



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Northeast Manor School

**Rodmell
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 3EY**

Lead Inspector
David Coulter

Announced Inspection
12th December 2006 09:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

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

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

Those outcomes are:

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

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

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

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of school Northease Manor School

Address Rodmell
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 3EY

Telephone number 01273 472915

Fax number 01273 472202

Email address office@northease.co.uk

Provider Web address

**Name of Governing body,
Person or Authority
responsible for the
school** Northease Manor School

Name of Head Mr Paul Stanley

Name of Head of Care

**Age range of residential
pupils**

**Date of last welfare
inspection**

Brief Description of the School:

Northeast Manor School is a day, and weekly boarding school, for young people aged between 10 and 17 years of age. It is a DfES approved co-educational day and boarding special school for pupils with specific learning difficulties including dyslexia and dysphaxia. There are currently only two categories with the fees structure: Boarding £8077 per term and Daily £5905 per term.

Boarding provision within the school is on a weekly basis. All boarders spend their weekends at home and return on Sunday evenings. At the time of the inspection there were a total of 80 pupils on the school roll, 38 of these were boarders, of which 31 were boys and 7 were girls.

The school is set within its own grounds in a rural location approximately three miles south of Lewes. The school consists of a range of historically interesting buildings that include a thatched Tudor Barn. Many of the buildings have received Grade II listing. Recent additions to the facilities, including a new boarding house, have been built in sympathy. There are three boarding houses on the main site, two of which provide accommodation for the boys, and separate accommodation for the girls.

The school has produced an attractive illustrated brochure that describes its aims and objectives, its facilities and the nature of its educational and social provision. It has also developed a computer web site that provides a range of information about the school, about Dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection was undertaken by two inspectors over a two-day period during the last week of the Autumn Term. While this was an announced inspection, the school was only given one week's notice. At the outset the inspectors would like to thank the Head, staff and pupils for their co-operation during what was a particularly busy time in the school calendar.

During the course of the inspection a full tour of the premises was undertaken, a range of records and documents examined and a range of pupils and staff spoke with. It was also possible to observe a breakfast and evening meal. A number of after-school activities and a morning assembly were also observed.

Individual discussions were undertaken with the Head Teacher, the Head of Care, Residential Staff, the Matron, Catering Manager and Bursar. Group discussions were held with pupils representing both younger and older boarders.

What the school does well:

Northeast offers a wide range of educational and social opportunities to young people with Specific Learning Difficulties. The boarding department plays an important role within the life of the school and makes a major contribution to the success of the 24-hour curriculum. In particular it was noted that:

*Staff operate a 'child centred' approach that treats each young person as an individual.

*There were good lines of communication between teaching and care staff.

*The boarding staff were aware of policies, procedures and accepted working practices.

*There was good support and supervision of staff.

*Boarding staff were proactive in developing new approaches to working with pupils.

*Boarding staff liaise effectively with parents/guardians.

*School staff were keeping abreast of developments within the field of child

protection.

*The school had a positive approach to discipline and behaviour management Staff operated the strategy in a fair and consistent manner.

*Staff tried to ensure that the views of students were regularly sought on both and individual and group basis.

*Boarders were offered a good range of leisure and recreational activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

*New residential staff have completed their induction and have settled in.

*All the recommendations arising out of the last inspection had been appropriately addressed.

*Staff supervision has been formalised.

*The healthy eating initiative has been further developed.

What they could do better:

*Boarders could be further encouraged, through bodies such as the Boarders Forum and School Council, to take more responsibility for new initiatives that could further improve their 'boarding experience'.

*The current care planning system could be rationalised to minimise unnecessary duplication. This could provide residential staff with more time.

*Members of the school's governing body could visit more frequently to meet with residential staff and boarders. This would provide boarders and residential staff with the opportunity to discuss life within the boarding department with an external monitor.

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

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

The Commission considers Standard 14 the key standard to be inspected.

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

14 & 15

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. Evidence indicated that the health and well being of each young person is monitored during their time in school and the concept of 'healthy living' actively promoted.

EVIDENCE:

Boarding provision within the school is on a weekly basis and boarders reside at the school from Sunday evening to Friday afternoon. As a consequence each young person remains registered with their own General Practitioner and dentist and return home if they require regular treatment. The school employs a Matron who, along with residential staff, monitors the health and well-being of each boarder. Through discussions with residential staff it was evident that the daily routine within boarding aimed to ensure that each young person developed good personal hygiene, received nutritious food and had access to regular physical activity.

During the inspection a discussion was held with the Matron and a number of health related records and policies examined. Parental Consent Forms for medical intervention are obtained as part of the admissions process. Records relating to the health of each young person are updated regularly. All accidents are recorded. If any specialised health needs are identified every effort is made to access appropriate services. Records indicated that assistance

was being sought by, amongst others, occupational therapists, counsellors and psychologists.

Medication was observed to be stored in appropriate locked facilities. At the time of the inspection a number of boarders were receiving medication on a daily basis. The arrangements for the storage and administration of medication were assessed as being appropriate. There is a policy and guidance for staff on the dispensing of homely remedies. A visit to the sickbay revealed that it was clean, tidy and in good decorative order. Care staff are expected to hold current First Aid certification.

Since the last inspection a new catering manager has been appointed. It was evident through a brief discussion that she was extremely keen to promote healthy eating. She explained that fresh produce was widely used and that her staff aimed to produce food that was both nutritious and appealing to the pupils. The success of the new policy was she said, 'reflected in the notable decrease in the amount of waste'. The catering manager felt that her staff had appropriate facilities and adequate resources to produce quality food.

The inspectors were invited to join pupils for an evening meal. The meal included fresh fruit and vegetable and all the pupils could access a salad bar. During meetings with pupils the subject of food was discussed. While it was evident that individuals had personal likes and dislikes there was a general consensus that the quality of food had improved during the last year.

It was clear that meal times provided an opportunity for social interaction and all meals are eaten communally in the schools dining room. Pupils are assigned to tables with their peers. While staff sit with the younger age groups, senior pupils are allowed to eat as a group by themselves. During the evening meal pupils are provided opportunities to both serve and assist in clearing up. It was observed that a number of pupils experienced difficulties in portioning food evenly with the consequence that some of their peers were disadvantaged. The Catering Manager explained that residential and kitchen staff were normally very good at monitoring what young people were eating and tried to ensure that they would always be offered an alternative if they did not like what was on offer. It is recommended that the current practice of carefully monitoring meal times continues to ensure that each young person is eating appropriately.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

The Commission considers Standards 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.

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

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

Quality in this outcome area is **good**. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. Evidence indicated the systems and working practices of the school ensure the safety and well-being of each young person. Boarding staff had been subject to a comprehensive recruitment and induction process.

EVIDENCE:

Confidential information relating to each young person was kept in appropriate locked facilities. Both teaching and residential staff use a communications book that is located within the staff room. Through discussions with a number of staff it was established that it would never be used to convey any confidential information on pupils. If sensitive information needs to be passed on to specific staff a cross-referencing system is used to direct them to a more confidential source. Within the boarding houses there are a number of areas that can be used for private meetings. The Head of Care has his own office that is situated in a location that is accessible to all the boarders. It was noted that staff dealt with issues relating to individual young people separately and in private.

A tour of boarding accommodation revealed that boarders had access to shower and toilet facilities with locks. While not all the junior boarders had their own forms, sharing with another was not raised as a major issue during group discussions. However, a number of the juniors said they would like to be given the choice of deciding who they had to share with. This was not an issue with any of the girls who, being a small group in a large unit, had ample space. It was evident that boarders could personalise their rooms with posters etc.

The school has an established complaints policy and procedure. All complaints are registered in a bound book and addressed by staff. While the present system provides a record of complaints it is recommended that it could better reflect outcomes by noting both how and by whom the issues raised were resolved. The individual making the entry should also sign and date the entry. The Head of Care has, since the last inspection, introduced a 'Solutions to Boarding Pupils Concerns Book', that encourages boarders to register any worries or concerns they might have associated with their lives as boarders. This pro-active approach appears to have been successful in allowing staff to address any concerns or difficulties before they developed into major complaints. No complaints had been registered since June 2005. Boarder's spoken with indicated that they would have no difficulty in registering their concerns with Residential Staff.

The school has a Child Protection Policy and all three residential staff were aware of their personal responsibilities in protecting individual young people. Staff had, since the last inspection, appropriately implemented the policy and procedure. The Head explained that recommendations from 'Every Child Matters' were being incorporated into the school's policies and procedures as they were reviewed. It was noted that the school's existing policy on the use of restraint contained guidance that was no longer deemed 'good practice'. In the light of this it is recommended that all policies related to the Management of Challenging Behaviour, are reviewed. During discussions with the Head of

Care it was decided that this would best be done following the residential staff's training course in January 2007.

The school has an anti-bullying policy and has an annual anti-bullying week each academic year to raise awareness among the pupils of its consequences for all. Aware of the opportunities that could arise for bullying within a residential setting, staff have developed working practices aimed at minimising the risk of such events occurring. The pupils' handbook contains clear guidance for pupils on what to do if they experience any form of bullying. Young people spoken with did not cite bullying as being a problem within the school and it was evident that staff were operating a regime based on mutual respect.

It was evident that the movement of young people around the school was carefully monitored by residential staff and regular roll calls were used to ensure everyone was accounted for. There is a policy and procedure if an individual goes missing. While young people have periods of free time after school there is a structured daily programme that provides a range of individual and group activities. There are a number of communal areas within the boarding houses that allow individuals to spend leisure time together rather than in the isolation of their own rooms.

During a discussion with a group of the older boarders the issue of supervision was raised. A number felt that they were, at times, subject to a degree of staff supervision that was intrusive and inappropriate to their age. This issue was discussed with both the Head and Head of Care. The Head explained that due to the communication difficulties experienced by the many of the young people misunderstandings often arose and if left unchecked could lead to arguments and in some instances confrontations. While this was acknowledged the inspectors felt that the development of the present games room could provide an attractive meeting place for senior boarders. With careful planning the room could be arranged to make staff supervision quite unobtrusive.

During the inspection it was possible to observe a number of young people on their return from school and their preparation for the evenings activities. The atmosphere remained relaxed and the interaction between the young people and staff appeared both spontaneous and warm. While staff were observed to engage with young people in a respectful manner they provided young people with clear guidance on what was and was not acceptable behaviour. The school rules were clear and unambiguous and provided clearly defined boundaries.

The Head of Care explained that the school's approach to behaviour management was based on positive reinforcement and though sanctions were used, reparation could be achieved. An examination of the sanctions book indicated that the majority of sanctions were imposed for unacceptable

behaviour in the classroom and not related to boarding. When sanctions are linked to a serious incident a report is completed and signed by a senior member of staff before being placed in the young person's file.

The school has a comprehensive Health and Safety Policy that is reviewed annually. A summary of the policy is provided in the staff handbook. The Bursar assumes responsibility for the implementation of Health and Safety Policy and meets regularly with representative from the Governing Body. Risk assessments were observed to be carried out in relation to both the environment and activities. Records demonstrated that fire alarms were checked weekly and full evacuations undertaken twice a year. A full inspection of the school's electrical system is undertaken every five years. The school is situated in rural setting and is surrounded on three sides by farmland. Pupils are discouraged from walking on the country round that provides access to the site. Outdoor lighting is strategically placed to ensure ease of access between areas at night. Access to the school premises is via the main entrance and all visitors are expected to report to reception and sign in.

Since the last inspection the school has appointed two new residential staff. An examination to their records revealed that they had been subject to a comprehensive recruitment process that included undertaking an interview, providing a number of references, including one from their most recent employer and an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau check. Records demonstrated that they had both completed a full induction programme. Both felt that the programme provided them with the opportunity to see how policies and procedures were translated into working practices and daily routines.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

The Commission considers Standards 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.

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

12, 13 & 22

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. Evidence indicated the systems and working practice of the home ensure that safety and well-being of each young person while they are resident within the school, and their relationships with staff operated on a mutual respect basis.

EVIDENCE:

Even though residential and teaching staff normally work at different times of the day, it was evident that food systems of communication had been established between both. The Head of Care felt that the joint staff training sessions every Friday afternoon was helping develop greater continuity in the delivery of a holistic curriculum. The Head of Care also meets regularly with other senior staff to discuss the progress of all the boarders.

Through discussions with a number of boarders it was evident that residential life within the school was providing them with a range of opportunities to develop their social and life skills. The Head of Care explained that each young person's social and educational needs were identified individually through assessments, and it was noted that all young people's files contained education

and social care plans, that had been subject to regular review. Residential staff supervise evening prep and were observed to offer support when required.

As the young people reside in the hostel five nights a week there is time for individuals to participate in a range of social and recreational activities both within the environs of the school and in the local community. Recreational activities are offered every school day except Friday. At the time of the inspection boarders were able to choose from a range of activities that include: sport, horse riding, swimming, design, cooking, indoor climbing, outdoor activities, film, war hammer, recycling arts and crafts, drama and African drumming. Facilities within the boarding houses also provided access to computer games, board games, music, television and DVD's. The school has a sports hall, fitness suite, games room and outdoor swimming pool.

Through discussions with two groups of boarders it was clear that the majority were participating in a range of activities. A number felt that the limited access to popular activities, such as horse riding, was frustrating. Mention was also made of the additional cost associated with certain activities. The Head of Care explained that activities were normally offered on a first-come, first served basis and that parental consent was required for some which was not always received on time. There were, he explained, always a number of activities on offer that did not require any expenditure.

The residential staff team has only been together for a relatively short period of time and were as one reported, 'still finding their feet'. They were also operating without the additional support of a GAP student who was not due to arrive until January. During the inspection it was possible to meet with all three members of residential staff. All were able to speak with authority on the care needs of the boarders in their houses. While each assume the responsibility for the day-to-day management of their own houses they are expected to deploy their wide and varied skills as and when required. The Head of Care explained that if it was felt that a young person needed additional support to address a difficulty a referral for specialist assistance would be made. Records indicated that specialist support, had at different times, been sought from Mental Health Professional, Occupational Therapists and Counsellors.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

The Commission considers Standards 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.

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

2, 9, 17 & 20

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. While systems have been established to seek out the view of boarders, there was a perception amongst some, that their views did not influence decisions. The interactions observed between boarders and staff appeared to be spontaneous and based on a mutual respect. Records demonstrated that the needs of each individual were clearly identified on admission. Boarder's spoken with confirmed that they could maintain regular contact with their families.

EVIDENCE:

From observations and discussion with boarders and staff it was clear that the views of individuals were regularly sought on both a formal and informal manner. Formally, through House, Boarding Forum and School Council Meetings etc, and informally through the one-to-one interaction between individuals and staff. Given the communication difficulties experienced by many of the young people at the school, staff have developed a range of different techniques to ascertain individuals' views. Staff confirmed that English was the first language of all the boarders.

While the boarders spoken with felt that they were consulted there was a perception amongst some that their views were not taken into consideration when decisions were made. However, there was evidence that some of the proposals raised through the Boarders Forum had already been implemented. For example, senior boarders had been provided with a dedicated table so that they could eat together. Following discussions with a group of senior boarders the inspectors concluded that while a system existed for individuals to express their views and opinions, it was not working as effectively as it could and that the decision making process would benefit from more transparency. In the light of this it is recommended that concise minutes be produced from meetings of the Boarding Forum and School Council in particular, that reflect; the issues raised, the decisions arrived at and if appropriate, a date for the implementation of the action required.

The Head explained that referrals to the school came from both parents and Local Educational Authorities. The majority of students at the school are in receipt of a Statement of Educational need. As many of the pupils are drawn from across the South of England, weekly boarding is necessary. Due to the location of their homes, boarding was necessary. The Head explained that placements were generally open ended and pupils returned to mainstream education of college when it was deemed appropriate. It was established that the majority of pupils return home on leaving Northease.

All prospective pupils are invited to visit the school with their parents/guardians prior to admission. Records demonstrated that the admissions process, amongst other things, determines each individual's educational, physical and social needs. Information received through the admissions process is used to determine how each individual's needs could best be met within the boarding department.

During the inspection a discussion was held with the Head of Care regarding the present care planning process. It was suggested that as the school is developing a holistic approach that reflects the use of a 'twenty-four hour curriculum', the present system could be rationalised to avoid unnecessary

duplication. It was felt that an effective cross-referencing system could be used to ensure ready access to important information. It was also suggested that reports should be concise and written in clear unambiguous language. Specific targets and proposed strategies to effect change needed to be clearly stated.

The Head of Care explained that, when appropriate, young people were encouraged to maintain regular contact with their parents and families. While boarders had access to phones within their respective houses a large number of those spoken with confirmed they had their own mobiles. The use of mobile phones was normally limited to certain periods of the day and negotiated with staff. Boarders confirmed they could access e-mail facilities.

Staff explained that parents visit the school while collecting and dropping off their children, attending reviews or as guests at school functions. At the time of the inspection arrangements were being made for the annual Carol Service to which the parents were invited. There is an active parent support group called Friends of Northease, who provide support to both parents and the school in a number of different ways including organising a distribution system for school uniforms, participating in workshops, training events and celebratory assemblies.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children can wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money.(NMS 16)
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.(NMS 21)
- Children live in well designed and pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.(NMS 23)
- Children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.(NMS 24)
- Children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity.(NMS 25)

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

23 & 24

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. Evidence indicated that the accommodation was appropriate to meeting the needs of the young people. The facilities provided many opportunities for individuals to develop their social and life skills.

EVIDENCE:

During the course of the inspection a full tour of the school site was undertaken. All the boarding houses are now situated on the main campus. Each of the boarding houses were observed to be clean, tidy and in generally good decorative order. Boarders had been able to personalise their bedrooms and many contained posters etc. A number of boarders commented on a lack of storage space in their rooms but on inspection it appeared that this was in many respects down to lack of organisation. Other boarders with the same facilities were not experiencing the same difficulties storing their personal effects. There was sufficient WC, bath and shower facilities to meet the needs

of the number of young people being accommodated. The boarding areas appeared pleasantly warm and well ventilated.

A number of the senior boys commented on the discomfort they experienced within the boarding house last summer. The boarding house, which is an impressive new building of a wooden construction, became excessively hot at night and as a consequence made sleeping difficult. It would appear staff tried to address the problem with fans etc.

Each of the boarding houses had communal areas that could be used for social and recreational activities. Boarders could, under supervision, access other areas of the school such as the sports hall, computer suite, outside play area, gym and swimming pool during summer months. The school appeared to have appropriate facilities to meet the need of its present boarders. The school is subject to regular maintenance and refurbishment.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

The Commission considers Standards 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.

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

1, 19, 28, 30, 31 & 32

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. From the evidence obtained during the inspection, including comments from boarders, it was clear that the school was providing good quality care within an appropriately structured setting.

EVIDENCE:

Northeast has a Statement of Purpose that is subject to an annual review. The current Statement of Purpose has been approved by the governing body as an accurate description of the aims and objective of the school, its target population and the nature of the educational provision on offer. It contains all the relevant information required under this standard. The school has also produced a brochure for prospective pupils and their families. This brochure provides a good overview of life within Northeast and contains a section on boarding provision. It is written in clear accessible language and contains a number of quote from, amongst others, a number of pupils and their parents. The brochure is illustrated with a range of photographs aimed at reflecting life at the school.

Observations within the school indicated residential staff operated a 'hands on' approach and spent the majority of their working time in the company of the young people. As the inspection took place during the last week of term it was unsurprising that many of the boarders and staff were feeling tired and looking forward to the Christmas holidays. In normal circumstances residential staff would have had the additional support of a GAP student for the duration of the term, however, this year's student was not available for the autumn term. Residential staff felt that while the current staffing levels were sufficient to provide effective cover, the additional support offered by the student would be welcomed. Through discussions with boarders it was clear that residential staff provided continuity in the delivery of care.

Records demonstrated that both of the new boarding staff and previous residential experience before assuming their posts. Through discussions it was clear they hoped to develop their knowledge and skills in working with young people with communication difficulties while at Northeast. Both felt their induction programme had been thorough and provided a good introduction to the roles and responsibilities of individual staff and the policies and procedures of the school. Each was in the process of developing their Professional Profile and Personal Improvement Plan that is developed with the Head of Care. Residential staff are expected to either hold or obtain a Boarding Schools Association Certificate within their first year.

The Head of Care meets each of the residential staff at the end of each shift and has designated supervision sessions each week. The residential staff have a formal meeting every two weeks. The minutes of these meetings were available for inspection. The Head of Care confirmed that staff were expected to undertake regular training in key areas such as Child Protection, First Aid, Team Teach, Managing Conflict and Aggressive Behaviour.

The Head of Care confirmed that he received support from both the Head of Teacher, Bursar and other senior staff. Evidence indicated that the boarding department was well managed, staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities and there were clear lines of accountability. Sufficient financial resources were available for staff to provide leisure activities, transport etc. During the course of the inspection it was possible to examine a range of policies and procedures associated with, amongst other things, sanctions, health and safety, child protection, bullying and managing challenging behaviour. A number of records and documents were also examined including: Staff records, care plans, complaints records, administration of medication records, activity programmes, minutes of staff meetings, fire alarm test records and complaints and concerns records. All the records contained recent and relevant information and as such met the required guidance.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

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

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

“X” in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion
 “N/A” in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
14	3
15	3

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

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

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

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

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

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection? None

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1.	RS15	It is recommended that the current practice of carefully monitoring mealtimes continues to ensure that each young person is eating appropriately.	
2.	RS10	It is recommended that, in the light of training, all policies related to the Management of Challenging Behaviour are reviewed.	
3.	RS4	While the present system provides a record of complaints it is recommended that it could better reflect outcomes by noting both how and by whom the issues raised were resolved. The individual making the entry should also sign and date the entry.	
4.	RS13	That the games room be further developed to provide a more attractive communal area for senior pupils.	
5.	RS17	That the present care planning process be further developed to ensure information is not, unnecessary being duplicated.	
6.	RS9	That the minutes of the Boarding Forum and School Council Meetings are produced in a format that reflects the decision making process and likely outcomes with timescales.	

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