



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Woodeaton Manor School

**Woodeaton
Oxford
OX3 9TS**

Lead Inspector
Clare Davies

Announced Inspection
18th October 2005 09:30

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

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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	Woodeaton Manor School
Address	Woodeaton Oxford OX3 9TS
Telephone number	01865 558722
Fax number	01865 311561
Email address	
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Oxfordshire County Council Education Department
Name of Head	Anne Pearce
Name of Head of Care	Carol King
Age range of residential pupils	11-16 years
Date of last welfare inspection	08/03/05

Brief Description of the School:

Woodeaton Manor provides education for 40 children and young people aged 11-16 years old, of mixed gender with emotional and social difficulties. The school is funded by the Local Education Authority (LEA) and located in a Grade II listed manor house and grounds. Oxfordshire County Council has agreed to adopt and act upon recommendations in a conservation plan to protect the historic character of the house and its significance alongside educational objectives.

Woodeaton Manor also provides residential places for a maximum of four nights a week, for up to ten children/young people.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection was an announced visit over two days. The inspector spent time with all the students seeing their bedrooms, residential accommodation and joining in mealtimes. The inspector spent time interviewing staff, reading records and observing staff interactions with the students.

Questionnaires were sent to a variety of people involved with Woodeaton Manor School and responses were received from four parents, nine students, one placing officer and one member of staff. All responses were positive and comments were received from parents such as:

‘We think all teachers, office staff, cooks, RSWs and LSAs do great jobs’

‘There should be more schools of this calibre with staff like at Woodeaton. We cannot praise all the staff enough for their help and kindness in bringing out the best in our son’

‘The best school our son has ever attended’

The inspector would like to thank the students, staff, head of care and head teacher for assisting with the inspection.

What the school does well:

Woodeaton Manor achieves its aim of providing a safe, supportive and nurturing environment. Food is given a high priority and healthy meals are provided to the whole school, including breakfast.

The staff have great enthusiasm for their work and demonstrate commitment to the students in supporting them to achieve their potential. Students are given opportunities to access the national curriculum, engage in a variety of activities and to ‘put it right’.

A good behaviour management system is in place and seen as ‘fair’ by the students. Good records are maintained.

A strength of the school is the supportive relationships between students and staff. The head teacher provides strong leadership.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has produced clear guidance for students on how to make a complaint.

Short term measures have been taken to improve the kitchen facilities whilst awaiting refurbishment

Bathroom privacy has been improved and suitable locks fitted.

Formal supervision and training has been extended to domestic staff.

What they could do better:

Tighten the procedures for the administration of medication.

Undertake regular testing of the fire safety system and keep fire exits clear from hazards.

Staff recruitment needs to be more robust.

Commence a programme of refurbishment prioritising the main kitchen.

There could be more training specific to residential staff.

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 and 15

The health needs of the students are met well. Further documentation is required and a review of how prescribed medication is administered. Food is of a very good quality with healthy eating promoted throughout the school.

EVIDENCE:

The inspectors looked at records of medication that had been administered and any medication held. Prescribed medication was placed in a dosset box by staff to provide a system of administration during the school week, but the inspectors were concerned that this meant staff had taken medication from its original packaging and therefore were dispensing it twice. The inspectors strongly recommend that medication remain in its original packaging until given to the student. Additionally, some pills had been halved to provide the prescribed dosage and this should not recur.

Records of medication given were appropriate and the school has produced good written guidelines for staff on how to respond to a student with asthma or epilepsy. Parental permission for the school staff to give prescribed medication had been acquired and it is recommended that parental permission is also sought for the administration of first aid, non-prescribed medication and to seek medical, optical or dental treatment when required.

A large number of staff are trained in first aid.

The school day starts with everyone having breakfast together - resident and day students with staff from residential care and education. A hot meal is provided along with cereals, toast and fruit juice. This ensures that all students have a nutritious start to their day and brings the school together.

All meals are prepared and cooked on site and the kitchen staff were observed to be fully included in the school team and interacting with the students by serving the meals. Great emphasis is given to the menus to ensure a healthy diet is served, avoiding high sugar meals and promoting fresh food. Drinking water is promoted throughout the school and when the residential students go on outings they are encouraged to select the healthy options for their snacks. The school encourages students to take Omega 3 capsules at lunchtime to assist with co-ordination, concentration and behaviour. Most students choose to take these supplements, with parental consent, and the headteacher reported that there had been notable benefits.

All meals are taken in a communal dining area in the manor house. This means that resident students do not eat in the residential area but may have drinks and a snack before bedtime. The dining areas have just enough space to accommodate all the students and staff, and can be noisy areas with a lot of movement whilst adults and students settle to their meal. The headteacher reported that she is aware of this being an area that needs regular review to consider how mealtimes could be improved.

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 and 27

Child protection awareness amongst staff is high and there is a low level of bullying in the school. The behaviour management system works well and is considered to be 'fair' by the students.

Each child is subject to a risk assessment in addition to activities undertaken. Testing of the fire system has not occurred routinely as required. The recruitment procedure needs to be more robust and in line with the National Minimum Standard.

EVIDENCE:

The privacy of the students is generally well respected and information handled confidentially. A complaints procedure is in place and known to the students. The pupil handbook and prospectus provides details on how to complain to the school and external bodies such as CSCI. There is also a complaints book for students to use in the main reception.

There is a good awareness of child protection issues amongst all staff and the inspectors were pleased to hear that refresher training was scheduled for the following month. The designated child protection officer has undertaken appropriate training with the local authority and a comprehensive policy is in place. The school has appropriately liaised with the local authority Children and Families Assessment Team and reported matters of concern to CSCI.

There is a bullying policy in place and information posted around the school and residential unit to address such issues. Nine students completed a questionnaire towards the inspection and when asked, 'Are you being bullied at the school at the moment?' one reported 'yes, often', two reported 'sometimes', five reported 'hardly ever' and one student said 'not at all'. The inspectors saw posters around the school to address bullying (the Anti Bullying Charter) and were told how such behaviour may be discussed in circle time, PSHE and when identified. A Bully Book was available for students to report any incidents.

Woodeaton Manor has a behaviour management policy where great emphasis is given to success and achievement for the individual and rewarded openly with certificates, activities on a Friday afternoon and accumulative points. The behaviour policy is well known by the residential staff and the achievements and difficulties are acknowledged with a separate points system. The residential staff apply appropriate sanctions such as loss of privileges, etc. The students consider the behaviour management to be fair, as in the questionnaire there were favourable responses. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are recorded on 'pink' paper and the type of behaviour is graded in levels 1-4. In contrast a 'gold' paper is awarded in recognition of excellent achievement.

A student told the inspector that at Woodeaton Manor you get given a chance to put things right if you mess up. The inspectors observed that the staff support the students in managing their behaviour and encouraging them to take responsibility for their actions.

The inspector saw records of any physical restraints that had occurred. These were documented clearly and monitored by the senior management team. The 'pink' form used to record when a student required to be restrained provides an opportunity for the students to sign the record.

Risk assessments are produced for each student and these were distributed well amongst the staff. It was evident that these were subject to regular review. In addition risk assessments were in place for the activities undertaken at school and off-site.

Records evidence that fire drills have taken place with residential students experiencing an evacuation after school hours, although it is recommended that names are recorded of who was present to monitor that all residents experience a drill. There were several outstanding actions as recommended through a fire safety audit undertaken on 4 October 2005 - the fire risk assessment to be completed, employee fire safety training to be recorded, the fire alarm system should be tested weekly, emergency lighting should be tested monthly and fire fighting equipment should be checked monthly. The inspector also identified that the external fire escape from the residential area required clearing of fallen leaves to ensure that it remains a safe route.

Records seen evidenced that water temperatures and electrical appliances are regularly tested. Domestic staff were aware of the need for safe storage of products and COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) details.

The inspector sampled three recruitment records and, whilst two references had been received for each member of staff, there was no evidence that there had been any direct contact by the school to verify each reference. The reference request letter requires amendment to specifically ask the referee to state any known reason why the applicant should not be employed to work 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 and 22

There are good links between school and residential staff that assist in supporting the students' educational progress. Activities that are arranged are varied and enjoyed. There is good co-ordination amongst the staff and external agencies to ensure that individuals receive appropriate support.

EVIDENCE:

Residential staff actively support the students' education, ensuring regular attendance, punctuality and assistance with school work. A copy of the statement of special educational needs is held for each child and available to residential staff. Teachers and residential staff reported that they could easily contact one another to discuss any progress or concerns. It is recommended that residential staff are made aware of the PSHE programme in order that they are prepared to further support the students with any queries they may have during the evening.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are shared with residential staff so that targets can be supported throughout the school. All relevant staff contribute to annual reviews.

Students who reside at Woodeaton Manor during the week reported that there were many activities for them such as swimming, outings, pool, music, boys' club, cinema, bowling, ice skating, football, multi-gym, PS2 and enjoyment of the extensive grounds. The residential building has space to provide two lounges, a games room and a multi-gym.

Great emphasis is given to identifying each student's individual needs and then plans are made as to how the school can meet them. This may be through the IEP, 1:1 time with key worker or teacher, health care and may also include external support from an educational psychologist, social worker or specialist community service. The inspectors observed a very committed staff team who collectively provide clear, consistent boundaries to the students. Whilst providing structure for the students, a strength of the school is its nurturing environment where students feel cared for and valued.

The headteacher has introduced 'pre-placement meetings' to gather background information from parents/carers and the outcome of these meetings were reported to be very valuable in helping to understand early childhood difficulties and any family issues to consider whilst supporting the students. The inspector observed the staff liaising closely with parents/carers and questionnaire responses support this.

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 and 20

Students are involved in decision making and encouraged to make suggestions. There are sound relationships between the staff and students. A written student guide supports the admission process to the residential unit. Placement plans are in place for each residential student.

EVIDENCE:

Students are actively involved in decisions about their involvement with school and the residential unit. There are regular house meetings where staff and students have an opportunity to raise any matters about group living and plan activities and developments within the house. The whole school meets together for circle time every morning and after lunch to reflect on the day's events and acknowledge achievements.

The inspector observed excellent relationships between students and staff throughout the school. Teachers, learning support assistants, catering staff, domestic staff, residential staff, administrative staff and particularly the headteacher.

All staff are clear of their roles and responsibilities and are able to set and maintain safe consistent boundaries that the students need and therefore respond well to.

Admission to the school happens on a planned basis and admission to the residential unit usually occurs once the student has attended school and the need for support from the residential team has been identified. A written guide is available to parents and students about the residential provision. This is a child-friendly document with good use of colour and pictures. On leaving the school there is a phased reduction of residential care, supported by time spent in a cottage on school site where students are able to prepare and cook a meal, use a washing machine, iron clothing and undertake other life skills.

Placement plans are in place for students. They meet the requirements of the National Minimum Standard and were considered working documents with regular review. A simple care plan for students is put on their bedroom wall to encourage development towards their personal goals.

Students are able to maintain contact with parents and families whilst staying at school. Contact between families and the staff is maintained by telephone, letters and occasionally face-to-face, although distance can be a hindrance to this level of contact as many students live far from the school. Students who are resident may return home at any time by arrangement and could be sent home if their behaviour is unacceptable to remain in group living. Four parents completed questionnaires towards the inspection and they all reported that the school kept them informed about the things that happened with their children.

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, 23, 24 and 25.

The residential provision is homely and pleasantly decorated. Some areas require redecoration and refurbishment. Bathrooms could be further enhanced with soft furnishings and bathroom fittings.

There has been a financial commitment to improve the accommodation throughout Woodeaton Manor and this will occur as part of a rolling programme. The refurbishment of the kitchen needs to be a priority.

EVIDENCE:

Students wear their casual clothes after school and their uniforms are laundered for the next day. Students manage their own pocket money and their bedrooms remain locked during the school day.

The residential area is located in a former coach house in the grounds of Woodeaton Manor. It comprises five two-bedded rooms, sitting room, computer room, multi-gym, TV room and large playroom, bathrooms and staff sleeping-in rooms. This provision is for boys only. There is provision for girls to become resident and sleep on the top floor of the manor house near to staff accommodation. Two semi-detached cottages stand within the grounds and are used to help students with life skills.

Some areas of residential provision are in need of redecoration and refurbishment and these have been identified within the conservation plan of the whole site. The headteacher was waiting to hear of timescales for when refurbishment work will begin. The bedroom and lounge areas were attractive and comfortable with good use of colour in the soft furnishings.

Bathrooms were clean and functional but would benefit from some fittings to make them more domestic in appearance and welcoming.

The central kitchen has been identified as in need of priority refurbishment and the kitchen staff reported that they had been consulted about the type of equipment required and the materials to be used in the refurbishment programme. The inspector could see that short term efforts had been made following the last CSCI inspection to improve areas of the kitchen, but the most urgent concern noted on this inspection was the breaking up of the floor in a walkway between the kitchen and the wash room.

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 and 33.

There is very good leadership supported by a senior management team. A training programme needs to be developed for residential staff to include access to NVQ in caring for children and young people.

EVIDENCE:

The school prospectus is a comprehensive document giving clear information for parents and students. Details are provided about the residential provision within the pupil information guide. The school aims are clearly set out with the intention to work in partnership with parents, students, governors, the community and outside professional agencies in order to meet the identified aims.

The school maintains records of development, progress and individual needs. It is recommended that the basic information sheet is amended to ensure that the following information is included - the name of the person with parental responsibility, any known court orders affecting a student's care, any contact arrangements where there are restrictions or where contact is forbidden.

Keyworkers produce placement plans and regularly update these, summarising events involving health, attainment, behaviour, contribution to the residential group and activities. The inspector concluded that these were good documents.

Records in relation to staff are held at the main school site and were generally adequate apart from the lack of some recruitment documents as mentioned in Standard 27.

Staffing levels are adequate with defined time on and off duty for residential staff. It was evident that the whole school staff team is very committed to the students and their care and often work over their hours to complete tasks. Arrangements to cover sickness of residential staff rely on the willingness of staff from the residential team or school staff and this does not seem to pose a great difficulty to the school.

Training for residential staff has occurred in child protection, managing challenging behaviour (restraint) and first aid. It is recommended that a training programme is devised to cover the areas identified in Appendix 2 of the National Minimum Standards. All staff have a personal development plan that looks at training needs. Staff that had recently joined the school reported that they had been supported very well by all staff and received good supervision. There were opportunities to shadow other staff before taking on areas of responsibility.

Staff from a variety of positions held within the school all reported how well supported and valued they feel by the headteacher. There is good leadership at the school with the head supported by a strong senior management team. The head of care, responsible for the residential provision, reports to the headteacher and attends senior management meetings as appropriate.

Two of the residential staff have commenced NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People but this had to be suspended. The head of care has yet to commence NVQ Level 4. The headteacher reported that there had been difficulties in identifying an assessor but the school would be attending a meeting after the inspection to try and re-establish NVQ training.

The inspector read reports on visits made by the governing body in accordance with Standard 33.

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	2
15	4

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	3
4	3
5	3
6	3
7	3
8	3
10	4
26	2
27	2

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	3
13	4
22	4

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	3
9	4
11	4
17	3
20	3

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
16	3
21	X
23	2
24	3
25	3

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
18	3
19	3
28	3
29	3
30	3
31	2
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	RS14	The school should seek advice from a pharmacist on the storage and administration of medication.	31/01/06
2	RS14	The school should obtain written parental permission for the administration of first aid, non-prescribed medication and to seek optical or dental treatment when required.	31/01/06
3	RS26	The school should ensure that fire evacuation drills involve all residential students.	01/11/05
4	RS26	It is recommended that the fire alarm system is tested weekly and emergency lighting monthly. The school should address all recommendations made from the fire audit undertaken 04/10/05.	21/10/05
5	RS26	It is recommended that the external fire escape is kept clear of fallen leaves.	21/10/05
6	RS27	The school's recruitment procedure should include all elements of Standard 27.	01/11/05
7	RS12	Residential staff should be made aware of the PSHE programme.	31/01/06

8	RS23	It is recommended that the central kitchen is given priority in the refurbishment programme and urgent attention given to the damaged floor.	01/01/06
9	RS25	The bathrooms could be enhanced to be more attractive.	31/03/06
10	RS18	The basic information sheet used on student files should be amended to include the details listed in the standard.	31/01/06
11	RS29	It is recommended that a training programme is devised to cover the areas identified in Appendix 2 of the National Minimum Standards.	31/03/06
12	RS31	There should be a training plan for residential staff in relation to NVQ Levels 3 and 4.	31/03/06

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