key working responsibilities.</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	1 September 2005
13	RS18	<p>The School should include information in the Children's Guide (see Standard 1 above) about boarders rights to access their personal files.</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	1 September 2005
14	RS22	<p>The School should seek to develop an arrangement for boarders to have access to an Independent Advocate. For example, the introduction of a local independent person / counsellor / mentor. If such a person cannot be found, the School should consider approaching an advocacy provider, such as NYAS, in this respect.</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	1 September 2005
15	RS25	<p>The School should ensure that all door locks in bathroom / shower / toilet areas assure privacy (whilst being able to be opened from the outside in the event of an emergency situation arising).</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	30 April 2005

16	RS26	<p>The School should address the 3 issues raised following the Fire Authority's inspection of the School on 3 March 2005, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wedges to be removed from all fire doors and these doors maintained in the closed position, or alternative appropriate door closures fitted. • Updating of the School's Fire Risk Assessment • Replacing out of date Fire Signage in various areas of the School. 	31 December 2005
17	RS28	<p>The staffing arrangements and staffing levels at the School should be reviewed. This to ensure that there is sufficient time for pastoral staff (including those with Key working roles) to develop and review Care Plans for individual boarders placed at the School.</p>	1 September 2005
18	RS29	<p>The School's induction programme should be reviewed, to provide a more formal induction process for new staff working at the School. The induction programme to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shadowing more experienced staff and being provided with support as part of the induction process • Understanding the local child protection procedures and the School's own procedures in that respect • Learning skills in writing incident reports • Reading, understanding, and writing Care Plans and Risk Assessments • An awareness of the School's Notification of Incidents procedure 	1 September 2005
19	RS29	<p>Each member of staff working at the School should have a Personal Development Plan.</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	1 September 2005

20	RS30	<p>The School's supervision arrangements should be reviewed to meet the Criteria of Standard 30 (30.2) in that regard.</p> <p>This is a repeat recommendation in respect of which the timescale has been extended.</p>	1 September 2005
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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
		None

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

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS**

The following inspection methods were used in the production of this report

Direct Observation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Accommodation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	YES

Checks with other Organisations

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

Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	YES
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	NO
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	02/03/05
Time of Inspection	14.00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	20.5
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	3

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

BOYS

GIRLS

TOTAL

Number of separate Boarding Houses

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the CSCI assessment of the extent to which standards have been met. The following scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The scale ranges from:

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

"0" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

"9" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not applicable.

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

STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

As part of the pre-inspection material, the Inspectors were provided with a copy of the School Prospectus 2004/2005, which had been updated since the last inspection. This was a comprehensive document which described the aims and objectives of the School, and the way in which both the educational and boarding arrangements were carried out. The Prospectus also included key policy documentation, including child protection, control and restraint, bullying, complaints, sanctions and rewards.

There was a shortfall in meeting this Standard. A recommendation from the last two inspections of the School remained outstanding to be addressed. This related to specific information to be produced for boarders (i.e. a 'Boarders Guide'). The Inspectors understood that, because there had been personnel changes for the position of Head of Care, this documentation had not yet been produced.

During this inspection, the situation was discussed with the recently appointed Head of Care, who was able to confirm that he intended to develop this piece of work, in consultation with boarders and other staff members, and that it would be completed in readiness for the start of the next school year, i.e. by September 2005. A repeated recommendation was made in this regard. (See also Standards 10 below, with regard to information to be provided to children about the School's expectation regarding behaviour, rules, sanctions and physical interventions; Standard 11 below with regard to information for new boarders; and Standard 18 below with regard to a child's right to see their personal file.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)

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

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

The Pre-inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *“Views are generally sought verbally although on some occasions boys write suggestions down. Verbal opinions occur in a number of ways and in different settings e.g. trips out, meetings, class discussion, bedroom discussion, mealtimes, activities, and the journey. Two boys meetings have taken place in the last half-term with a member of the care team and the Head of Care. Boys are encouraged to offer opinions and ideas openly and to make suggestions for evening activities. Boys are asked for their opinions in relation to their School reports, and these are recorded as part of that report. This is also part of the recent boys meeting”*.

When the Inspectors spoke with groups of boys, they did confirm that their views were sought and listened to, and were able to give examples of where things had been changed for their benefit, as a result. This included choices of activities, food and drink preferences, and a slightly later bedtime on Thursday evenings.

12 boarders who completed a Questionnaire said that staff asked for their opinions about the School, 8 said that they were sometimes asked, and 3 said that they had not been asked at all.

In answer to the question ‘Are staff good at letting you know about things that happen with your child?’ 17 of the 18 parents who completed a Parents’ Questionnaire confirmed a satisfactory Yes. In answer to the Boarders’ Questionnaire which asked ‘Do staff ask your opinions about the School?’ 12 boys said yes, 3 said no, and 8 said sometimes.

As reported previously, there was a daily meeting at 4pm, where boys and staff gathered together, to review the day. The meeting, attended by teaching and pastoral staff, was mainly intended for staff to give feedback on how well the boys had fared, praising achievements and good behaviour and also commenting where boys had not had such a positive day. Where Points had been awarded or deducted, these were also mentioned at these meetings. The Inspectors attended one of these meetings, which they felt provided a positive opportunity for staff and boys to reflect on the day. The emphasis was on giving praise for things achieved. Mention was also made of situations where boys had done less well but this was not dwelled on.

The Head of Care confirmed that a regular (4 weekly) forum for the views of boys to be sought, had been set up, and took place on Wednesday evenings. The forum included taking notes, so any necessary matters or suggestions could be referred for action, and boys could be provided with feedback, at a later date. He also confirmed that the School was now taking more positive action regarding the recommendation made at the last two inspections of the School, with regard to introducing policy guidance for staff about seeking the views of boarders. A repeat recommendation was made in this regard.

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)

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

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

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *"The School has a room available for children to meet with visitors. The vast majority of visitors are social workers or youth offending officers. Both groups of people would already be known to the young person. Staff will sit in on the meeting should the young person request this"*.

The School Prospectus 2004/2005 included a section on Privacy and Confidentiality. This talked about the school and staff *"respecting a child's wishes for privacy and confidentiality so far as is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect the young person."* Whilst the Prospectus did provide guidance for staff about not divulging confidential information, or written information from files, to inappropriate parties, and also referred to the fact that certain information (i.e. child protection matters) must be passed on to the designated Child Protection Coordinator at the School, it did not address all of the day to day practical issues.

When the Inspectors spoke to groups of boarders, a consistent theme was that their privacy was not entirely respected – particularly when they were in their dormitories, changing, or using the showers. Examples were given of staff coming into dormitories without knocking or waiting to be invited in, and the example of shampoo being given out, by staff, at the times when boys were actually using the showers. 8 boarders who completed a Questionnaire said that there was enough privacy, and 10 boarders said there was not. They cited examples that shower curtains could be opened, that there was no privacy between the shower and dormitory, that the locks were 'useless' and that there was no privacy when making phone calls to family or friends. The situation was discussed with the Head of Care, who confirmed that guidelines were being drawn up, as part of an Induction pack, for new staff. Therefore a repeated recommendation was made for this guidance for staff to be drawn up, and put into working practice, in these respects.

The issue of privacy was also raised in respect of door locks to toilets and bathrooms – boarders said that, in some areas, these locks were insecure, and if doors were shaken or tampered with, the bolts could come undone, and privacy would be compromised. During the interview with the Head of Care, he confirmed that work was in hand to provide more secure and appropriate door locks. Because this matter remained outstanding from previous inspections of the School, (linked to Standard 25 below and the need to have door locks that can be opened from the outside in the event of an emergency) a repeat recommendation was made.

Standard 4 (4.1 – 4.8)

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

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

19 boarders who completed a Questionnaire said that they knew how to make a complaint, and 5 said that they did not. Those who knew, said they had either been told by the School, by their parent, or by other boys. They were also clear that they could make a complaint to anyone they felt comfortable with – citing the Head, Deputy, Head of Care, staff on duty, or Key workers. The Inspectors felt that there was a positive culture within the School towards complaints, and that boys were encouraged to let someone know if they had a worry or concern.

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that there had been no serious complaint about the School or those working there in the previous twelve months.

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

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

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

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

CHILD PROTECTION

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 5 (5.1 – 5.12)

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

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

The School Prospectus 2004-2005 included the Child Protection Policy for the School, which talked about the procedure for investigating child protection matters, as well as the procedure for selecting staff to work at the School. The procedure said that the Head, Mrs Jennings, was the 'Named Person' with responsibility for coordination of child protection matters at the school, and for liaising with other relevant agencies.

The Pre inspection Questionnaire also confirmed that *"Child protection training takes place periodically. It is essential for staff to be available for this training which normally takes place during the three weeks allocated"*.

The Inspectors asked one new member of staff who was interviewed what their understanding was in respect of child protection matters, and they were clear that they could listen to what was being said by a child, but would need to refer anything onto the Named Person, for further investigation.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection was aware of one child protection allegation that had resulted in a strategy meeting and investigation, since the last inspection of the School in February 2004.

The School also had, within its Prospectus, guidance for staff on Working Alone with a child, which included guidance for staff about summoning assistance if needed, about avoiding being alone with a child in any remote or secluded area, and ensuring there was visual access or an open door, in any one-to-one situation. Staff were also required to report any situation where a child became distressed or angry. The Pre Inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *"a written policy on lone working, or working one-to-one with children is in the process of being drafted"*. This recommendation was therefore repeated.

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

1

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5)

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

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

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that the School countered bullying by *"The good relationships which exist between staff and pupils mean that staff can tackle incidents between young people as they happen. This also means that children are able to confide in staff when incidents take place. There is also good supervision which decreases the time when bullying can take place"*. There was evidence, in the form of observed interaction between staff and boarders, that this statement was an accurate reflection of life at the school.

However, responses given by the majority of boarders were that there were incidents of bullying at the School. 9 said they were bullied 'most of the time'; 2 'often'; 6 'sometimes', 5 'hardly ever', and 4 'not at all'. 6 boarders said that bullying was one of the things that they didn't like about living at the School, and 5 said that it was the worst thing that had happened since they were living at the School.

These responses were discussed more fully with groups of boarders, during the inspection process, and it was clear that bullying continues to be an issue at the School. The Inspectors understood that the nature of Bramfield School was such that it would be unrealistic to expect there to be no bullying between boys, and they were assured that incidents of bullying that were known about were dealt with. However, they were concerned that the School's response was reactive rather than proactive, and felt that more could be done. For example, there was no Anti Bullying initiative, either instigated through the School curriculum or during pastoral activities, nor were there any posters or other reminders to boys that bullying would not be tolerated. Boys reported that bullying occurred in the forms of getting hit or pushed; having rude or nasty things said; racist remarks; and what seemed to be a quite common practice of being slapped across the forehead by other boys. A member of staff who had worked at the School for several years said that in response to bullying the boys were nagged and told to stop – again, this demonstrated a reactive position. The Inspectors felt that, although the school was clearly working in a positive way a group of challenging young people, the School needed to address the whole issue of bullying in a more proactive way, including introducing discussion, debate, and consequences, on a regular basis. One bullying incident that the Inspectors were aware of had been included in the file of the boy who had been bullied, but there was no evidence a report in the file of the perpetrator of the bullying, neither was there any action plan for addressing the issue with that young person.

The situation was discussed during the interview with the Head of Care. He confirmed that staff did try to reinforce the message that bullying was not acceptable and would not be tolerated, and that staff tried to get the young persons into more 'adult behaviours'. He agreed that a section on bullying would be incorporated into the Children's Guide, and the Inspectors suggested that this should include clear descriptions of what forms bullying might take; advice about what to do if a boy was being bullied; strategies for coping; and a clear outline of what the School would do to support any boy who had been bullied, and what action the School would take in respect of the perpetrator of the abuse.

The Head of Care also confirmed that it was intended to develop an initiative through art

lessons, to develop the bullying theme, and to encourage boys to express this through artwork, including posters that could be displayed around the School. Another forum for discussing bullying was the more recently introduced Boarders meetings. There was also an intention to set up a Drama Group – where the issue of bullying would also be able to be expressed through the medium of drama. The Inspectors felt that these ideas, if turned into positive actions, would be a significant improvement in raising awareness, and in stating the School's position with regard to bullying, and its consequences. A recommendation was made in that regard.

Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied

25 %

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)

All significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified by the Head of the school or designated person to the appropriate authorities.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

As reported last year, the Head was aware of her responsibilities for notifying significant events to the appropriate Authorities.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection had been kept informed of relevant matters, in the twelve month period since the last inspection of the School.

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

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

0

0

0

0

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9) The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that <i>“In the initial instance, the School will make contact with the home to find out why the child is absent. If there is a continued absence without a reasonable explanation, the School will notify the Education Authority. In the case of an unauthorised absence of a child from school premises, staff make every effort to locate the child and return them to school. If a child has been absent for a period of one hour without any sighting, local police are informed. Once a child has returned to school, every effort is made to talk through the incident and the reasons for it, with them”.</i></p> <p>At the start of this three day inspection, the Head talked with the Inspectors about a small number of boys who were not currently in School, for a variety of different reasons. The School was working hard with parents, and with boys, to ensure that they were able to return to the School at the earliest, most appropriate, time. A positive example included the Head of Care making a detour on his route to School one morning, to collect a boy who had been absent for a time, from his home, and to support him with his return to the School.</p> <p>The School continued to have contact and liaison with the local Community Police, who had, in the past, attended the School in respect of their public relations and safety roles.</p>		
Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:		X

CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

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

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *“Staff at school form close relationships with pupils and this is of paramount importance when talking of methods of control. These good relationships are the first level when looking at control”*.

The School continued to encourage mutually respectful relationships – between boarders, and between boarders and staff. The 4pm meeting, designed to reflect on the events of the day, helped to focus attention on positive points, as well as making mention of things that had not gone so well. Boundaries were in place, and supervision of boarders was such that there were, as far as was possible, staff on hand to anticipate and deflect what could otherwise become significant events or challenging situations. This was particularly noticeable at mealtimes, when each table of pupils included at least a member of staff, keeping a watching brief on table manners, and interactions between pupils sitting together.

Each of the house dormitories also had named pastoral staff who had responsibility for supervising these areas and supporting the boarders sleeping in those rooms. It was clear from the discussion groups that some staff working at Bramfield House are held in high esteem by the boarders, including staff who boarders they felt they could talk to, if they had a worry or concern.

The School operated a Points system, designed to encourage and reward pupils who are able to maintain a reasonable attitude during the day. Additional points could be earned for volunteering with extra chores. Points were deducted for significant misbehaviour and disruptive attitudes. Pocket money was given to pupils, based on a rising scale of points achieved, between 50 and 60 points. There was also a Bonus Pot which was made up of monies not given to pupils who scored less points. The Points system was understood by the boarders, and they felt it was one way in which they could positively achieve. The whole school meetings, held in the morning before School, and in the afternoon, at the end of the School day, included discussion about points that had been achieved and deducted.

The Inspector overheard an incident during the course of the inspection where a pair of trainers belonging to one boy had gone missing. The boy asked a member of staff to help, and, instead of helping to sort the matter out, the member of staff suggested that the boy asked another boy what had happened to them. The Inspectors felt that this was a poor response to a situation that might encourage further conflict between two boys, and that it was important that boys are not able to play one off, against the other.

The Inspectors were somewhat concerned to hear numerous comments from boarders regarding a member of staff who they felt less positive about, whose name was mentioned several times during the inspection. Their comments related to that member of staff's general attitude / personality, as well as their robust response to challenging situations and restraining techniques.

Because of the Inspector's concerns, there was some general discussion with the Head of Care, during the inspection. He felt that one of his key roles since appointment would be to encourage staff to develop their abilities and capabilities to their fullest potential, as well as

addressing issues of poorer performance, or where there was perceived conflict amongst the staff team. As far as he was concerned, he had not witnessed any inappropriate restraints by staff, during his presence in the School.

The situation was also discussed with the Head and Mr Anstes, during the feedback meeting after the inspection had taken place. They confirmed being aware of the situation, and confirmed that the situation was being addressed.

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)

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

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

As reported last year, good behaviours and positive attitudes towards each other were noted and rewarded, including reference being made at the 4pm meeting. The Inspectors found that, on a one-to-one basis, the majority of boys were friendly, helpful, and interested in talking to the Inspectors. The dynamics of small groups of boarders in the evening discussion groups with the Inspectors made it, in some cases, more difficult for boarders to engage positively in the exercise. This could be attributed to a number of reasons, including personality clashes, different ages and abilities, some discomfort at talking with the Inspectors, and boys simply wanting to be elsewhere. However, the most likely being that the range of emotional and behavioural problems experienced by the boarders at Bramfield does not lend itself to prearranged group discussions with inspectors who were, to a large degree, strangers to the young people. The Inspectors did explain that the discussion groups were not mandatory, and boys were only invited to take part if they really wanted to.

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *"The school operates a points system which the majority of boys work within. There are other rewards for good behaviour, both in the class setting and in the house. These are often individual arrangements between staff and pupils working towards particular targets. When control is challenged there are a variety of different strategies used. This will include engaging the child in dialogue, using diversionary tactics, change of environment, moving to another room, passing the child on to another member of staff"*. One practice still used at the School was 'sitting back' which involved a pupil being taken out of their usual setting, and being required to 'sit back' quietly in a different room, under the supervision of staff. The new Head of Care discussed the fact that he felt this may not always be the most appropriate method and that he was intending, in consultation with other members of staff and boys, to review this. He also acknowledged that there was, to a degree, a historical 'maleness' about the School which he felt was being gradually dispelled. He felt that this had been helped by the appointment of a female Head, and more female staff working in pastoral roles at the School. He told the Inspectors that a former acceptable practice of 'rough and tumble' between boys and staff was no longer seen as appropriate, neither could he condone the use of a School Punch bag, as a way of getting rid of physical aggression, as he did not feel that any activity involving the use of a clenched fist was an appropriate model of control.

With regard to the application of physical restraint, 11 boarders who completed a Questionnaire said that they had been restrained, and 13 said that they had not. They described restraint having been applied to break up fights; punish; stop damage; prevent someone from being hurt. The majority of those who completed a Questionnaire felt that staff had used proper ways of restraining; 8 said they had never been hurt, and 5 said that they had been hurt during a restraint. A member of staff who was interviewed by the Inspectors said that there was no meaningful debriefing after restraints or incidents, and that, as a member of staff, there was no time to have a period of calm after the restraint had taken place, before continuing duty. These issues were discussed again at the feedback meeting, and the Head confirmed that they would be addressed.

With regard to the actual written records of Restraints, the School had introduced a Restraint Log - a bound book which had been set up since the last inspection of the School, and was

designed to provide detail of the restraints that had taken place. The Head discussed this particular record with one of the Inspectors, as she felt that the tick box style constrained the entries that were being made. The same Inspector also examined the Restraint Log, and it was recommended that the most important thing was for the records of restraint to accurately reflect the detail of the restraint incidents. The Inspectors felt that the bound log book could be cross referenced to the more detailed incident reports which were made, and placed on boarders files.

Restraint records examined, did not, in every case, provide the information required. Some of the language used to describe restraints that had been applied was inappropriate. By way of example, one entry said “... went barmy. I took him onto the landing and lay him on the floor and held him with one arm”. In another entry “... does not want to be here”. As one of the key purposes of a restraint log was to confirm that appropriate holds and techniques were used, the above examples were felt to be inappropriate, both in terms of content, and because the second comment was opinion based, rather than based on fact. A recommendation was made for staff to receive further training in that regard.

Since the last inspection of the School, a positive development had been training for staff in positive handling strategies – delivered by Team-Teach. This training had clearly benefited a number of staff at the School in terms of knowledge, skills, and confidence. Of the 9 members of staff who completed a Staff Questionnaire the majority referred to the training as a positive aspect, saying it had been “*sensible, practical, and effective*”. For staff who had started at the School more recently, the intention was for the training to be repeated at regular intervals, and one objective was to have a member(s) of staff accredited in Team-Teach methods, so that training could, at a future stage, be delivered in-house. The Inspectors noted that not all staff had attended the training on an ongoing basis, although future dates had been identified for those unable to attend on the planned day. Due to the complex nature of the challenges presented by the boys at Bramfield School, the Inspectors recommended that Team-Teach training to be repeated at regular / annual intervals, to ensure that any new staff receive the training, and to update other staff on changes and developments within this programme.

One member of staff who had recently joined the School told the Inspectors that although Incident Reports were completed in respect of issues such as bullying or difficult behaviour. further work needed to be developed within the staff team. The suggestion of a Group Work forum was discussed, as the member of staff thought this might help to change the culture towards a more proactive approach.

A recommendation relating to the Children’s Guide (see also Standard 1) also remained outstanding for action. This Guide, when produced, should include information for boarders about the School’s expectations of behaviour, school rules, and sanctions and physical interventions that might be used. This recommendation was therefore repeated.

With regard to Sanctions, 11 boarders who completed a Questionnaire said that these were very fair, 4 said they were quite fair, 5 said that they were usually okay, and 5 thought they were either quite / very unfair. They said that typical punishments included not going out on trips or activities; having to ‘sit back’; going to bed early; not being able to watch television; and being told off. Boarders confirmed that staff did discuss any behaviour and punishments with them.

QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>A boarder who assisted the Inspectors during a guided tour, confirmed that the admission process to the School had been good. It had involved a visit from the former Head of the School, a visit to the School before deciding whether or not to move there, and a chance to get to know the staff, and other boys.</p> <p>As reported previously, the boys who attended Bramfield School had all been admitted to the School as part of a pre-planned process, involving parents, carers, and placing authorities.</p> <p>Older boarders told the Inspectors that they were expected to help and support younger / new boarders when they first joined the School. An outstanding recommendation which relates to this Standard (and to Standard 1 above) relates to the introduction of a Children's Guide, which should include information about the process for introducing and admitting boys to the School. This recommendation has therefore been repeated.</p>		

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)

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

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

The Inspectors found that this Standard was being well met at the School. The small size of the School, and the way in which staffing arrangements for teaching and pastoral staff overlapped, meant that a seamless service was being provided, with good consistency of practice.

The Inspectors met with a number of pastoral staff, who were committed and enthusiastic about the School, and who felt that things had continued to improve with the new Head of Care in post.

The School, quite small in size, provided good communication between staff working there, and there was an appropriate distinction between classroom regimes and expectations, to the more relaxed and informal approach, once School time ended and the evening's activities began.

Although this inspection did not include discussion with a group of teachers, 6 of the teaching staff completed a Staff Questionnaire, designed to inform the inspection process. Their responses were very positive – in respect of teamwork, relationships between the School, other professionals, and parents of boys. Staff felt well supported, particularly mentioning the Senior Management Team. All staff confirmed there were regular teachers meetings, as well as full staff meetings.

Boys were involved in the review of their educational achievements, including reading the reports that were compiled to parents, which reported on their progress and achievements.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)

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

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

The majority of boys mentioned in their Questionnaires that the activities were a positive part of School life. They said they enjoyed youth club, paint balling, using the swimming pool, playing games, and football matches.

The School had a good programme of activities and real choices could be made. These were decided on at the time of the 4pm meeting, when boys were asked to say what activities they would like to join in, and were given a choice of at least 3 / 4 activities, each night. Some of these activities were based in the School, and some involved trips away. Some offered quieter activity, whilst others offered exercise, noise, and fun. If a boy had received a sanction, his choice of activity might be restricted for a particular evening.

In terms of 'high risk' activities, the Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that there were regular activities in Norwich, Great Yarmouth, Ipswich and Lowestoft. All of these activities took place at a recognised centre, and were supervised by properly qualified staff. The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *"There were, in the grounds, some hazards, such as trees that boys found irresistible to climb. These activities were, when known about, supervised. There were, inevitably, occasions when boys did place themselves at risk"*.

The School was set in extensive grounds with sports pitches, an indoor sports area, and swimming pool. There were areas where boys were allowed to play, unrestricted, and other areas that were designated out of bounds.

During the discussion groups, the Inspectors were told that access to the Internet had been stopped. Boarders said that there was a filter system which had been disabled. They also thought there had been a problem with a computer virus. The Inspectors agreed that they would check the position with the Head, who subsequently confirmed that in actual fact there was access to the internet, although this was strictly monitored, including filters within the system, and all access being supervised by member(s) of staff.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.25)

The school actively promotes the health care of each child and meets any intimate care needs.

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

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *“Medication is kept in a locked cabinet in an allocated room. Medication is administered by nominated senior staff in the absence of the school Matron. Records are kept of any medication administered. Regular medication, for example Ritalin or Concerta X, is taken to the child while they are having their meal, either breakfast, lunch, or tea”*.

The same document also confirmed that *“Children have regular dental and optician appointments, although this is becoming problematic, as there is not a National Health Dentist at the practice at present. If a boy needs to see a doctor, an appointment will be made at the local surgery, by the School Matron”*.

One of the Inspectors met with the School Matron and examined the storage and record keeping arrangements in respect of medications. These were found to be satisfactory, including appropriate record keeping in respect of the administration of controlled drugs. There was also a range of information leaflets / booklets regarding drugs, smoking, abuse, and sexual health for men.

The Lead Inspector also wrote to the local GP to seek his views on the School. In a letter, he confirmed that he had visited the previous autumn, and had found the school to be well run with the boys seeming happy and well looked after. He also confirmed that boys were occasionally seen at the local surgery, but far less frequently than in previous years.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)

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

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

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *“The School cook provides very tasty and nutritious meals, made with fresh local ingredients. Many of the pupils live on take-away meals at home, and what we try to do at School is introduce them to home-cooking and get them to try a range of meals”*. The School was commended for the catering arrangements, in terms of the variety of menu, and portion sizes, and the informal atmosphere in which meals were served and eaten.

During the three days of the inspection, the Inspectors sampled breakfast, lunch, and evening meal. The meals were well prepared, with ample portions, and there were choices including salads, vegetables, and cakes for dessert. Boarders sat together on tables for 5 or 6, with a member of staff supervising. Conversation was encouraged and good table manners were expected.

Of the boarders who completed a Questionnaire, 12 said that the food was very good, 3 said that it was usually good, 4 said it was just about okay, and 3 said that it was very bad. The Inspectors observed that meals appeared to be enjoyed, with the odd exception of one or two boarders who, for different reasons, either had no appetite, or did not like what was on the menu. The kitchen staff were involved in serving the meal, and staff were also on hand to observe any situation where a pupil refused food, or took just a small portion, so that this could be monitored. Breakfast sampled was a choice of cereal, fruit juice, followed by egg on toast, and the lunch was a full roast chicken dinner. Teatime was a choice of meat or fish, with vegetables or salad, and home-made cake. Later in the evening, at the end of the activities, the boys were offered a sandwich, cake, and fruit juice, before going up to their dormitories to get ready for bed.

The main kitchen was well organised and clean. Food was covered and labelled, and there was evidence of fresh produce being used.

Older boarders were able to prepare drinks and snacks, in the evening, in the small lounge which formed part of a more independent dormitory area – otherwise known as ‘the flat’. A kettle and toaster had been provided.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)

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

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

The pupils at Bramfield House do not wear School uniform. The Pre inspection questionnaire confirmed that *"A part-time domestic is responsible for washing children's clothes. There is no facility at the School for children to wash their own clothes. Some children prefer to take their clothes home to wash. Children are only resident for a maximum of four nights at any one time"*.

In practice, boys wore casual clothes, during the school day and during the evening, such as sweat shirts, tee shirts, jeans, and trainers. Each boarder had an individual hanging locker in their dormitory area, where their clothing was kept.

The Pre inspection Questionnaire also confirmed that *"Children are encouraged to hand any valuables and money to staff, for safe keeping"*. The system for accounting for these monies and for ensuring that monies being securely stored were satisfactory, were not checked during the course of this inspection, although the Head of Care did confirm that the record keeping arrangements had been improved, in line with a recommendation made at last year's inspection, in that regard.

CARE PLANNING AND PLACEMENT PLAN

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

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

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

The Inspectors discussed with the Head of Care whether or not Care Plans had been developed for boarders at the School, since last years inspection. He said that whilst there were education plans in place, nothing had yet been developed in respect of pastoral care.

Inspection of files examined confirmed that a number of identified issues had not been addressed through the Care Plans to give guidance to staff and to ensure a consistent approach was given when working with these issues with the boarders. For example, the Inspectors were aware that personal care was an issue for some boarders, but there was nothing recorded about how staff would support and encourage good personal care routines in this respect. Another example concerned a boy who was frequently restrained because of challenging behaviour, but there was no plan of action or information for staff to follow, about how the boy would be supported or helped in that respect.

The Head of Care acknowledged the need for this to be addressed, and felt that staff with Key working roles needed to be engaged in this process, including having time within their shifts of duty to read, review, and develop the care plans. This comment was corroborated by staff who talked with the Inspectors, who felt that, currently, their shifts were “hands on practical care” with little time left for reading, writing, or updating documentation.

In the Self Assessment document, completed by the Head before the inspection, she identified the fact that the files for children “*were retrospective rather than forward planning*”. She also commented on the fact that she did not want staff sitting writing about children at the expense of actually working with them. In the Inspector’s view, it should not be an either / or situation, and staff should have time within their allocated hours of duty to spend time updating, reading, and reviewing files.

The recommendation made last year in respect of the development of Care Plans was therefore repeated.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.5)

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

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

As reported last year, a sample of boarders files were examined. These provided evidence that essential information was recorded, including a photograph. The files contained School Reports and Pastoral Summaries, at the end of each term. These included boarders and Headteachers' comments.

A repeat recommendation was made in respect of boarders rights to access their personal files, linked to Standard 1 above, with regard to the 'Boarders Guide' being developed, to include information for children about their right to see their personal file.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)

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

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

As reported previously, the School continued to maintain a Register of all children, which included the information outlined in Criteria 19.2 of this Standard.

All records requested by the Inspectors were made available during the course of the inspection.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)

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

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

As in previous years, this is an area of activity where the School was commended. A number of parents, Placing Authorities, and staff, all commented positively about the way in which the School interacted with and supported parents, to ensure ongoing placement of their child at the School. This included visits to families during school holidays, regular telephone calls and contacts, and inviting parents to attend significant meetings including reviews.

This was confirmed in the Head's response to the Pre inspection Questionnaire which said *"There is regular contact with all parents. Senior staff aim to visit families at home at least twice a year, and there is frequent phone contact. Families are encouraged to attend reviews and if possible the School will help to arrange transport"*.

Comments from parents include the following:

"Dee Jennings phones me and then lets me know about things in writing. She encourages visits, and she always makes me welcome. I can talk to her about anything. 1st class!"

"There is telephone contact and detailed letters. They make you feel welcome and they offer you a tea or coffee. They keep coming back to check everything is alright. They always say you can come back, at any time".

"The staff are very good – and there is lots of communication between them and myself".

"Staff are always friendly and helpful".

"Always ask us if we would like to stay to lunch. Staff are always friendly and open. They always ask what we think and listen to any comments we make".

"We are made to feel part of the School".

"We always get a smile, get offered tea, and the staff talk to us in laymans terms – there are no airs or graces".

"Staff are always friendly, and ready to assist".

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *"Pupils are not in care here"*. Nonetheless, the School did play an active part in helping young persons towards adulthood and moving on. The School had helped boarders to secure work placements, and to think about what they might want to do, once they leave. The School had also helped older boarders to develop some independent living skills, by offering, in their last year at the School, the opportunity to live in a semi-independent flat, which consists of two dormitories, and also had a lounge, with facilities to make drinks and hot snacks. Examination of one boarders file provided evidence that the School was helping seek an further education course for the boarder, who was due to leave the School summer 2005. Staff also worked with external education colleagues, seeking work experience and college placements for boarders who were due to move on.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

As reported previously, the stated ethos and philosophy of the School, which includes *"The aim to safeguard and promote welfare; to create a safe community with clear and thoughtful boundaries; to create an atmosphere within which a young person can grow in every sense of the word – physically socially emotionally and intellectually..."* was reflected in the everyday practices observed by the Inspectors during their three day visit. Boarders were given individualised support in line with their wishes and needs, and a Key worker system had been set up, so that there were opportunities for one-to-one, including activities that took place away from the School.

The Headteacher and Senior team took particular interest in the pastoral care of boarders including those with complex and difficult family situations and backgrounds. This was borne out by the fact that they were prepared to visit these families during school holidays.

In terms of the development of an independent advocacy service for boarders, this remains to be addressed. Previous recommendations have been made for this area of the Schools provision to be developed, but, to date, the School has been unable to find anyone local, who would be willing or suited to take this on. The Inspectors felt that it was an important area that needed to be addressed – particularly for boarders who could benefit from the opportunity to talk to someone who was neither connected directly to the School (i.e. a member of staff), or was a member of their own family, or a friend. A repeat recommendation was therefore made, in this regard.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

As reported previously, the School is on the outskirts of Bramfield village, and is located adjacent to a working farm. There are extensive grounds, and the majority of the School is located in the main house – a large three storey period property. As such, the premises would not meet the Criteria 23.2 of this Standard and be suitable to accommodate children with physical disabilities.

With regard to Criteria 23.6, the Proprietors of the School – Mr and Mrs Anstes – did occupy accommodation on the first floor, on a part-time basis. Their accommodation was accessed from within the School, via the first floor. This area was in close proximity to boarding areas, and the Inspectors noted that the safety and privacy of boarders could be compromised by these arrangements, although this had not been raised as an issue at this, (or at previous) inspections of the School. In practice, Mr and Mrs Anstes had spent very little time living in this accommodation, in the last twelve months, and were frequently away during term-time.

Visitors to the School were monitored – the front door was locked, and visitors had to ring a bell and wait to be invited in.

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *“The School makes every effort to liaise with other professionals, with neighbours, and the local community. Pupils regularly participate in work experience in the locality, and also socialise to a small extent by attending the local youth club”*.

Some of the staff who work at the School also lived in the local area.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)

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

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

The Inspectors were taken on a pupil guided tour of the accommodation, assisted by two boys. The accommodation and facilities were appropriate for boarders. There was plenty of space, and the areas were comfortable and organised. Feedback from boys who completed a Questionnaire was that the School could be cold, particularly when the weather changed suddenly. However, the Inspectors found everywhere to be warm during their visit, in early March, when the weather had been poor including quite heavy snow.

The School had a total of seven bedrooms, ranging in size from two to seven beds. Boys were allocated to these dormitories based on friendship groups, age, and also taking into account their relationship with the member of staff in charge of that dormitory. By and large, these arrangements worked well, and boys had developed friendships with each other, and with the member of staff on duty. This was evident during the Inspectors' evening visit to the School, when boarders were using their dormitories to watch t.v. play games, and generally relax together, before bedtime.

This is not a full-time boarding School, and therefore the boys tended not to personalise their dormitories to any great extent, although they were allowed to put up suitable posters, pictures, or photographs, if they wanted to. The fact that some dormitories did accommodate more than four boys was not expressed as a concern, as the maximum amount of time a boy would spend in the dormitory would be four nights a week, and some boys also went home during the School week, for an overnight stay. The oldest boys could, if they chose, move more independent accommodation during their last year at School – this was provided in a separate corridor, leading off the main landing, and comprised two dormitories, a lounge, and separate bathroom and toilet facilities.

During the earlier part of the evenings, boys had access downstairs to computers, to pool tables, to the gym, and in good weather, to the outdoors, as well as those activities that were arranged, away from the School.

A positive aspect of the dormitory accommodation was the addition of comfortable sofas and chairs, and televisions. This provided a homely space for boys to relax in their groups and to benefit from time with their supervising member of staff, before bedtime. Boys were able to visit each other in the dormitories, provided that other boys agreed that they wanted visitors in their dormitory at that time of the evening. The Inspectors felt that this arrangement worked well, and was more beneficial in this School setting, than one larger common room that all the boys would use together. Each boy was provided with a full length metal locker to store their clothes and personal items. There was discussion with the Deputy about a plan to move these lockers into another area on the first floor – as it was felt that this would improve the appearance of dormitories, and provide more space, and the Inspectors agreed with this proposal for improving the arrangements for boarders at the School.

In the Pre inspection Questionnaire, the Head has indicated that changes she would like to see made to the School premises, if this were feasible, were: *"Improve the gym area.*

Convert disused space to an art room. Provide a proper rope and activity area".

The arrangements for supervising boarders at night were unchanged. The School employed a waking night person who came on duty at 11pm and left at 7am. During the course of the

night he provided regular dormitory patrols and stationed himself on the landing area, where he was able to listen out for any disturbances, and keep a watching brief. The waking night staff was supported by another member of staff who (on a shift basis) slept-in, using a bedroom located nearby.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

There were sufficient numbers of baths, showers and toilets, all of which were of a good standard. However, during the tour of the accommodation, the Inspectors noted that not all the door locks worked effectively, and some of the doors which had bolts fitted, could not be opened from the outside in the event of an emergency. This was a recommendation from the last inspection, and the Head of Care confirmed that it was due to be addressed, very shortly. The recommendation was therefore repeated.

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.10)

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

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

The Fire Authority arranged to visit the School during the inspection. The Fire Officer who carried out a tour of the premises and inspected the fire safety arrangements, confirmed that he would be providing the School with a report from the visit, in due course. In the meantime, he advised the Inspectors that there were three issues that needed to be addressed, and these in brief were:

Some fire doors were wedged open; Some fire signage was out of date; and the School's Fire risk assessment had not been updated in the last three years. A recommendation was made in that regard. The Fire Authority's visit was discussed during the feedback meeting with the Head and Mr Anstes, who confirmed that the issues would be addressed, and all of the advice would be acted on, by, the latest, the end of December 2005.

In other respects, the School was being maintained to reasonable standards, and matters of damage whether accidental or deliberate, were effectively reported, and dealt with. Restraints had been fitted to upstairs windows.

The Head of Care was asked whether risk assessments had been developed. He told the Inspectors that he had produced a Pre-Admission / Review Risk Assessment and Activity Risk Assessment formats, which were shortly to be put into working practice.

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9) Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those employed on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with the children in the school includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (at Standard or Enhanced level as appropriate to their role in the school), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.			
Key Findings and Evidence		Standard met?	3
One of the Inspector's examined five staff personnel files. These contained evidence that staff were being appropriately recruited, including Application Forms, seeking of references, Criminal Records Bureau checks at enhanced levels, Contracts of Employment, and Job Descriptions. The Head discussed the fact that obtaining verbal verification of references was time consuming, but nonetheless she understood the need to ensure that all references were genuine. The Inspector suggested the task could be delegated to the School Secretary, and that the Head would only need to be involved if an issue arose as a result of the phone call made seeking verification.			
Total number of care staff:	9	Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:	X

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

The staffing levels at the School had increased since last year's inspection. This had a positive effect on the arrangements for the supervision of boarders at the School. Each full time member of staff was allocated a Dormitory to supervise, and there was a clear shift pattern for pastoral staff, which involved working during the early morning, over lunchtime, and then the longest shift at the end of the School day. Although shifts constructed in this way were quite tiring, the Inspectors acknowledged that the School was not open on Friday evenings or at the weekends, and that staff also benefited from longer breaks in the School holidays.

The Inspectors acknowledged that with the recommendations being made, and the additional responsibilities to be taken on by staff, there could be a need to revise the staffing levels and staffing structure, to facilitate the developmental work that is both planned by the School and recommended through the inspection findings. For instance, staff will need time to develop their Key working roles; to read review and update Care Plans; to set up Group work Forums; and to be given time for a thorough induction, to receive one-to-one supervision, and to have their training needs met. A recommendation was therefore made for staffing levels to be reviewed.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

The Pre Inspection Questionnaire confirmed that *"There are 3 weeks in the year set aside for staff training. These are traditionally one week at Easter, and two at the start of the summer holidays. However, I have recently changed the summer arrangements for one week at the start of the holidays and one week at the end of the holidays. This is to allow Key workers time to undertake home visits. Professional development currently takes place within the 3 weeks highlighted above. Two care staff are undertaking Open University courses to gain qualification. Most of the work entailed in this is undertaken in their own time but time off is allowed for exams. Care staff have also undertaken some training in term time, such as Child Protection courses."*

The School had a positive view of staff training and development opportunities for its' staff. The Team Teach training referred to earlier in this report had been very beneficial for staff working with challenging young persons. Child protection training was also provided on an annual basis.

Some key recommendations made at the last inspection of the School remained outstanding for action. These were discussed with the recently appointed Head of Care, who confirmed that support, supervision, training and development were on the Agenda for action.

During an interview with a recently appointed member of staff, it was established that the induction process for that person had been quite minimal. It was described as being shown the Dormitory that was to be supervised, and then "getting on with it". This comment needs to be seen in the context of how the school arranges staffing of boarding accommodation.

Staff are allocated to a dormitory each, with no more than 6 boarders in each, and at least one member of supernumerary staff available for support if needed. Staff consistently reported that their colleagues were supportive and helpful to new members of staff on a day to day basis, although the reported experiences of one member of staff suggest the early days may be daunting and the systems the school have would be enhanced, were they preceded by a formal, recorded induction, clarifying roles, routines, expectations and methods of dealing with a range of predictable issues. A recommendation, made last year, was repeated with regard to the introduction of a formal, recorded induction programme to be provided for new staff. This should include shadowing more experienced staff, being provided with support, discussion of child protection policy and procedures, understanding those matters that need to be notified, writing of incident reports, reading of care plans and risk assessments for individual boarders, and ensuring that policies and procedures had been provided, read and understood in terms of safe and consistent working practices.

Another recommendation, which has been repeated from last year's inspection, related to each member of staff having a personal development plan.

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

One of the Inspectors interviewed a member of the housekeeping staff, and also had a discussion with the School Cook. Both were satisfied with the arrangements in place for their support and supervision.

With regard to staff with teaching and pastoral roles, there was no formal supervision process in place. This was discussed with the Head of Care who confirmed that a process for induction, supervision and support to staff was being introduced. This would include formal 1:1 supervision sessions between supervisor and supervisee, and a written format for supervision notes to be made. He recognised the importance of introducing a process that led from sound recruitment, to induction, to support and supervision, leading to the development of the Personal Development Plan (see Standard 29 above) and the Annual Appraisal. Because this piece of work had not yet been entirely implemented, a repeat recommendation was made in that regard.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.17)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Inspectors found that the arrangements for organisation, management and staffing of the School had developed and improved from the previous year. Staffing levels had been increased, and with a recently appointed Head of Care in post, it was clear that steps were being taken to reinforce the pastoral care arrangements.

The School continued to hold an 'end of the week management meeting' between the Head, Deputy, Head of Care, and Senior Care Worker. This meeting was designed to 'catch' the issues from the working week.

During a short interview with the Deputy the Inspectors heard that staff were positive about the changes that had been made, and that any frustrations related to the fact that staff did not have enough time to develop the School in certain areas, including in respect of recommendations made as part of the inspection process.

With regard to the School having a minimum ratio of 80% of care staff having completed NVQ level 3 (or equivalent) by the year 2005. This was discussed at the feedback meeting and it was confirmed that two members of staff were actively undertaking NVQ level 3 equivalent through study with the Open University. The Head felt that another positive development was the fact that the Head of Care was also an NVQ Assessor, and that this might encourage other staff to consider taking up NVQ training opportunities, based on the fact that they would be able to be assessed, in-house. The position with regard to staff development and training will therefore be kept under review.

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

X %

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

9

This Standard did not apply.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The Inspectors attended a feedback meeting at the School, on 22 March 2005, to discuss the findings of the inspection. This was attended by the Head, and Mr M Anstes, the son of the Proprietors, who had more recently taken over a monitoring role at the School. Copies of his reports from visits carried out in October, November, January and February were provided to the Inspectors. Discussion with him during the feedback meeting, together with evidence of his involvement with the School, demonstrated a commitment to the business and running of the School and for ensuring that the School continued to be managed effectively. It was clear that monies were being invested in the School, in terms of the infrastructure and physical environment, as well as for recruiting staff, and for their training and development needs. The Inspectors were told that the maximum amount of pupils that the School can accommodate was 40, and that, as at Easter 2005, there were 37 pupils at the School. There was also a waiting list of boys who had been referred for a place at the School, as and when vacancies occurred.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

N/A

Lay Assessor N/A **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 2nd – 4th March 2005 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

YES

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

YES

Note:

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

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 21st April 2005, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

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

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

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

Print Name _____

Signature

Designation

Date _____

Or

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

--

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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S0000024575.V207015.R01

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