



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Bleasdale House School

**27 Emesgate Lane
Silverdale
Nr Carnforth
Lancashire
LA5 0RG**

Lead Inspector
Elaine Clare

Announced Inspection
9th July 2006 02:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

Reader Information	
Document Purpose	Inspection Report
Author	CSCI
Audience	General Public
Further copies from	0870 240 7535 (telephone order line)
Copyright	This report is copyright Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and may only be used in its entirety. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the express permission of CSCI
Internet address	www.csci.org.uk

This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Residential Special Schools*. They can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

Every Child Matters, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life.

Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above.

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of school	Bleasdale House School
Address	27 Emesgate Lane Silverdale Nr Carnforth Lancashire LA5 0RG
Telephone number	
Fax number	01254 702044
Email address	head@bleasdale.lancsngfl.ac.uk
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Lancashire County Council
Name of Head	Mr Robert Wright
Name of Head of Care	Mrs Linda Walker
Age range of residential pupils	4 – 19 years
Date of last welfare inspection	30 th January 2006

Brief Description of the School:

Bleasdale House School is a residential special school operated by Lancashire County Council Education department (LEA) and registered with the Department Of Education and Skills (DFES). The schools primary function is to provide pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities with a positive and safe educational experience while boarding at the school.

Eighteen pupils were residing at the school for up to a maximum of thirty-eight weeks per year. Most pupils went home every other weekend and all pupils went home during the school holidays. Other pupils attended the school on a daily basis. A large, multi-disciplinary staff group was meeting the complex educational and physical needs of pupils.

The residential area was separated physically from the school. It is a large country house with many historic features. There are splendid views across the bay with extensive grounds and gardens. The home is provided with a range of facilities to cater for individual needs of the children.

SUMMARY

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

The inspection was announced and started at 2pm. It took place over two days during a weekend and the early part of the working week. The inspectors spoke and spent time with a number of children and spoke separately to members of staff, senior care officer, the head of care and the head teacher. The head of care showed the inspectors around the school. Records were also examined.

What the school does well:

This is a residential school where the children are looked after well. It has a competent staff team who understand the needs of the children living there. Those children observed appeared to like staying at the school. Staff listened to them and were there for them when needed.

One staff member wrote to the inspector about what the school does particularly well, they wrote that the school "provides our pupils with a good start in their life in a caring clean environment, and develops their achievements to the maximum."

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum and in addition the resident children are provided with a "twenty four hour educative care curriculum".

What has improved since the last inspection?

The Statement of Purpose has been developed and a copy was made available to the inspectors. Copies of the Statement of Purpose are also made available to staff members and parents. Details of the complaint procedure have been included in the Statement of Purpose and directs people to make a complaint directly to the Commission Social Care Inspection (CSCI).

Placement plans and risk assessments have been revised and are regularly reviewed.

All staff members are in the process of obtaining a Criminal Record Certificate (CRB) and this check will be obtained every three years.

What they could do better:

Placement plans should be reviewed regularly and correspond fully with the daily records and monitoring sheets.

Please contact the Head for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

CONTENTS

Being Healthy

Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

Scoring of Outcomes

Recommended Actions identified during the inspection

Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted.(NMS 14)
- Children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs.(NMS 15)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

14,15

The quality in this outcome group is excellent

The physical, emotional and mental health needs of each child are identified and actively promoted within the day-to-day care at the school.

EVIDENCE:

The school has a policy and written guidance, which was observed to be implemented in practice, on promoting the health needs of children in the school. The school has a team of nurses employed by Morecambe Bay Care NHS Trust who oversee the medical care of the individual children. Each child has a comprehensive and detailed nursing care plan, which is regularly updated and reviewed by the nurse manager.

The nurse manager arranges for visiting professionals to attend the school for each child to receive medical, optical and dental treatment. The school has a doctor assigned to the children, who visits regularly.

Issues of personal hygiene are dealt with sensitively. Areas of the school are designated to assist staff with changing of the children. Children are given personal attention from a single member of staff whilst dealing with sensitive issues to ensure that dignity is paramount for the child.

Staff are trained in the use of first aid and first aid boxes were seen around the school. A medical team is available 24 hours a day and have access to specific medical equipment, which is used only by people, trained to do so.

Medication was observed by the inspector, as was the medical room in which it is stored. The children at the home are on a number of medicines and tablets and these are carefully monitored by the nursing manager. The school has secure medical cabinets, which meet the needs of the Medicine Act 1968. A

written record is maintained of any medical procedures, illnesses or accidents that have occurred to the children while resident at the school.

The medical input into the school and the close relationship it has with the medical team is to be commended. It was felt by the inspectors that this standard exceeded the minimum recommended.

The school had introduced a Healthy Eating programme to encourage the children to adopt healthier eating habits. Children clearly enjoyed and staff commented positively about these and about the meals provided. Boarding pupils took lunch in the main school dining room and all other meals in their residential units. The inspector dined with the children in the dining room, which offered a varied menu that catered for a wide range of tastes. The meals were well prepared and well presented. Children resident were involved in planning menu's on the residential units, and were given a choice of food at breakfast, dinner, supper, and for snacks. Children helped occasionally with the preparation of meals, helping them develop skills.

All staff had received formal basic food hygiene training, ensuring they were aware of hygienic procedures to follow when preparing food.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled.(NMS 3)
- Children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration.(NMS 4)
- The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.(NMS 5)
- Children are protected from bullying by others.(NMS 6)
- 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.(NMS 7)
- Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return.(NMS 8)
- Children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour.(NMS 10)
- Children live in schools that provide physical safety and security.(NMS 26)
- There is careful selection and vetting of all staff, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers.(NMS 27)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

3,4,5,6,7,8,10,26,27

The quality in this outcome group is excellent.

Children's privacy was respected. There were good complaints and child protection procedures in place and appropriate behaviour management systems were in place, to protect children.

EVIDENCE:

A few children were provided with single bedroom accommodation, though in the main accommodation is in double or triple bedrooms. During the inspection we observed staff working with children in ways that respected the children's privacy. Staff were sensitive to children's individual needs, including having regard to gender issues and privacy. Daily written records were kept on each children accommodated.

The school had developed an appropriate complaints procedure. Parents were given a complaints booklet detailing the procedures to follow should they wish to make a formal complaint. The school's documentation for recording complaints complied with the requirements of Standard 4. These actions showed the school ensured children were fully aware of how to make a complaint, and that any complaint would be appropriately addressed.

The school had appropriate child protection policies and procedures in place. The Head Teacher was currently fulfilling the role of "Named Person" for child protection issues. He had undergone a child protection training course run by the local authority training team. All staff, including domestic staff, had received further child protection training. Staff interviewed gave appropriate responses to child protection scenario's we put to them. These actions showed the school had taken reasonable measures to ensure staff had appropriate knowledge of procedures and policies that protected and safeguarded children.

The school had good anti-bullying policies in place. Individual risk assessments had been carried out on each young person accommodated.

The school aimed to promote acceptable behaviour from children and had systems in place to positively reinforce and reward such behaviour.

The Head of care detailed ways in which the school considered the make up and grouping of children in each residential unit, to try to ensure, as far as possible, units had groupings of children who could live happily together.

Systems were in place to ensure the school appropriately notified relevant agencies of all significant events. We interviewed the head teacher, who was the staff member with responsibility for overseeing health and safety issues. He had received appropriate training for this role. Staff had received training on Health & Safety issues at a staff training days. We also viewed relevant Health and Safety documentation. A monthly Health and Safety inspection check was carried out on all areas of the school buildings, including the residential units. A full report was compiled following each inspection check. All relevant fire safety checks and fire drills had been carried out. Required checks on electrical equipment and installations had been carried out, as had required annual safety checks on gas installations and boilers. All taps in residential units had been fitted with regulators to ensure hot water provided did not exceed 43 degrees C. Lancashire County Council carried out a quarterly Health & Safety audit. We did not see any obvious health and safety hazards during our inspection. These actions showed the school took all reasonable measures to ensure children lived in accommodation that was safe and secure.

The school operated recruitment procedures which protected children. All staff recruited had appropriate CRB disclosures in place, had two written references on file, and these references had been verified. This showed the school followed recruitment procedures that took all reasonable measures to ensure staff recruited were suitable people to be working with children.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- The school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school.(NMS 12)
- Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community.(NMS 13)
- Children receive individual support when they need it.(NMS 22)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

12,13,14

The quality in this outcome group is excellent.

Children's educational needs were well met and leisure and activities are excellent.

EVIDENCE:

All children accommodated attended school on the second day of the inspection. Care staff interviewed stated there were good working relationships between the care and education departments. Care staff were allocated working duties during classroom hours, providing support and assistance when required. Senior care staff informed us that some education staff worked occasional care hours. Some young people accommodated were attending further education colleges and following 16+ transition plans.

In the completed questionnaires they returned staff stated the leisure activities offered by the school were "good". Residential units had televisions, videos, DVD players and various types of computer game consoles. Children also detailed through photographs various outings and trips they had been on. These included individual and group activities such as swimming and gardening. Children were able to choose activities they wished to do. Books and games were available within the residential units, and we observed staff involving children in cooking and crafts. These actions showed the school were meeting children's leisure and activity needs.

All children were allocated a key worker. The school employed the services of speech therapists and Occupational Therapists. These actions showed the school could offer individual support, and individual specialist support, to children if required.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run. No child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views.(NMS 2)
- Children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect.(NMS 9)
- Children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes.(NMS 11)
- Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school.(NMS 17)
- 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.(NMS 20)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

2,9,11,17,20

The quality in this outcome group is excellent.

Children were effectively encouraged to make a positive contribution to their day-to-day lives and in the life of the school/

EVIDENCE:

Minutes of reviews were seen that showed children's opinions and views were being represented in formal meetings. The inspectors observed a strategy review when the child showed slides of the targets that he had achieved. We spent time with the children in the residential units, in the morning and evening, and observed them being offered a range of choices, and being asked to make meaningful decisions about matters that affected them.

We observed staff working with children in various settings, and at various times, throughout the inspection, and during our pre-inspection visit. There were good working relationships between staff and children and we witnessed staff dealing with situations sensitively and calmly. The use of humour was prevalent and children responded well to staff. Staff were seen to communicate effectively with children who had a range of social communication difficulties, and they showed due regard to children's cultural needs.

There was evidence to show that the school fully considered the effect any new resident may have on the welfare of the children already accommodated. The Head gave various examples which confirmed that the school had developed clear admissions criteria. Admissions were reviewed after twelve weeks. Senior care staff interviewed told us that they were involved in the admissions process and they felt their views were taken in to account by the school when considering new admissions. Various systems were in place to assist children preparing to leave school, and help them develop further skills. Where relevant, young people were attending further education colleges and following 16+ transition plans.

We viewed the placement plans of some children accommodated. The current placement plans did not cover all areas required. The information on the placement plans required expanding and personalising. Needs assessed and targets set needed to be more clearly defined, with clearer evaluation as to whether targets had been met or not.

All children accommodated went home to their families/carers every other weekend and during all school holidays. Care staff confirmed that they maintained telephone contact with parents/carers to pass on information as necessary. Children had an individual communication book, which they took home with them when they went on home leave. Parents/carers could make entries in the book, and care staff completed it whilst the child was at school. These actions showed children were encouraged and supported to maintain contact with their families/carers and friends.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children can 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.(NMS 16)
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.(NMS 21)
- Children live in well designed and pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.(NMS 23)
- Children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.(NMS 24)
- Children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity.(NMS 25)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

16,21,23,24,25

The quality in this outcome group is excellent.

Children's clothing and personal requisites needs were met. The standard of accommodation for the children is excellent and their privacy was respected.

EVIDENCE:

We spent time with children on their residential units. During the day children wore their own personal clothing and exercised choice in what activities they wished to do. This showed their wishes were taken in to account and acted upon.

Some children had their own individual bedroom others shared. Staff stated that children could choose to spend their time in their own room, or the communal areas of the residential units. During the evening we visited, several children chose to do some activities while others listened to music in their bedrooms in their bedrooms.

All children's clothing was laundered in the residential areas in line with 'family type' living arrangements, and children were supported to have choice in the selection of their own clothing. The Head Teacher explained to us that due to the small number of boarders, all bed linen was also being laundered on the residential units.

The school does supply pocket money to resident children. Generally any additional money children accommodated brought in to school was handed in to staff for safekeeping.

As previously stated, systems were in place to assist young people preparing to leave school, and help them develop further skills. Young people were attending further education colleges and following 16+ transition plans.

The school was set in its own grounds, and contained all education, classroom and office areas, as well as residential living units, within the main building. The residential unit area had a lounge, dining area, kitchen, bathrooms and bedrooms.

No replies were received to pre-inspection letters sent to fire department or environmental health departments to suggest there were any outstanding issues at the school.

Generally, the residential living accommodation was suitably maintained. Communal areas were comfortably furnished and appropriately decorated. Children were able to personalise their bedroom areas if they wished to. The physical lay out of the buildings restricted developments of individual residential units to some extent.

There were adequate washing and bathing facilities within the residential unit areas. All washing and toilet areas had suitable locks on the doors to ensure children's privacy when using them.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils.(NMS 1)
- Children's needs, development and progress is recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions.(NMS 18)
- There are adequate records of both the staff and child groups of the school.(NMS 19)
- Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.(NMS 28)
- Children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs.(NMS 29)
- Children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare.(NMS 30)
- Children receive the care and services they need from competent staff.(NMS 31)
- Children and staff enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools.(NMS 32)
- The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school.(NMS 33)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

1,18,19,28,29,30,31,32,33

The quality in this outcome group is excellent.

The school was appropriately managed and staff were competent in their roles which the children benefited from

EVIDENCE:

The school had both a statement of purpose and a school prospectus that detailed the education and care offered. They had been reviewed and amended in 2006. They contained descriptions of key policies, and informed readers how the full policies could be accessed.

Children case files viewed contained all information required. In case files we viewed, relevant entries in documentation were signed or dated by the person making the entries. Each residential unit kept a daily record sheet on each child accommodated. These record sheets detailed the children's experiences in the morning, evening and through the night, and entries on these sheets were appropriately signed and dated.

The school register showed the dates of admission and departure of each child accommodated, where they were living prior to admission, and where they were accommodated on leaving the school.

Staff rota's viewed showed staffing levels were appropriate, and enabled staff to meet the individual needs of the children accommodated. Duty team leaders interviewed stated they always had sufficient staff on duty to cover the residential units. Four waking night staff were on duty throughout each night, and the senior care staff on duty was on sleeping in duty to provide support if needed. All care staff interviewed stated the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher were available at any time for support and advice. These actions showed the school were ensuring there was always enough staff available to meet the needs of the children accommodated.

The school offered induction training and ongoing training to staff. Training needs were identified through supervision and performance management. Staff interviewed stated there were good training programmes in place and that they all received annual appraisals. Each member of staff had a personal development/training plan in place. The Head Teacher informed us one of the senior care staff was currently undertaking NVQ Assessors training, and that all care staff had completed the relevant NVQ qualifications, although some had not had their worked "signed off" by external verifiers. These actions showed the school had taken measures to ensure an appropriately trained care staff team was in place.

Staff did receive formal supervision with the frequency required. Staff delivering supervision had received appropriate training in supervision skills.

The internal monitoring of the school's operation was occurring and with the frequency required. External monitoring was also occurring with the frequency required. A senior staff member from the local authority was responsible for carrying out these monitoring visits.

We met with the Head Teacher at various times throughout the pre-inspection visit, and during the two days of the inspection. He provided all the documentation we requested. We discussed various issues with him and found him willing to listen to our findings and keen to address recommendations we made. He noted our comments and suggestions and responded positively, showing the school's management were open to inspection and monitoring of the school's practices, policies and procedures.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools have been met and uses the following scale.

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

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion

"N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
14	4
15	4

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	3
4	3
5	3
6	3
7	3
8	3
10	3
26	3
27	3

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	4
13	4
22	4

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	3
9	3
11	3
17	2
20	3

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
16	3
21	3
23	4
24	4
25	3

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
18	3
19	3
28	3
29	3
30	3
31	3
32	3
33	3

No

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the proprietor meets the Children Act 1989, Inspection of Schools and Colleges Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards.

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1.	RS17	An improvement in the placement plan would enhance the provision offered at Bleasdale.	

Commission for Social Care Inspection

North Lancashire Area Office
2nd Floor, Unit 1, Tustin Court
Port Way
Preston
PR2 2YQ

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120

Email: enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.csci.org.uk

© This report is copyright Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and may only be used in its entirety. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the express permission of CSCI.