



Champions for
Social Care
Improvement

inspection report

Boarding School

Wycliffe College Junior School

Ryeford Hall

Stonehouse

Gloucestershire

GL10 2LD

19th May 2003 & 21st January 2004

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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

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

The role of CSCI is to:

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

Inspection Methods & Findings

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

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION**Name of School**

Wycliffe Preparatory School

Address

Ryeford Hall, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 2LD

Tel No:

01453 820470

Fax No:**Email Address****Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school**

The Governors of Preparatory School

Name of Head

Mr Ken Melber May 2003); Mr Adrian Palmer (January 2004)

NCSC Classification

BS

Type of school

Boarding School

Date of last boarding welfare inspection

22/06/99

Date of Inspection Visit		19th May 2003 & 21 st January 2004		ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am		
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Ms Barbara Davies	086956	
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	Mr Ian Godfrey		
Name of NCSC Inspector	3			
Name of NCSC Inspector	4			
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):		N/A		
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.		N/A		
Was this inspection conducted alongside an ISI or OfSTED inspection as part of a Joint Whole School Inspection?				NO
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Mr Ken Melber (May 2003) & Mr Adrian Palmer (January 2004)		

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Boarding 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 Boarding Schools, published by the Secretary of State under Section 87C of the Children Act 1989, and other relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 as amended.

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

This document summarises the inspection findings of the NCSC in respect of Wycliffe College Junior School.

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

The report will show the following:

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

INSPECTION VISITS

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

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

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

Wycliffe College Junior School is close to the small town of Stonehouse in Gloucestershire. It currently offers boarding accommodation to both boys and girls on a flexi, weekly or full-time basis. Boarders live in one of two houses. Penwood is the boys boarding house, while Windrush accommodates the girls. The boarding houses overlook the school's playing fields. The main school premises are situated on the opposite side of the Old Stroud Road with access from the boarding houses via a footbridge.

The school has strong links with Wycliffe College (Senior) School and some functions e.g. the bursary are shared.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

- Written information distributed to parents of children as they enter the school describing the school's practice and some of the policies and procedures
- The school had published a policy on countering bullying and all staff were familiar with its contents
- Effectively manage the behaviour of boarders with minimum use of sanctions
- A record of sanctions administered maintained in each boarding house
- Appointed a full-time housemother to attend to the needs of boarders
- The daily routine was well structured to include academic, recreation and free-time needs of boarders
- Extensive support systems for boarders identified within the school
- Regular forums for the exchange of information between boarding staff and teaching staff
- Medical facilities available to children if ill or in need of first aid
- Boarding houses equipped with facilities that allow children to prepare drinks and snacks
- Completion of detailed risk assessments in relation to the school's premises and grounds and in advance of school trips
- Supervision of boarders during school trips
- Clear policy that gap students are not left to supervise pupils without another staff member being contactable
- Night time supervision of boarders conformed to standards
- Staff handbook published containing written guidance for staff on school's policies
- Discreet supervision of boarders to promote privacy
- Refurbishment of dormitories in penwood
- Security of boarding houses
- Boarding house staff facilitate contact between boarders and their parents
- Provision in each boarding house for boarders to make and receive telephone calls in

private

- Boarding house staff maintain regular communication with parents of boarders
- Attending to the laundry needs of boarders
- Visit to off-site accommodation to be used by the school for trips

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

- Information forwarded to parents should be amended to include the aims and organisation of boarding, the admission criteria, the facilities and welfare support available to boarders
- Revisions to the Child Protection Policy
- The school's policy on rewards and sanctions should be amended to include a description of the measures that may be used by staff in the boarding houses, describe the sanctions that staff are not permitted to use and a statement on the use of physical restraint
- Distribute information to boarders describing the school's use of sanctions and restraint
- Additional staffing resources being available to children at night
- Amendments required to staff handbook to ensure the contents correlate with standards
- Ensure recruitment procedures conform fully to the National Minimum Standards
- Written agreements to be introduced between the school and any adult not employed by the school but living in boarding accommodation specifying the terms and conditions of their accommodation and describing their role.
- Continued attention to furnishings and décor in Windrush dormitories.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This school has been inspected for the first time against National Minimum Standards introduced from 1st April 2002. As a result, this report may contain a substantial number of recommendations. If so the number of these should fall significantly at the next inspection when the provider will have had time to take account of the new legislation and standards and to take action to meet them.

Due to operational difficulties there was a significant delay in submission of the report of the visit in May 2003. The school made representation to the NCSC local office on the basis that the original report was inaccurate in several respects and did not give a true reflection of current boarding practice within the school particularly taking into account changes since the summer term. Following the representations the NCSC agreed to conduct a further visit in January 2004 to re-assess the areas felt to be inaccurate. This report thus combines the findings of both visits.

Welfare Policies and Procedures

3 of the 7 standards inspected was met

The failure of the school to fully satisfy this set of standards was as a result of minor amendments required to policy and procedural documentation and that the full range of information specified in standards was not available to parents and children. Staff were well acquainted with the contents of the policies in existence and of the action that should be taken in given circumstances. In-set days were used as a forum to provide training in these matters

Organisation and Management

5 of the 7 standards inspected were met

Although regular informal visits to the boarding house were reported as being made, there was no formal system for the recording of these. There was a need for an identified person within the school to have designated responsibility for the management and leadership and development of boarding in the school.

Boarders were appropriately allocated to boarding houses by gender and to dormitories by age with each boarder being able to identify at least one staff member from whom they could seek advice and support. Action is required to ensure that the facilities in the girls dormitories equate to that in the boys. The recently implemented boarders forums should allow the boarders to feel as though they have a greater say in the development of boarding practice.

Welfare Support to Boarders

11 of the 13 standards inspected were met

Appropriate medical and first aid support was available to boarders. Procedural documentation was required for staff advising on the administration of non-prescription household remedies'. Arrangements to attend to ill boarders were satisfactory in the school environment and in the boarding houses. Appropriate arrangements were in place to allow boarders to contact parents in private. Houseparents supported children and parents to

maintain contact where difficulties were reported.

The school has appropriate provision for boarders to secure valuables and possessions though could clarify who has the responsibility for the provision of padlocks. There was a process for inducting new boarders but written information for boarders describing the boarding practice in each of the houses would be beneficial.

Risk assessments and record of accidents, were reviewed by the school's team of health and safety officers. There was evidence that these records had been subject to review by the team. Other school's records should contain evidence that they have been monitored by the Head or a senior member of school staff and contain details of any action taken . Boarders were provided with a healthy, nutritious diet but consideration should be given as to how boarders can influence the menus.

Fire drills and tests of alarms were conducted regularly and the Fire Safety Officer confirmed that the school complies with specific fire safety checks.

Staffing

6 of the 9 standards inspected were met

The school's practice in this set of standards required only minor amendments to fully comply with standards. A recruitment checklist provided the procedures for recruiting staff and demonstrated that with a few exceptions they mostly correlated with the practice stated in standards. An examination of a sample of staff files demonstrated that in most cases staff are recruited a term in advance of taking up post allowing the range of checks to be completed , including checks with the Criminal Records Bureau. Staffing of the boarding houses has been reviewed and necessary adjustments made. Appropriate arrangements were in place for boarders to be supervised at night.

Arrangements were in place for boarders to be appropriately supervised when away from the school but there is a need for a school policy to be published on the safety and supervision of boarders during journeys and covering school transport, use of private vehicles and school use of public transport.

All staff interviewed were aware of their specific roles and responsibilities and written guidance was provided describing the school's practice. Practice could be enhanced by staff involved in boarding receiving more formal supervision and appraisal of their performance.

Premises

8 the 12 standards inspected were met

Appropriate measures were in place to ensure that the areas of the school premises to which children had access were safe. The school was proactive in completing risk assessments for the buildings and grounds. Failure to fully satisfy this set of standards is largely due the refurbishment that is necessary to the changing rooms on the lower ground floor in Penwood and because of the poor decorative condition of some of the dormitories and furnishings in Windrush. Action was also required to ensure that in Windrush, the amount of space available to boarders in dormitories is sufficient to satisfy standards and that there is a sufficient ratio of toilets to boarders.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

[illegible]

NO

No	Standard*	Recommended Actions	
2	BS1	Make the necessary additions to the Penwood handbook as outlined in the report	31/03/02

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 Boarding Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.

No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
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1	BS1	Amendments should be made to the 'Wycliffe Joining Information' or the Statement of boarding Practice to include the detail specified in standards and to accurately describe the current boarding practice of the school. This information should be routinely made available to parents and children.	31/03/04
2	BS3	<p>The school's child protection policy should be amended to include the following detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The requirement for the referral of allegations or suspicions of abuse, to the local social services department, to carry out child protection investigations rather than internal investigations by the school within 24 hours and for referrals made by telephone to be followed up in writing. • A consideration of the measures that may be necessary to protect individual boarders • Information that staff can refer any concern or allegation about the practices or behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm, directly to the National Care Standards Commission, • Reference to the application of the whistleblowing policy • The action to be taken should the alleged perpetrator be a fellow pupil 	31/03/04
3	BS3	The policy concerning pupils missing from the school should be included in the staff handbook.	31/03/04
4	BS4	<p>The school's policy on behaviour and discipline should be amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include details of the disciplinary measures that may be used by staff within the boarding houses • Include a statement on the use of physical restraint 	31/03/04
5	BS5	Parents should be informed about contact details for the NCSC in the event that they may wish to make a complaint about boarding welfare.	31/03/04
6	BS15	A written protocol should be published on the provision of non-prescription 'household medicines' to boarders.	31/03/04
7	BS22	The school should conduct an audit, of its procedures for recruiting guardians, to determine whether the current practice is in line with that stated in the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools	31/03/04

8	BS32	A policy should be published in relation to the safety and supervision of boarders during journeys, covering school transport, use of private vehicles and school use of public transport.	31/03/04
9	BS35	<p>The school should complete a written agreement with any adult not employed by the school but living in the same building as boarding accommodation that specifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The terms of their accommodation • Guidance on contact with boarders • Their responsibilities to supervise their visitors • That their accommodation may be terminated if there is any evidence that they are unsuitable to have regular contact with children • The requirement to notify an unrelated designated senior member of staff, if they are charged with, or convicted of any criminal offence. 	31/03/04
10	BS38	The school should audit its existing recruitment procedures against the standards to identify shortfalls.	31/03/04
11	BS44	Improvements should be made to the other toilet and shower provision in each boarding house to improve privacy for boarders using these facilities.	1/09/04

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

Identified below are advisory recommendations on welfare matters addressed in the main body of the report and based on the National Minimum Standards, made for consideration by the school.

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1		The school is advised to provide boarding specific information in age appropriate formats
2		The school is advised to place the guidance on countering major risks to health, including substance misuse, in the staff handbook
3	BS8	The school is advised to complete its review and appoint a member of the management team as head of boarding
4		The school is advised to provide information for boarders on the role and responsibility of monitors
6	BS15	The school is advised that medication and first aid administered in the boarding house should be kept in a record dedicated to that purpose.
7	BS20	The school is advised to clarify who is responsible for providing padlocks for lockable furniture
8		The school is advised to implement a system which allows children to sign for money and valuables held for safekeeping they receive from the school
9	BS21	The school is advised to provide Written information in age appropriate style that provides boarders with information about the rules of the boarding house and other key aspects of boarding provision, such as the complaints procedure, disciplinary process, accommodation provision.
10		The school is advised to implement a system of formal supervision and appraisal for all boarding house staff
11	BS40	The school is advised to take steps to ensure that the ratio of female boarders to w.c's does not exceed that specified in standards, in addition to which the decorative appearance of the bathrooms in each of the boarding houses should be improved
12	BS42	The school is advised to consider further decoration & refurbishment of dormitories in Windrush.

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

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS**

The following Inspection Methods have been used in the production of this report.

Direct Observation	YES
Pupil guided tour of accommodation	YES
Pupil guided tour of Recreational Areas	YES
Checks with other Organisations and Individuals	
• Social Services	NO
• Fire Service	NO
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person or Counsellor	NO
• Chair of Governors	NO
'Tracking' individual welfare arrangements	YES
Group discussion with boarders	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Group discussion with ancillary staff	YES
Group discussion with Gap students	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Boarders' survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Invitation to parents to comment	YES
Inspection of policy / practice documents	YES
Inspection of Records	YES
Visit to Sanatorium	YES
Visits to lodgings	NO
Individual interviews with pupil(s)	NO
Date of Inspection	19/05/03
Time of Inspection	11:00
Duration of Inspection (hrs.)	40
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	3

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

School information:

Age Range of Boarding Pupils **From**

7

To

13

Number of Boarders (full time + weekly) at time of inspection:

Boys

25

Girls

15

Total

40

Number of separate Boarding Houses

2

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 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

WELFARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.4)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

Parents of children attending the school were provided with a copy of the school's prospectus which has now been updated to reflect the changes in the school. A copy of the document 'Wycliffe Junior School Joining information' is also provided. The latter document contains details of the schools overall facilities but lacks more specific detail about the boarding provision, its organisation and admission criteria.

The aims and objectives of boarding were detailed in a separate Statement of Boarding Principals but this was not routinely made available to parents and children.

In addition, the inspectors were informed that a draft boarding house handbook was in the process of release and the inspectors would urge completion of this work.

The 'Wycliffe Junior school Joining information' contained substantial information about the schools policies, procedures and practice, including details of the school's anti-bullying procedure.

There was no date on which either the 'joining information or the statement of boarding principles had been published or subsequently reviewed. The only evidence that the 'joining information' had been updated was that it contained information relating to this academic year. The pre-inspection information provided by the headmaster indicated the last review date as being 2001.

Current information could be improved by producing information for younger pupils in age appropriate formats.

The headmaster indicated that consideration is being given to the compilation of a separate booklet describing the facilities and practices in each of the boarding houses. The inspector would welcome this development.

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.6)

The school should have an effective policy on countering bullying, which is known to parents, boarders and staff and which is implemented successfully in practice.

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

Each staff member was issued with a staff handbook that contained details of the school's anti-bullying procedures. This contained all the information required to satisfy standards. Information is circulated to parents in the 'Wycliffe Junior school Joining Information' booklet and this would benefit from being amended to be more specific about the action to be taken by staff in response to observed or reported bullying.

Some children indicated in questionnaires and in interviews during the inspection that they had experienced bullying whilst attending the school. 12.5% of pupils who completed questionnaires indicated that they were bullied often and 5% that they were bullied all the time, the majority of such pupils being females. During interviews children spoke of bullying and felt that it was dealt with more effectively within the structure of the school environment, where staffing levels allowed for greater supervision, than within the boarding houses. Nevertheless, individual boarders did express that they thought boarding staff would intervene if they became aware of a problem.

In particular children, talked about the clear separation between 'school life' and 'boarding life' and would therefore not normally report issues in the boarding house to their tutors in school.

During interviews, staff demonstrated that they recognised the potential for bullying to occur within the school. They were familiar with the school's anti-bullying policy and were aware of the need to be vigilant.

Children and staff confirmed that 'initiation ceremonies' intended to cause physical pain, anxiety or humiliation do not feature within the school. At the start of each new term new children are formally welcomed and introduced to other boarders by the headmaster.

Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied

66

%

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.9)

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

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

The school's child protection policy was available to staff within the staff handbook. An examination of the procedure showed that it contained most of the detail specified in standards with the following exceptions:

- It did not include a requirement for the referral to be made within 24hours, of allegations or suspicions of abuse, to the local social services department to carry out child protection investigations rather than internal investigations by the school.
- It did not specify the need for a telephone referral to be subsequently supported by confirmation in writing.
- A consideration of the measures that may be necessary to protect individual boarders
- It did not state that staff can refer any concern or allegation about the practices or behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious

harm directly to the National Care Standards Commission,

- It did not provide immunity from retribution or disciplinary action against staff for 'whistleblowing' in good faith. This is included in the schools separate whistleblowing policy but staff spoken to were not particularly well versed in the principles of the policy and it did not appear in the staff handbook provided at inspection. The school should include a short statement within the child protection which refers to the application of the whistleblowing policy in the event of any suspicions or knowledge of abuse occurring.
- Action to be taken should the alleged perpetrator be a fellow pupil

There was evidence from discussions with the lead child protection officer and from staff files that they are required to read the existing policy and sign to say they have done so. The school is advised to repeat this exercise once the above amendments have been made.

The designated person for managing child protection events in the school familiarised staff with the school's procedures as part of their induction and all staff interviewed expressed familiarity with the school's child protection policy and were able to describe the procedures to be followed. More extensive Child Protection training had been provided for all staff during an 'inset' day but this had been a number of years prior to the inspection, consequently staff appointed subsequently, had not this more formal training. However, the inspectors were informed that the 'inset' training would be delivered to staff at the start of the forthcoming summer term. Area Child Protection Committee training has been undertaken by the Deputy Headmistress, games staff and two heads of houses and the school were trying to secure ACPC training places for the day matrons.

While not given explicit instruction, boarders in positions of responsibility are provided with guidance about how to respond to any issues of concern raised with them about other children.

No policy was in place at the time of the May 2003 inspection for dealing with pupils missing from the school. During the January 2004 visit the inspectors were informed and shown a draft policy. This does not currently form part of the staff handbook and should be included once ratified. The staff members interviewed consistently described the approach they would adopt should such a pupil be missing from the school. It was reported that there had been no incidence of boarders missing from the school.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.7)

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

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

The school's policy on behaviour and discipline was available to staff within the staff handbook and provided a description of the 'rewards and sanctions' system that operated in the school setting.

It did not however:

- Include details of the disciplinary measures that may be used by staff within the boarding houses
- Include a statement on the use of physical restraint however, the schools Occupational Health Therapist has delivered staff training on this issue.

These matters could be included in the boarding house handbook currently in production.

Information distributed to parents was also lacking in these areas. The children interviewed were familiar with the rewards and sanctions system for the school and the boarding house. They were able to describe the range of sanctions that were likely to be applied for misdemeanours within the boarding house and these might include 'early bed', 'not allowed to watch a film'. 34% of boarders interviewed described the punishments as average; whilst 24% of boarders described considered them to be unfair an equal percentage thought they were very fair. Some boarders described staff as 'stressy and shouting more than they need to when the same thing could be achieved by talking to us'.

A record of each sanction administered was kept in the general log book in each boarding house along with other information. This was good practice as standards expect only major sanctions to be recorded. However more effective monitoring could be achieved if a separate record of sanctions was maintained. An examination of the daily log in which sanctions were recorded demonstrated that the behaviour of children was being effectively managed with a minimal use of sanctions.

Staff and children interviewed confirmed that there had been no occasion when staff had been required to use physical intervention.

The inclusion in policy of prohibited sanctions would be seen as enhancing current practice though is not required by the current standards.

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.7)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on responding to complaints from boarders and parents.

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

The staff handbook described the school's practice in managing complaints from pupils but not from parents. Wycliffe Junior School Joining Information' provided parents with some information about how they could register concerns but did not provide details of the action that would be taken by the school in response to complaints received. There was no mechanism in place for alerting parents and boarders to the fact that they can contact the National Care Standards Commission of any complaint concerning boarder's welfare.

At the January 2004 visit the inspectors were provided with documentary evidence that parents are provided with a letter stating that the home has a complaints procedure, that

they can have a copy on request and that feedback to the school is encouraged.

One pupil record examined provided evidence of appropriate complaints management by the school.

Number of complaints, if any, received by NCSC about the school during last 12 months:

0

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.3)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on countering major risks to health, including substance abuse.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

During interviews the headmaster and teaching staff indicated that Personal, Social and Sexual Health Education was provided to boarders as part of the school curriculum and that this would cover some of the matters specified in standards.

There are cross-school policies (Wycliffe College and Wycliffe Juniors) in place which provide information and guidance to staff on countering major risks to health. When questioned, staff were unaware of the existence of the policy and the school is advised to include it in the staff handbook.

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Records within the school setting and in each boarding house contained the details that staff would require in order to deal effectively with the health needs of children. Children's files also contained contact details for each child and where appropriate details of any court order affecting parental responsibility or the care of the boarder. Appropriate action, was observed to have been taken, by the school in respect of a parent requesting information about a child for whom they didn't have parental responsibility.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.3)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The headmaster has a weekly meeting with the heads of the houses and reports on boarding and other welfare matters to the Governors Welfare Committee, which meets once per term. The headmaster reported making regular informal visits to each of the boarding houses to satisfy himself about the welfare of the pupils. These visits were not recorded so there was no information available describing the action taken in response to any problems that may have been identified during the visits.

The new headteacher is in the process of reviewing the monitoring of boarding practice. Regular visits are made to the each house and there are currently plans to nominate a senior member of staff as head of boarding. The inspectors are of the view that this will enhance current arrangements.

Both of the housemothers with responsibility for the boarding houses had appropriate experience of 'boarding'. The housemother of the boys' boarding house was appointed in a full-time capacity to attend to the welfare needs of the boarders. The school had found this to be a more effective means of attending to the needs of the boarders and a similar arrangement was implemented to good effect in the girls' boarding house at the start of the Autumn term 2003.

Both housemothers have been nominated to attend training in boarding.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.3)

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

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

Staff guidance contained details of how the school would respond to specific circumstances that may affect the welfare of individual boarders such as illness or accident. There was no information that described the actions to be taken by staff in the event of a crisis affecting individual or groups of boarders when away from the school site and how such an event would be co-ordinated. The headmaster and staff described an appropriate response to such a situation and were consistent in description of the action that would be taken. The school had responded promptly to the recent SARS outbreak and had made appropriate arrangements to ensure the safety of all pupils.

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.5)

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

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

During the May 2003 visit Male and female boarders were accommodated in separate boarding houses. Boarders were allocated to dormitories according to age or individual need. Penwood had recently been redecorated and refurbished, consequently the furniture in the boys dormitories was of superior condition to that provided in Windrush for the girls. During interviews the girls consistently complained about the condition of the beds and the mattresses. They reported that "staff told us that they had got us some new beds but these are cast offs from the senior school and are always breaking". Boarding staff confirmed that the beds had been acquired from the senior school and that they were regularly being reported to the handyman as being in need of repair. During a tour of Windrush the inspector found that there were items of furniture in need of repair or replacement. Beds were also checked and the comments made by the girls were found to have some foundation.

The appointment of a full-time housemother in Penwood had resulted in some differences in boarding practice between the two houses. This had been recognised by the school and a full-time housemother was appointed to commence work in Windrush in the Autumn term 2003.

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

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

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

Facilities were available within the school and the boarding house to which children could have access at evenings and weekends. Access to the school's sporting facilities was possible on the occasions when an appropriately qualified member of teaching staff was available to supervise. In addition, a programme of external activities was planned to take place on a number of weekends throughout the term. This was popular with the boarders. Female boarders expressed disappointment that, on weekends when an external activity wasn't scheduled, there was a limited choice of activity available. They reported that "there's one teacher on duty and you either do what they are doing or stay in the boarding house - and that's boring". This view tended to be supported by the one response received from parents which stated that the school could do better at providing more diverse activities for those not interested in sports. However, the inspectors feel that on balance an appropriate range of activities is on offer during the course of each school term.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.2)

Boarders have opportunity to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision.

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

The school council provided boarders with the opportunity to contribute views to the operation of boarding and in addition a meeting of boarders took place in each house once a term. Boarders lacked confidence that the systems allowed them to influence boarding practice in the school and were not able to identify any issues in which they had influenced policy or development in boarding, citing examples of issues raised that had not been addressed. One particular example related to them not wanting fish fingers served for Breakfast. In May 2003 The headmaster acknowledged that the school council focussed on all aspects of school life and that there was no forum that involved only boarders in a review of boarding practice.

At the January 2004 the inspectors were informed that a separate boys and girls boarding forum, co-ordinated by the deputy headmistress, had been put in place. It was not possible to make a judgement about the impact of this initiative but the inspectors are optimistic that it will be of benefit.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.7)

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

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

A small number of boarders were given additional responsibilities within the boarding houses and were appointed as 'monitors'. Whilst not able to impose sanctions themselves, some female boarders felt that on occasions the monitors would misrepresent breaches of conduct to the housemother to 'get us into trouble'. The housemother acknowledged that this was a possibility but said that it would be taken into account when determining whether or not to administer a sanction. There was no information available to boarders that described the role and responsibilities of the monitor and this should be considered.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.6)

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

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

The school had identified extensive support systems within the school to which boarders could turn for advice and guidance over personal matters. Guidance for staff was explicit that boarders were able to share concerns with any staff member and not just their personal tutor.

During interviews with children it was evident that they made the clear distinction between 'school life' and 'boarding life'. Children almost unanimously reported that they would not share concerns about matters in the boarding house with their tutor or concerns about school with their housemother. 67% of boarders reported in questionnaires that they felt able to seek advice or guidance from their parents and 55% their friends. The member of school staff to whom boarders were most likely to turn was the housemaster, to whom 35% of boarders completing questionnaires said they could turn. The school had appointed an independent person whom children could contact, but only 2% of boarders reported that they would feel able to do this. Children and staff were positive about the weekly 'circle time' that provided boarders with the opportunity to discuss problems or concerns. Children expressed confidence in being able to talk to the teacher responsible for these sessions. All children reported in interviews that they had at least one member of staff to whom they could turn for advice and guidance.

WELFARE SUPPORT TO BOARDERS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.14)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The school's practice was in line with standards in most matters. The one shortfall was due to boarding staff not having access to a written protocol on the provision of non-prescription 'household medicines' to boarders. They did however understand that they were only allowed to administer 'calpol and vick'.

Boarders had access to appropriate first aid and minor illness treatment with most of the school's staff having completed training in emergency first aid, in addition to which a qualified nurse was available in the medical centre at the senior school.

Policy and procedural documentation was available to staff within the staff handbook, describing the actions that should be taken in the event of an accident. The school could consider including the circumstances in which emergency services may need to be involved without first referring to medical staff.

Written consents were obtained from parents to authorise the school to administer emergency first aid and contained details of the medication that the school is likely to administer.

Medication administered to boarders was recorded in the boarding house log book along with other routine information. Practice would be enhanced by maintaining this information

as a separate record, similar to the system that currently exists on the main school site. In addition, the housemistress in Penwood had recently introduced the practice of making a separate record in individual children's records. It was proposed to introduce a similar system in Windrush.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.3)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Boarders were familiar with the arrangements for taking care of them when they were ill. If taken ill whilst at school they could be looked after for short periods of time in the school clinic by the matrons or alternatively return to the boarding house under the supervision of the appropriate housemother. In circumstances where the illness dictated separation from other boarders, the pupil would either be transferred to the sick bay in the senior school where a qualified nurse was available to provide care or alternatively return home.

During the May visit boarders reported that staff were sympathetic and responsive to their needs when ill. However, Concern was expressed by some of the pupils in the girls boarding house about being unable to summons assistance from the housemother during the night. Other pupils who had observed this practice though had not directly experienced it themselves supported this. The information from pupils was shared with the headmaster during verbal feedback. On the occasion of the January 2004 visit, the inspectors were happy that the matter had been satisfactorily addressed.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The elements of this standard were satisfied but consideration should given as to whether the circumstances of any individual boarder are such that a welfare plan should be in place in line with standard 17.2 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. The head did not consider this to be the case at the time of the inspection and no evidence was found to the contrary during an inspection of a sample of pupil files.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The elements of this standard were satisfied.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.6)

Boarders are enabled to contact their parents and families in private.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Telephones were available within each boarding house that enabled children to make and receive telephone calls in private. The area in which the telephone was located in the girls' boarding house would benefit from redecoration and refurbishment to make it a more welcoming environment. Boarders were allowed use of personal mobile phones at reasonable times and also had access to electronic means of communication. Helpline and outside contact numbers were displayed by the telephones in line with standards. Recordings in children's files contained evidence of two-way communication between boarding staff and children's parents confirming contact arrangements and discussing concerns.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.3)

Reasonable protection is provided for boarders' personal possessions and for any boarders' money or valuables looked after by the school.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

While some boarders reported that they had money or personal possessions go astray the school does provide lockable storage space in each boarding house and systems are in place for the safe keeping and administration of money. The storage facility (under bed boxes) in Pennwood while lockable have no padlocks and it would be helpful if the school were explicit about whose responsibility (parents or school) it is to provide these.

The arrangements for managing boarders money included records being kept electronically. Some of the female boarders and a member of staff in Windrush reported that on occasions there were inconsistencies between the amount of money that children understood that they had in their savings account and the amount that the record stated they had available. Implementing a system which allows children to sign for money and valuables they deposit would enhance current practice and help to alleviate some of the difficulties experienced.

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.3)

There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders.

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

The daily and weekly routines were displayed on the notice board in the boarding houses. Some written information is provided in the joining information for new pupils though, as highlighted elsewhere in this report, the introduction of boarding specific information would be beneficial.

Boarders and boarding staff consistently described the practice for a more experienced boarder to introduce new boarders with the routines and expectations of boarding.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.4)

Any guardians appointed by the school should be subject to the same recruitment checks as staff, and their care of pupils should be monitored.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****0**

Pre-inspection information indicated that there were no children in the junior school with guardians appointed.

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.4)

The Head, or a senior member of the school's staff, regularly monitors the school's records of risk assessments, punishments, complaints and accidents, to identify any issues requiring action.

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

The school had a team of staff with designated responsibility for attending to health and safety issues at the senior school and on the junior school campus. This has proven an effective means of regularly monitoring health and safety risk assessments and accident records. The accident record contained evidence of monitoring by the team of staff with designated responsibility for health and safety.

The headmaster indicated that the school's record of sanctions is monitored twice a term but there was no signature or date noted in the record to demonstrate that monitoring does take place at this frequency. While current practice meets the standards, improvements could be achieved by introducing:

- Signatures on relevant records to evidence auditing
- Boarding houses maintaining their own record of punishments which are regularly monitored

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8)

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

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

An external catering organisation had been contracted to provide meals for the school. A weekly menu was displayed on the wall in the dining room and this was found to provide a well-balanced, healthy and nutritious diet. During interviews children consistently described the food as the aspect of the school's provision that they liked least. This was confirmed in their individual responses to questionnaires with 45% of boarders describing the quality of food as average. 15% described the food as very poor whilst a slightly higher percentage-

17.5% described it as very good. In particular boarders did not like the fact that 'fish fingers' were served for breakfast and this was recognised by the headmaster and the cook. Children felt that there was little potential for them to influence the menu although they reported that they raised it regularly as an item at the student's council.

During mealtimes pupils were observed to have generous helpings and to take advantage of seconds.

Catering staff had all completed training in food handling and hygiene. The Environmental Health Service had recently visited the kitchens in the main school building and action had been taken to satisfy their recommendations. At verbal feedback the school was advised to request that the Environmental Health assess the kitchens in the boarding houses following concerns expressed by female boarders during interviews. In January 2004, the Headteacher confirmed that such a visit had taken place following the May 2003 visit.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.5)

Boarders have access to drinking water in both boarding and teaching areas, and to food or the means of preparing food at reasonable times in addition to main meals.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Each boarding house was equipped with kitchen facilities that allowed children to have access to drinking water and to the means of preparing food outside of mealtimes.

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5)

Boarders and boarding staff should be aware of emergency evacuation procedures from boarding accommodation. The school should comply with recommendations of the Fire Service, and should regularly carry out and record risk assessments in relation to fire, together with fire drills and any routine tests recommended by the Fire Service.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Boarding staff and boarders were all familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures from boarding accommodation in the event of a fire and confirmed the frequency at which drills are conducted. The girls in Windrush were sceptical about the fire drills conducted at night reporting that “ the staff tell you when they are going to take place”.

An inspection of the record of fire drills showed that tests of fire alarms took place regularly. No records in relation to checks on smoke detectors, emergency lighting, self-closing devices and fire extinguishers were available for inspection. However, the inspection by the fire safety officer in April 2003 confirmed compliance with this aspect of fire safety.

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

9

Not applicable.

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.2)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

9

Not applicable.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

It was the school's practice to complete risk assessments prior to activities and outings taking place.

Conclusions were drawn following an examination of the records completed in advance of outings arranged this term that appropriate measures had been taken by the school to ensure the safety of boarders.

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.5)

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

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

Daily newspapers were available to boarders and each boarding house was equipped with a television to allow boarders access to media coverage if they wished. Boarders were encouraged and supported to use the shopping facilities in the nearby town centre and were supervised by teaching or boarding staff to do so. It was school policy that boarders were not allowed to leave the school site without supervision and this was understood by boarders. Boarders reported on their weekly visits to the town they were allowed a maximum of 50 pence spending money when what they would really like is "£1 so that we can buy a bag of chips each rather than have to share one between two of us".

This was explored with one of the house mothers who explained that allowing boarders further money would increase the potential for boarders to pool financial resources and purchase items such as cigarettes and alcohol, although there was no evidence to suggest that this is what they would do. A review should be conducted of this practice.

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

There were two members of staff on duty in each boarding house until 2000hrs each weekday evening, one of whom could be a gap student. This meant that there was only one staff member available in each house group to attend to the needs of children at bed-time. Female boarders reported that it was difficult to attract the staff's attention when they were settling younger children in bed, as 'they can't be in two places at once'. Housemistress reported that it was difficult to attend to the individual needs of children at bed times and that it wasn't possible to spend time reading stories to younger children who would benefit from this approach. The opinion of gap students was that staffing levels in the boarding houses were 'a bit thin' and it was often difficult to allocate time to individual boarders who may be in need of reassurance. Boarders complained that there were insufficient staff available at week-ends to provide a range of activities however, the inspectors were satisfied that the range of activities was within the bounds of acceptability. One member of teaching staff was allocated to provide additional support to the two house groups each Sunday and would usually organise an activity in which boarders could participate.

Action had been taken by the time of the January 2004 visit to provide some additional staffing resources in the boarding accommodation.

A duty roster identified the staff members on duty in the boarding houses each day. Boarders were familiar with the shifts worked by each staff member and with the roles assumed by individual staff members.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

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

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

The school placed an emphasis on the supervision of boarders, who because of their young age were not allowed away from the school premises unless accompanied by a member of staff. Staff with designated responsibility for organising trips and outings were required to complete a risk assessment providing details of the proposed trip. These were then authorised by the Deputy Head in advance of the event. Evidence was seen in some of the completed checklists that staffing ratios on outings and holidays were often in excess of the DfES guidance on minimum ratios.

Following interviews with the Headmaster, boarding staff and the Gap Students, it was concluded that the role and responsibilities of Gap Students were in line with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding schools,

Interviews with the gap students, boarding and pupils confirmed that gap students are not left alone in charge of boarders unless there is a supervising member of staff contactable on site or accompanying them when they are away from the school.

While the existing guidance for staff addressed some areas outlined in the standards, there were shortfalls in that it failed to provide information relating to the safety and supervision of boarders during journeys, the use of private vehicles or public transport and the steps to be taken to safeguard boarders in these instances. The Headteacher confirmed that pupils: never use public transport while at school; rarely use private vehicles; and have safety measures for the use of school transport explained to them verbally. The existing policy would benefit from having more detail pertaining to these matters even if it only re-iterates the official policy egg that public transport is not used.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.5)

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

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

In line with the National Minimum Standards at least one member of staff had designated responsibility to sleep in the boarding house each night. Boarders were aware of the arrangements for contacting staff members during the night although, during the May 2003 visit, some of the girls in Windrush reported difficulties in obtaining a response on the few occasions that this had been necessary. (See also Standard 16)

Standard 34 (34.1 - 34.7)

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

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

The housemistress, and gap students reported having received job descriptions outlining their specific roles and responsibilities and details of the duties of the house parents are included in the document 'Boarding at Wycliffe School'. Documentary evidence showed that supporting house staff also have job descriptions and they themselves were happy with the way they had been inducted into their role by the housemother. New Gap students go

through a similar induction process.

During the May 2003 one Housemistress was also a member of the teaching staff and in respect of this role would receive an appraisal once every two year, with an annual review being conducted of the targets. This system did not apply to other staff working in the boarding houses. There were no arrangements in place for boarding staff to receive regular, formal supervision but housemistress reported that they had regular informal discussion with the headmaster or deputy head and valued this as a support mechanism. The deputy head, who had designated responsibility for child protection, had acquainted all boarding house staff with the school's child protection policy.

The boarding practice could be enhanced by implementation of formal systems of appraisal and supervision for all boarding house staff.

Opportunities are available for boarding staff to attend Boarding Schools Association training where appropriate and commensurate with their role.

Standard 35 (35.1 - 35.4)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Boarding staff confirmed that they had received a copy of the staff handbook, containing written guidance. The handbook contained all of the information specified in standards but the contents of some of the policy , procedures and guidance require amending to include additional information. These matters have been highlighted in other areas of this report.

Standard 36 (36.1 - 36.4)

There are sound staff/boarder relationships.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Boarders in Penwood were mainly positive about the relationships that existed between themselves and the boarding staff. Although they felt that staff sometimes 'got annoyed quickly' they also felt that they were kind and responsive if boarders were upset.

During the May 2003 visit boarders in Windrush expressed dissatisfaction with some aspects of boarding life and it was apparent that the relationship between them and the housemistress was not good. Female boarders felt that the limited number of staff working in the boarding house meant that there was no independent avenue through which they could express their concerns and have them effectively addressed. It may well be that some of the problems identified were exacerbated by the fact that the Housemistress concerned also worked as a teacher in the school during the day and that the demands on her were overly onerous. The school appear to have recognised the potential for this to be so and, following the departure of the housemistress at the end of the summer term, she was replaced by a full-time housemistress. At the time of the January 2004 visit, the previously reported problems had been alleviated.

At the May 2003 visit, boarders expressed concern about the professional conduct of one member of teaching staff who had visited Windrush. This information was shared with the Headteacher during the inspection and an internal investigation conducted. In January 2004 this matter was found to have a satisfactory resolution. As a result practices, concerning male staff and female pupil boundaries, have been changed.

Standard 37 (37.1 - 37.2)

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

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

Supervision of boarders within the boarding house was reported by staff to be discreet. Staff reported that shower times were supervised by maintaining a discreet presence outside the bathroom. This was also reported to be the approach used when children were getting dressed or changing into nightwear in the dormitories. Boarders confirmed that this was the practice.

Standard 38 (38.1 - 38.10)

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

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

A checklist provided evidence that school recruitment procedures contain most of the elements specified in standards and a sample of staff files demonstrated that in the most recent appointments the procedures had been followed and checks with the Criminal Records Bureau completed before staff commenced work. The application form provided details of a candidates cv. The school had registered with the Criminal Records Bureau and the school was successfully processing checks.

The following shortfalls were noted:

- One member of staff recently recruited had only one reference on file
- One member of staff had not had a gap in employment history accounted for. While the interview aid memoir does ask this to be checked, the relevant section read, "none noted", while the available information showed a two-year gap which remained unaccounted for.
- One teaching member of staff who commenced employment in September 2003 had no proof of qualifications on file. The school explained that this was because the person in question was newly qualified and had not yet been issued with a certificate. The school is advised, in such circumstances to check these matters out and receive confirmation in writing from the academic institution.

The headteacher indicated that it was the practice for the school to make contact with referee to verify references in circumstances where previous work had involved work with children to verify the reason why the employment ceased. However, there was no evidence of this being done on files.

The school obtains certificates of good conduct for gap students who have lived outside the United Kingdom and telephone interviews are conducted. It is recommended that the school complete CRB checks on gap students at the enhanced level as in the course of their duties they may be alone with individual or groups of students observed to have 'unsupervised contact' with boarders.

Standard 39 (39.1 - 39.4)

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

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

The headmaster indicated that it is the practice of the school to only use external contractors who have been subjected to satisfactory vetting procedures. The vetting procedures will include evidence of checks with the Criminal Records Bureau having been completed. It was indicated that there is seldom the need for the junior school children to be transported by taxi but that the school has a number of firms whose drivers have been approved. The practice described is in line with standards. Evidence of these systems being in place was not sought during this inspection.

The school implements a general licence agreement for all staff families who occupy boarding accommodation and a copy was received by the inspectors. However, this falls short of the requirements of the standards because it is not currently the practice for the school to complete an individual written agreement with any adult not employed by the school but living in the same building as boarding accommodation. This should specify:

- The terms of their accommodation
- Guidance on contact with boarders
- Their responsibilities to supervise their visitors
- That their accommodation may be terminated if there is any evidence that they are unsuitable to have regular contact with children
- The requirement to notify an unrelated designated senior member of staff, if they are charged with, or convicted of any criminal offence.

The current Licence Agreement does not provide this level of detail and is not signed by any non-employed person.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 40 (40.1 - 40.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The decorative appearance of the boarding houses was in the process of being addressed. Dormitories in Penwood had been decorated and refurbished and boarding staff were currently engaged in redecorating the games room. The communal social areas in Windrush were decoratively in good condition although a number of the dormitories would benefit from decoration and refurbishment.</p> <p>The windows in each boarding house provided sufficient light and ventilation. In circumstances where windows were considered to pose a risk to boarders, restrictors had been fitted.</p>		

Standard 41 (41.1 - 41.8)

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

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

Boarding staff and boarders understand that boarding accommodation is for the exclusive use of full-time, weekly and flexi-boarders and that the public are not permitted to have access to boarders accommodation and this is understood by children and boarding staff. Key pads fitted to the entrances of the boarding houses allowed children to gain access to the boarding houses.

It was noted that throughout the inspection, the external doors to the main school building were unlocked potentially allowing members of the public to gain unauthorised access to the building and to boarders.

Standard 42 (42.1 - 42.14)

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

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

In both boarding houses, the boarders in each dormitory were appropriately separated by age. In each dormitory there was evidence of boarders having personalised the area of the dormitory by their bed with pictures, posters and personal items.

The bedrooms in 'Penwood', catering for the male boarders had recently been redecorated and refurbished. The bedrooms were of a good size and new cabin beds were in use providing each boarder with a generous amount of space within which to store their possessions.

In Windrush extra beds had been moved into some of the dormitories to facilitate the demand for 'flexi' boarding. This had restricted the amount of space available to full-time and weekly boarders in these rooms. In addition, the condition of some the beds was poor and not of a sound construction. Boarders and boarding staff reported that they were frequently in need of repair and the information in the items for repair log tended to confirm this. One dormitory had a door that interconnected with the room used by the sleeping-in member of staff. This door was open during the inspection. This arrangement is inappropriate.

At the time of the January 2004 visit there had been some improvements in Windrush. The more serious overcrowding issues have been addressed and there had been some replacement beds.

In addition, the inspectors were concerned to note that some of the fire doors were blocked off with furniture in two of the rooms in Windrush. It is not clear if these are designated fire exits. The school is advised to review its fire safety risk assessments and seek advice from the Fire Safety Officer. The headteacher has since confirmed that the doors in question are not designated fire exits and that the fire officer is happy with the arrangements.

Standard 43 (43.1 - 43.2) Suitable facilities for both organised and private study are available to boarders.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The daily routine of the school was organised to include 'prep'. This took place in the main school building where suitable facilities were provided. There were areas in each boarding house that boarders could use to study privately if they wished.		

Standard 44 (44.1 - 44.10) Adequate toilet and washing facilities are readily accessible to boarders, with appropriate privacy.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>There were sufficient toilets, showers and washbasins in Penwood to satisfy standards. In Windrush there were sufficient showers to satisfy standards but the number of toilets and washbasins to the number of pupils accommodated was insufficient to satisfy standards. Boarders did not report this to be a problem.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to how the privacy of the showers and toilets can be improved in both boarding houses. In May 2003 boarders in Windrush reported problems with the temperature and the flow of water, to the showers and hand basins, this should be investigated and rectified. It was noted that there were cracked tiles in the bathrooms in Penwood and these should be replaced.</p> <p>At the January 2004 visit, the privacy issues remained and still need to be addressed though the water temperature matters had been resolved.</p>		

Standard 45 (45.1 - 45.3) Suitable changing provision is provided for use by day.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>The school was aware that major refurbishment was required in order that the facilities used by the boys to change for sports, conformed to standards. The provision within the basement of Penwood afforded little privacy to boarders and the shower and toilet facilities were outdated. The Inspector was informed that refurbishment of this facility is due to take place this summer. The privacy of boarders using the 'under the bridge' changing rooms, on the main school site, was compromised by a missing door.</p> <p>The changing rooms on the main school site used by the girls were of more modern design and conformed to standards.</p>		

Standard 46 (46.1 - 46.6) Boarders have access to a range and choice of safe recreational areas, both indoors and outdoors.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The elements of this standard had been satisfied with a range of indoor and outdoor recreational areas being available for the use of borders. School sporting facilities were available for the use of boarders when appropriately qualified staff were available to supervise. Boarding staff and boarders indicated that they would appreciate additional art and craft materials being available.		

Standard 47 (47.1 - 47.9)

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

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

A tour of the boarding houses and grounds showed that appropriate measures had been taken by the school to ensure that they were reasonably free from hazards. The extent to which windows in the boarding house could be opened had been restricted to prevent boarders from being able to climb out of the windows. Steps had also been taken to prevent access to the nearby railway line.

Standard 48 (48.1 - 48.4)

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

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

Appropriate arrangements are in place for being able to provide separate care for boarders who are ill. This necessitates the transfer of children from the boarding house to the sick bay located in the senior school where they are then cared for by qualified nursing staff. It is however, more usual for ill children to return home to be cared for by their families.

Standard 49 (49.1 - 49.3)

Adequate laundry provision is made for boarders' clothing and bedding.

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

A member of school staff had been designated with key responsibility for attending to the laundry needs of boarders. A system was in operation, for attending to clothing and bedding, this was understood by boarders and staff. It was considered effective by boarders and generated no complaints.

Standard 50 (50.1 - 50.2)

Boarders are able to obtain minor necessary personal and stationery items while accommodated at school.

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

The boarding routine allowed children to visit the nearby shopping centre once a week. They were able to purchase personal and stationary items on these occasions. At other times, a member of the house staff would ensure that purchases were made on behalf of pupils should it be necessary.

Standard 51 (51.1 - 51.11)

Any lodgings arranged by the school to accommodate pupils provide satisfactory accommodation and supervision, are checked by the school before use, and are monitored by the school during use.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****9**

Not applicable.

Standard 52 (52.1 - 52.8)

Any off-site short-stay accommodation arranged by the school for any of its boarders provides satisfactory accommodation and supervision, is checked by the school before use (although this may not be feasible when accommodation is in private households), and is monitored by the school during use.

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

The practice of the school described by the headmaster and teachers during interviews was consistent with that specified in standards. An itinerary and risk assessment compiled for a forthcoming outing confirmed that this was the case. A teacher was designated with responsibility for co-ordinating the trip and this included making an assessment about the suitability of the accommodation to be used in advance of the trip. Where the outing involved children participating in outdoor pursuits, appropriate checks were made on the experience and qualifications of the instructors.

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

Not Applicable.

Lay Assessor

Signature

Date

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

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 19th May 2003 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the Head

YES

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

NO

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

YES

Note:

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

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 24th October 2003, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the recommended actions in a timely fashion

YES

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

NO

Head has declined to provide an action plan

NO

Other: <enter details here>

NO

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

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

Print Name

Signature

Designation

Date

Or

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

--

Print Name

Signature

Designation

Date

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