

inspection report

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

Royal School For The Deaf

50 Topsham Road

Exeter

Devon

EX24NF

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 Tel No:

Royal School For The Deaf 01392 272692

Address Fax No:

50 Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4NF 01392 431146
Email Address:

info@rsd-exeter.ac.uk

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

Royal School for the Deaf Board of Governors

Name of Head Mr John Shaw NCSC Classification Residential Special School Type of school

Date of last boarding welfare inspection: 17/10/01

Date of Inspection Visit		23rd September 2003	ID Code
	•		
Time of Inspection Visit		10:00 am	
	_		
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Romana Young	105157
Name of NCSC Increases	2	Jim Palmer	
Name of NCSC Inspector		Jili Faillei	
Name of NCSC Inspector	me of NCSC Inspector 3		
•			
Name of NCSC Inspector 4			
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector			
(if applicable):		Not applicable	
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)			
Lay assessors are members of the publi			
independent of the NCSC. They accomp	_		
inspectors on some inspections and bri	ng a		
different perspective to the inspection			
process.		Not applicable	
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Sign	er) (if	Debbie Harvey (RNID)	
applicable)		Helen Campbell (RNID)	
Name of Establishment Representative a	at the		
time of inspection		Mr John Shaw, Principal	

CONTENTS

Introduction to Report and Inspection
Inspection visits
Brief Description of the school and Residential Provision

Part A: Summary of Inspection Findings
What the school does well in Boarding Welfare
What the school should do better in Boarding Welfare
Conclusions and overview of findings on Boarding Welfare

Notifications to Local Education Authority or Secretary of State Implementation of Recommended Actions from last inspection Recommended Actions from this inspection Advisory Recommendations from this inspection

Part B: Inspection Methods Used & Findings

Inspection Methods Used

- 1. Statement of the School's Purpose
- 2. Children's rights
- 3. Child Protection
- 4. Care and Control
- 5. Quality of Care
- 6. Planning for care
- 7. Premises
- 8. Staffing
- 9. Organisation and Management

Part C: Lay Assessor's Summary (where applicable)

Part D: Head's Response

- D.1. Head's comments
- D.2. Action Plan
- D.3. Head's agreement

INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

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

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

This document summarises the inspection findings of the NCSC in respect of Royal School For The Deaf

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

The Royal School for the Deaf is a non-maintained residential special school for deaf children. Some students also have additional learning difficulties, and/or physical disabilities or visual impairments.

The school was established in 1826 to provide education for deaf children from the South-West of England. It moved to its present site in 1828 and now serves more than 30 local education authorities, including those in South Wales, London and Jersey.

The school is registered with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and is a registered charity.

The residential provision consists of three boarding areas – Olding and Kettlewell for primary and secondary school age children and the Further Education College residential units for post 16 students. Students under the age of 16 years are weekly or part-time boarders and return home for weekends and holidays. The Further Education College accommodates young people, aged sixteen and over, as termly boarders. These students return home during the holiday periods and one weekend in three during the term.

The school employs an audiologist and speech and language therapist and has other specialist visiting support, for example physiotherapist, occupational therapist, orthoptist and orthotist services.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

There is good communication and cooperation between teaching and care staff teams. The senior management team give strong leadership and good support and guidance to staff. Students feel valued and that their needs are understood at the school. They have good relationships with staff and with one another.

Parents are very satisfied with the way the their children are cared for and educated at the school. Many parents commented on how happy their child is to return to the school each week and see this as an excellent indicator that their child is settled and well looked after at the school and that their needs are being well met. An overwhelming majority of the parents who responded to the questionnaire survey could not think of anything the school should change about how it looks after children. Parents feel that the best things about the school are the commitment and professionalism of all staff, the friendly, caring and supportive ethos of the school and the way in which children and young people are individually encouraged and enabled to reach their potential in an environment that understands and supports their particular special needs. They also feel that allowing their child to attend the school on a residential basis was a good decision and that the school offers a good range of activities and social opportunities to students. Parents who live long distances from the school are also very appreciative of the fact that the school provides accommodation for them free of charge. Parents also commented on how welcoming everyone at the school is when they visit and how much they are made to feel at home and part of the school.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

There are six staff who are deaf employed at the school but none on the care teams. A view was expressed to the inspector that it would be beneficial to students to have more deaf adults employed at the school as role models and there is a gap in this in the residential sector

The school should consider how more input from students can be incorporated into the programme to update and improve the boarding accommodation. The lighting along the pathway used by students moving from Kettlewell to Olding at night should be improved as discussed with the principal.

The school should ensure that all children's records are signed by the member of staff making the entry.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

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

The staff team are committed and dedicated to providing a specialist centre of excellence in education and care for deaf children and young people. The principal and senior management team provide strong support and guidance to staff and students. The school has an open and friendly ethos. The service provided by the school is very much valued by the children and young people attending the school and their families. The standard of care and commitment to meeting the students' needs in an individualised way is commendable. All staff work well together to ensure that individual needs are met.

Although most students would say that living away from home is not their ideal choice, they can see the benefit that attending the school has for them both educationally and socially and in providing them with wider contact with a group of their peers.

The inspectors would like to thank the young people, the staff and the principal for their warm welcome, co-operation and assistance during the inspection.

NOTI	FICATIONS	TO LOCAL EDU	UCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY C	F STATE
by th Auth	ne National pority or Dep	Care Standards partment for Edu	safeguard and promote welfare to be mad Commission to the Local Education ucation and Skills under section 87(4) of t this inspection?	NO
	fication to b		Local Education Authority Secretary of State	NO NO
The	grounds foi	any Notification	n to be made are:	
IMPL	EMENTATION NECESTRAL	ON OF RECOMM	MENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECT	ION
Rec	commended	Actions from the	last Inspection visit fully implemented?	YES
		gs of this inspec e listed below:	ction on any Recommended Actions not	120
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 action and any advisory recommendations are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

No	Standard*	Recommended Action	

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.

4		-
No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	RSS4	The school should ensure that children and their parents are told how they can make a complaint directly to the National Care Standards Commission (or the Commission for Social Care Inspection for 01/04/04).
2	RSS10	The school should ensure that a record of all sanctions applied is kept in a bound and numbered book which contains a list of permitted sanctions. Entries should include the information listed in National Minimum Standard 10.9.
3	RSS18	The school should ensure that written entries on a child's file have the name of the signatory clearly identified.

4 RSS 19	The school should ensure that for each child resident, a register showing the information detailed in NMS 19.2 is kept and that the records detailed in Standard 19 are retained for at least five years from the date of the last entry.
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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

Direct Observation

INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS

YES

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

Direct Observation	ILO
Pupil Guided Tour of Accommodation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	
Checks with other Organisations	
 Social Services 	YES
Fire Service	NO
 Environmental Health 	YES
• DfES	NO
School Doctor	NO
 Independent Person 	NO
 Chair of Governors 	YES
Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	NA
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO
Date of Inspection	23/09/03
Time of Inspection	10:00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	7.5

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	9	То	18+	
NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIM	E OF INS	PECTIO	ON:		
BOYS		32			
GIRLS		19			
TOTAL		51			
Number of separate Boarding Ho	uses	3			

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

The scale ranges from:

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

[&]quot;0" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

[&]quot;9" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not applicable.

[&]quot;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?

3

The school has a written Statement of Purpose that describes what the school sets out to do for those children it accommodates and the manner in which care is provided. The statement is made up of a range of documents, for example, the school prospectus and mission statement, annual reports and information supplied to the children and young people, their parents/carers and staff.

The range of needs to be met under the statement of purpose are capable of being fulfilled by the school as it currently operates and the school only admits children and young people whose assessed needs can be met within the purpose of the school.

12 staff survey questionnaire forms were returned – these and discussions with staff show that staff are aware of and understand the purpose of the school and believe that the school achieves its aims well.

22 parents responded to the parent questionnaire survey. All agreed that the school had given them a leaflet or some other written information telling them what they need to know about the school.

The prospectus and other documentation are currently being reviewed. The school provides a comprehensive range of information and intends to improve in this area by reviewing the information provided more regularly, improving the presentation and producing new printed materials.

Evidence: school prospectus; student handbook; staff handbook; parents' leaflet; annual reports; pre-inspection questionnaire; separate discussions with the principal, the head of care and staff; head's self-assessment form; questionnaire survey responses.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 2 (2.1 - 2.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

In the parent questionnaire survey, 95% agreed that the staff ask for their opinion before making any big decisions about their child and the remainder made no comment about this. 64% of parents agreed that they had been asked about how they think their child should be cared for in the school. 23% disagreed and 13% did not comment about this.

Parents feel that the school maintains good contact with them through the home-school book system, telephone and letter contact and reviews.

Students' opinions and views are sought through individual tutor and keyworker sessions, reviews, group meetings and the school's council meetings.

Students confirmed that they can approach any member of staff about issues or concerns, not just their tutor or keyworker. The principal and deputy principal are very available to students and ready to listen to their opinions and views.

Staff receive training on the Total Communication approach of using voice and sign together, used by the school, and are expected to attend weekly classes in BSL (British Sign Language) and/or Signed English and to undertake accredited exams to ensure they can communicate with and understand and be understood by the students.

The school intends to improve in this area by being more responsive to what the young people have to say.

Evidence: observation; questionnaire survey responses; head's self-assessment form; schools council meeting minutes and responses; group discussions with students.

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?

There is practice guidance on privacy and confidentiality in the staff handbook.

Discussion with staff and questionnaire survey responses show that staff are aware that privacy and confidentiality must be respected. Staff knock on doors or use the lights to alert a student that they wish to enter their bedroom and wait for a response before entering.

Students in F.E. College have keys to their bedrooms.

Bathroom and toilet facilities have internal locks.

Parents confirmed that they could see their child in private if they wish.

Evidence: tour of premises; discussions with students; discussions with staff; questionnaire survey responses; staff handbook.

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?

64% of parents who responded to the questionnaire survey said that the school had given them a leaflet or some other written information about how they can make a complaint if they need to. 18% disagreed with this and a further 18% made no comment or didn't know if they had received written information about making a complaint. 41% of parents said that they had been told how they could make a complaint to a National Care Standards Commission inspector if they need to but 50% disagreed with this. 9% made no comment about this. 91% of the parents who responded to the parent questionnaire survey said that they had never had to make a complaint about the school. The two parents who said they had made a complaint said that it had been resolved satisfactorily.

In discussion and staff questionnaire survey responses, staff confirmed that they are aware of the complaints policy and how to deal with complaints.

Discussions with students confirmed that they are aware of how to make a complaint within the school.

However, children and their parents should be told how they can make a complaint directly to the Commission – a recommendation has been made regarding this.

Evidence: survey questionnaire responses; discussions with staff; discussions with students.

Number of complaints about care at the school recorded over last 12 months:	0
Number of above complaints substantiated:	X
Number of complaints received by NCSC about the school over last 12 months:	0
Number of above complaints substantiated:	X

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?

3

Discussion with staff and questionnaire survey responses confirm that staff are aware of the school's child protection policy and procedures.

All staff are made aware of their responsibility to protect the students through yearly refresher training on child protection led by the principal.

The principal attends area child protection education sub-group meetings.

The principal stated that the local Social Services Department has approved the school's child protection policy and procedures.

The school aims to improve coordinator training in respect of child protection.

Evidence: questionnaire survey responses; discussions with staff; head's self-assessment form; pre-inspection questionnaire.

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

0

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Discussion with staff and staff questionnaire survey responses confirmed that staff are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy and would take any reports of bullying from the students seriously.

The school uses assemblies, tutorials, keyworker sessions and group role play sessions to raise awareness of bullying issues and strategies for dealing with bullying behaviour. Students did not raise bullying as an issue during meetings with the inspectors.

The school aims to improve in raising awareness of bullying issues, focussing on reducing incidents of bullying and including the risk of bullying and behaviour management strategies in risk assessments. The policy is being reviewed.

Evidence: head's self-assessment form; discussions with staff and students; questionnaire survey responses; policies and procedures.

Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied

X %

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

All parents who replied to the questionnaire survey agreed that staff are good at letting them know about things that happen with their child.

The principal is aware of the school should notify promptly the National Care Standards Commission of events detailed in NMS 7.2 and 7.6.

No notifications have been made.

In the event of an incident, staff would contact the senior on call.

Incidents are recorded on incident reports.

Evidence: questionnaire survey responses; pre-inspection questionnaire; discussion with principal; discussions with staff,

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

- conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children
- consumers, member of countries and another state of the s

serious harm to a child

0

serious illness or accident of a child

0

serious incident requiring police to be called

0

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)

The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The school has a procedure to follow in the event of a student being absent without authority. Parents/carers and the police would be informed.

The principal stated that students rarely leave the school site or fail to return without authority.

Evidence: head's self-assessment form; pre-inspection questionnaire; policies and procedures.

Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:

0

CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

The parents' questionnaire survey responses showed that parents feel that all staff are very supportive and caring in their relationships with the children and young people and that their child is thriving and making good progress at the school, socially as well as educationally. The inspectors observed that all staff related to the children and young people in a calm, caring and professional manner, taking time and care to listen to and understand what the children and young people wanted to say. The inspectors observed that the children and young people were happy, relaxed and relating well and easily to staff and one another. Staff encouraged children and young people to be inclusive and respectful to one another. The school aims to foster an open and nurturing environment throughout the school where everyone, staff and students, are respected as individuals, valued and included. Excellent communication and partnership with parents is maintained.

Evidence: observation; discussions with young people; discussions with the principal, senior managers and staff; questionnaire survey responses.

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

A sanction book/log is maintained. There is no evidence of any inappropriate sanction. The record does not accord with NMS 10.9 in that it is kept in a loose leaf folder not a hard bound and numbered book; no detail of location of incident, or name of staff imposing the sanction or other staff present; no signature on entries for Kettlewell and Olding. F.E. do have staff signatures.

Staff reward desired behaviour by praise, rewards and special mention at assembly. A range of sanctions may be used, for example, missing an activity, time out in room, being "grounded" or restriction of time off-site (for students aged over 14 years) or early bedtime. Young people said they thought that staff were fair when they imposed sanctions. Discussion with staff and questionnaire survey responses showed that staff are aware of the school's policies on behaviour and discipline and physical management of pupils and most, except recently appointed staff, have received training in specific behaviour management techniques, for example, Team Teach.

A sample of incident reports were read. Restraints are also recorded on incident logs with a central log kept by deputy head. A record of all school exclusions is also maintained. 19 of the 22 parents who replied to the questionnaire survey agreed that the school had told them about its rules. Two said that they had not been told and one did not comment. The majority of parents thought that the rules were "ok" or "fair". Most parents agreed that the school had told them about what punishments it uses and were in agreement with the school's policy on behaviour management. A number of parents said that they were pleased that staff consulted them about behavioural issues and discussed proposed sanctions with them before any were applied.

The school intends to improve practice in this area by introducing/improving individual behaviour plans. Also policy and practice are being reviewed in the light of recent training.

Evidence: head's self-assessment form; discussions with deputy principal and other staff; questionnaire survey responses; sanctions and restraints records; policies and procedures; discussions with students.

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?

3

The school has an admission process which includes an assessment of the young person's needs to ensure that the school can meet their needs. The young person and their parents have an opportunity to visit the school and the residential accommodation before admission. Each young person has an appointed key worker and this is decided on an individual basis, to suit the young person.

As a young person transfers from the main school to the F.E. college or to another school or leaving the school, a transition plan is drawn up.

The young people were aware of these plans and confirmed that they had been involved in the planning process.

The school liaises with other agencies, particularly the Connexions advisors in the student's home area and with social workers and other professionals for young people leaving care. Young people are supported by the school in visiting future placements and staff from future placements are encouraged to visit the young person at the school to exchange information and develop relationships to ensure a smooth transfer is effected.

Evidence: discussions with staff; policies and procedures; discussions with young people.

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 deputy principal is responsible for providing liaison between education and care staff. He meets with the head of care or her deputy every day for a handover meeting and exchange of information. He then has a briefing meeting with teaching staff but care staff also go directly to form tutors to pass on information or discuss any issues or areas of concern. The deputy principal ensures that care staff are briefed at the end of the school day about students needs and behaviour where necessary.

The school intends to improve in this area by developing closer links between the school and care staff teams.

Evidence: head's self-assessment form, discussion with senior managers; discussions with staff; observation.

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

Students are provided with the opportunity to undertake a range of activities on and off the school site. On-site activities include swimming, football, arts and crafts, cookery, indoor games, tv and videos.

Off-site activities include cinema, theatre, museum and art gallery trips, outdoor pursuits - for example, canoeing and sailing, attending football matches, bowling, walking, outings to the beach, local parks or shops and restaurants, youth and football clubs or deaf club.

Some parents commented that the activities available to their child are one of the best things about the school.

Students have a choice of a range of activities on offer each evening.

Evidence: survey questionnaire responses; head' self-assessment questionnaire; pre-inspection questionnaire; observation; discussions with young people; discussions with 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

Health needs are well catered for. A local GP visits the school for consultations every Tuesday. Students can also attend a local GP surgery for consultation as required. A community nurse also visits the school as required.

The school employs an audiologist and speech and language therapist. Occupational and physiotherapist and other specialist provide a visiting service to the school.

Most students' dental needs are attended to during school holidays or on home visits. Appointments at a local dental clinic are made on parental request.

Staff confirmed that they have received training on first aid and also on a range of medical/health needs – for example, diabetes and epilepsy.

Medications are stored in locked cabinets within locked rooms. Records of medications administered are kept with the date, time and dosage recorded and signed by the staff who have administered the medication.

The school has recently produced new guidance for staff on providing personal care to students. Staff also have a health advice booklet giving advice about particular health issues relating to current students.

The school intends to improve in this area by reviewing a number of systems in relation to the transfer of information and dispensing of medication.

Evidence: head's self-assessment form; discussion with deputy principal; pre-inspection questionnaire; observation; staff questionnaire survey responses.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The four-week basic menu planning evolves according to the students' likes and dislikes. Catering staff take note of students' comments about particular items and assess popularity of menu items by the amount eaten/wasted and incorporate these findings into the next four weekly cycle of planning.

Fresh fruit and a salad option are available each day.

Catering staff are provided with information about individual dietary requirements so that appropriate dietary needs can be catered for. A range of dietary needs is currently catered for, for example, vegetarian options or soya produce are made available.

Students are involved in taster sessions to inform purchasing choices.

The inspectors shared meals with the students in the dining room. Meals are a social occasion with staff and students sitting and eating together in groups. The food was appetising and well presented with sufficient quantity for students to have a second helping if they chose.

Evidence: discussion with domestic bursar and catering staff; discussions with students; meals taken with students; menus.

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

Students can exercise their own preferences in the choice of clothing outside of school time. Staff provide assistance in purchasing personal requisites either as part of a group outing or on an individual basis where required. Staff assist students to purchase clothing at parents' request.

The school will assist with the purchase of clothing and/or personal requisites where necessary.

The school has laundry facilities on site and there are individual washing machines and dryers available for students' use (mainly post 16).

Bedding is laundered off-site. Main school children and young people usually take personal washing home at weekends.

Evidence: tour of premises; observation; pre-inspection questionnaire; discussion with students; discussion with staff.

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?

3

Of the 22 parents who responded to the questionnaire survey, 21 ticked the response "the staff are great" to the question "how well do you think the school is caring for your child?" The remaining one parent ticked " quite well". Parents confirmed that they attend reviews and meetings and that they are listened to.

Three central files were examined on 03/10/03. Placement plans were seen to be available on the files. Annual reviews had been undertaken and parents had been sent a copy of the review minutes. The young person and their parents attended the reviews. The young person's views were included.

Staff confirmed to the inspectors that they are aware of the placement plans.

The school intends to improve in this area by developing more detailed plans regarding targets for individual pupils. It is intended that the new head of care will review the information, plans and targets in respect of individual students.

Evidence: pre-inspection questionnaire; head's self-assessment form; file tracking; discussions with the principal and other staff; questionnaire survey responses.

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

The inspector checked a sample of seven young people's files. The head of care explained that the files she had made available for inspection were the care files. Each care file contained a front information sheet. Daily events are not signed by the author. The central files held by the school on each young person are held in the main admin office. Three of these central files were checked. The inspector judged that the files contained the information required in NMS 18.2.

Evidence: file tracking; discussion with the head of care.

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?

2

A register of children is kept in class. No central register holding the information detailed in NMS19.2 is kept.

A staff list is maintained.

A diary of events, accident logs and a record of visitors are maintained.

Evidence: record checks.

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

Parent survey questionnaire responses indicated that parents feel that staff keep them well informed about what is happening with their child at the school and that they can phone or visit their child at the school when they wish.

Parents said that all staff make them feel welcome and part of the school when they visit, by offering good hospitality, spending time with them and listening to what they have to say and involving them in classroom and other activities and meals. Parents who live long distances from the school appreciate that the school encourages family visits by providing accommodation free of charge to parents and other family members.

Students can use their own mobile phones if they wish.

Evidence: head's self-assessment form; survey questionnaire responses; interview with deputy principal.

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

There are currently no students at the school to whom this standard applies.

The school maintains good contact with parents and other agencies in preparing students who are leaving the school.

Evidence: discussion with the principal and head of care; pre-inspection questionnaire.

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?

3

Children and young people are given a high level of individual support.

Students the inspectors met with during the inspection confirmed they felt listened to and were able to ask staff when they felt they needed support.

A key worker system is operated on the residential side and each young person has an individual tutor. Liaison between these groups of staff is good.

Each young person has an annual review and a personal plan. Additional professional support is provided where there is a need identified in the care plan or annual review. One student was facilitated by the school in contacting and attending a local mosque. This student was also provided with support by the school in reading and accessing the Koran on an individual basis.

The local Christian chaplain for the deaf holds Confirmation sessions at the school for a group of students.

Evidence: discussions with young people; discussions with staff; observation; pre-inspection questionnaire.

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

The school is located close to city centre and local sports, leisure and other amenities. The school has spacious grounds and good outdoor facilities.

The structure of buildings was not purpose built for the current range of physical disabilities some of the students now have but students with disabilities have all the necessary access to all parts of the building and site they need to use.

The school has a maintenance and repair plan to upgrade and modernise some of the older buildings.

The open campus, next to a main road presents something of a security issue but there are systems in place to ensure the safety of students and staff and staff are reminded to remain alert and report any person on the site who is not wearing a school security pass. The inspector discussed with the principal the need for improved lighting at night where the shrubs and bushes overshadow the path taken by students from Kettlewell to Olding. The principal stated that this issue would be addressed urgently.

Evidence: tour of the premises; discussion with managers and staff; discussions with students; observation.

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

There are three residential areas within the school – Olding and Kettlewell for main school children and the residential blocks in the Further Education College for post 16 students. Students have their own bedrooms with hand basin. Groups are divided according to gender and age. The boarding accommodation is generally well maintained and decorated to an acceptable standard. Young people are able to personalise their bedrooms, if they wish. Accommodation is spacious with a good range of facilities. The accommodation has been adjusted to suit the needs of current students.

Windows and doors were being replaced in Kettlewell during the course of the inspection. The school intends to replace/update certain furniture and fittings as funds allow and improve on security.

Evidence: tour of the premises; discussion with managers and staff; discussion with students; pre-inspection questionnaire.

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?

3

There are sufficient baths, showers and toilets for both young people and staff. Students in Kettlewell complained that the hot water sometimes took a long time to come through to their wash basins.

Students did not raise privacy in the bathing and toilet facilities as an issue with the inspectors in discussions.

Evidence: tour of premises; discussions with students; discussions with staff.

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?

3

Letter received from Exeter City Council Environmental Health Officer confirming that there are no outstanding food safety requirements for the school.

Fire precautions log book seen – checks are made on fire alarm system and other fire safety equipment and a record of fire drills is kept. The principal reviews and signs the records.

A full test and inspection of electrical installations and equipment was undertaken in October 2001. Gas installations are serviced annually.

A health and safety audit is due to be undertaken in two week's time.

Staff have received in-house training on risk management. A system for reporting "near misses" is now in place.

On-site and off-site individual risk assessments and activities risk assessments are undertaken – evidenced by inspection of records and individual and group discussion with staff.

There are written guidelines for the use of school transport and the inspector was informed that, when pupils and students are on board, only Devon County Council approved drivers are allowed to drive the school's mini-buses.

Evidence: interview with domestic bursar; fire precautions records; accident records; interview with staff responsible for health and safety; risk management briefing notes.

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?

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Vacancies are advertised in the local and national press, Devon bulletin and at the Job Centre. Applicants complete a letter of application accompanied by a c.v. Short listed candidates visit the school and undertake a formal interview. References and checks are undertaken – CRB check, two written references, medical check, proof of qualifications – for the successful candidate. Appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of probationary period.

The school is in process of ensuring that a CRB check has been undertaken for all existing as well as newly appointed staff.

CRB checks are undertaken on volunteers.

Staff checks confirmed the process undertaken with new staff. Three staff personnel files were checked. The inspector discussed the staff files and interview procedures with the principal. Interview notes are completed but shredded when an appointment is made. Unsuccessful candidates are offered debriefing after interview. Any gaps in employment history are discussed at the interview.

Evidence: discussions with the principal and other staff; pre-inspection questionnaire; staff file checks.

Total number of care staff:	10	Number of care staff who left in	1		
	Total number of care stail.	12	last 12 months:	4	l

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

18 of the 22 parents who responded to the questionnaire survey agreed that they thought there was enough staff at the school to care for their child. 1disagreed, 1 said they didn't know and 2 made not response.

Agency staff are not used.

Members of staff sleep-in in all residential areas. The principal or deputy principal or head of care provide on-call support to staff in the evenings and at weekends.

Staffing levels during the inspection visit were observed to be adequate and in discussion, care staff said that staffing levels are adequate in general. The principal recently agreed to an increase in staffing levels after staff assessed this as necessary to meet the needs of a new student.

Evidence: pre-inspection questionnaire; questionnaire survey responses; staffing rota; discussion with head of care; discussions with staff.

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?

3

Staff are provided with and offered a good range of training opportunities.

In discussions and the staff questionnaire survey responses, staff confirmed that they are provided with in-service and professional training – for example, induction training, British Sign Language (BSL), risk assessment training, Team Teach, NVQ Level 3 in Caring for children and young people and assessors training.

Staff said that regular staff meetings and the staff handbook were also helpful in providing them with required information.

Evidence: survey questionnaire responses; discussions with staff

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?

3

Staff questionnaire survey responses indicate that staff feel well supported. Staff feel that the induction and on-going training opportunities, peer support and senior management "open door" policy are the most supportive aspects of the school for staff.

Staff questionnaire survey responses confirmed that staff are familiar with the school's written policies and procedures. They are made available to staff through the staff handbook and staff made aware of any changes/updates through meetings and memos. Care staff confirmed that they receive 1:1 supervision.

Evidence: staff questionnaire survey responses; policies and procedures; discussions with staff and head of care.

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

Five care staff hold NVQ Level 3 in caring for children and young people and two members of the care staff team will be undertaking this training.

Head of care holds a degree in social work and community studies.

Parents overwhelmingly agreed that staff do a good job of caring for their child and that the school is well organised, managed and staffed. Many said that they felt that the staff were excellent and should be commended for the high standard of care and education that is provided.

There are clear management structures within the school. The senior management team meet regularly, as do the care team and other professional staff groups.

The senior management team, led by the principal provides very clear and committed leadership to the staff.

All staff were aware of on-call senior manager arrangements out of office hours.

The school intends to improve on the supervision and appraisal arrangements for staff other than teachers.

Evidence: pre-inspection questionnaire; discussion with head of care and staff; questionnaire survey responses.

Percentage of care staff with relevant NVQ or equivalent child care		0/	
qualification:	50	%	

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

There are systems of delegated power in place to ensure such notification and structures are in place to fully meet the standard.

Senior members of staff, delegated by the principal to do so, monitor records to identify any patterns or issues requiring action, for example, records are kept of accidents and near misses involving students and members of staff. The principal and senior management check the records to identify any particular patterns or problem areas for which a particular risk management strategy might be needed.

The principal reports to the governing body on the overall monitoring of the management of the school.

Evidence: discussions with the principal and senior managers; pre-inspection questionnaire; record checks.

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 Rev G. Behenna, accompanied by one of the school governors, undertakes the Standard 33 visits to the school. The accompanying school governor is appointed on a rota basis.

Visits are made half-termly but are not fully unannounced. The principal and head of care have prior knowledge of the visits.

The school intends to improve on the formal recording of the routine monitoring undertaken.

Evidence: pre-inspection questionnaire; head's self-assessment form.

PART C	LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY			
(where applicable)				
Lay Assessor	Signature			
Date				

PART D

HEAD'S RESPONSE

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

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 23rd September 2003 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

HEAD'S RESPONSE TO NATIONAL CARE STANDARDS COMMISSION REPORT ON INSPECTION OF BOARDING WELFARE, 23 – 26 SEPTEMBER 2003

I was very pleased to receive what I regard as a fair and accurate report following the inspection of the school in September 2003.

The fact that there is no Recommended Action reflects well on the school. An Action Plan taking into account of the Advisory Recommendations made is attached. Other points raised within the report will be considered in developing future policy and practice.

Finally I would take the opportunity to inform you that immediately after the inspection the bound sanction books were introduced and improvements made to the external lighting by the swimming pool.

John	F	SI	าลพ	
Princ	ip	al		

Action taken by the NCSC 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 beer incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate	NO
Note: In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector are both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.	nd the Head
 D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 27th which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recomme are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. T kept on file and made available on request. Status of the Head's Action Plan at time of publication of the final inspect 	ndations his will be
Action plan was required	
	YES
Action plan was received at the point of publication	YES
Action plan was received at the point of publication Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion	
	YES
Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further	YES

	Head's statement of agreement/comments: Please complete the relevant section that applies.			
D.3.1	confirm that the conte of the facts relating to	of The Royal School for the Deaf that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation acts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that with the recommended actions made and will seek to comply with		
	Print Name			
	Signature			
	Designation			
	Date			
Or				
D.3.2	am unable to confirm representation of the f	of The Royal School for the Deaf le to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate tation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above or the following reasons:		
	Print Name			

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.

Signature

Date

Designation

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT