



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

BOARDING SCHOOL

Chigwell School

**Chigwell
Essex
IG7 6QF**

Lead Inspector
David Downes

Key Announced Inspection
11th October 2006 08:00

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 *Boarding 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.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of school	Chigwell School
Address	Chigwell Essex IG7 6QF
Telephone number	020 8501 5700
Fax number	020 8500 6232
Email address	
Provider Web address	www.chigwell-school.org
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Chigwell School Trust
Name of Head	Mr David Gibbs
Head of Boarding	Mr David Morrison, Snr Boarding Housemaster
Age range of boarding pupils	15 – 19
Date of last welfare inspection	Full boarding welfare inspection 24/03/03 Annual visit 06/05/05

Brief Description of the School:

Chigwell School is a co-educational independent school with both day and boarding provision. Together, the junior and senior schools provide places for approximately seven hundred pupils. Thirty-nine senior school students, all of whom were in the Sixth Form, were boarding at the time of the inspection. There is no boarding provision in the junior school.

Boarding accommodation is situated in three separate buildings. Two converted Victorian houses on the main school site, Sandon Lodge and Hainault House, provide accommodation for girls. A converted Georgian mansion, Grange Court, provides accommodation for boys and is situated short walk from the main school site.

The school's leisure facilities include extensive sports fields and a swimming pool.

The school stands in over seventy acres of grounds on the outskirts of Chigwell. There is good access to primary road and railway networks.

SUMMARY

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

This announced boarding welfare inspection covered all the key National Minimum Standards that have been identified by the Commission and some other Standards were also assessed.

This summary has been written in a style that is suitable for young people to read and it will be produced as a separate document for boarders.

David Downes and Vivienne Wells, a Boarding Sector Professional Inspector, visited the school for the day on 11th October, arriving early in the morning and staying until mid-evening. David Downes visited the school again on 20th October to finish inspecting records and to give feedback to the Headmaster.

Before the inspection, boarders were asked to complete a questionnaire to give the inspectors their views about boarding at the school. Thirty-one boarders filled in the questionnaire.

On 11th October, the inspectors joined the boarders for meals and spent time talking with them about the school.

The inspectors also:

- spoke with the Headmaster, the boarding house staff, the Sister, the Chaplain, the Senior Mistress and other staff who help to look after boarders
- looked at some records
- talked with two groups of boarders
- watched how the boarders and staff got along together
- toured the boarding houses
- visited other parts of the school where boarders spend their leisure time.

The school provided written information for the inspection. The inspectors received letters from the parent of a boarder and from the School Doctor, Environmental Health and the Fire Service.

The inspectors would like to thank the Headmaster, staff and boarders for their hospitality and for their help with the inspection.

What the school does well:

These are some of the good things that the inspectors found out about the school:

- Boarders are well looked after and feel safe. They receive a good standard of health and pastoral care. There are plenty of staff to look after boarders and the boarding houses are well organised.
- Relationships between staff and boarders are friendly and respectful. Boarders behave very well and feel that staff treat them fairly.
- In the survey, 71% of boarders said they were 'Always' satisfied with their boarding house and 29% said 'Usually'.
- Boarders get on well together and the atmosphere in the boarding houses is relaxed and friendly.
- Boarders were able to name a variety of people to whom they could talk about any worries or concerns.
- The boarding houses are comfortable, homely and clean.
- Boarders make good use of the school's sports and leisure facilities.
- The quality and choice of food offered boarders a balanced diet. Boarders' are able to express their views about the school's catering and they are taken seriously.

Comments made by boarders in their questionnaires included:

"The boarding house is fine – practically as good as it gets."

"The staff are nice. Good food. Rooms are comfortable."

"There's a good, friendly atmosphere, though maybe it's a bit strict at times."

"I'm generally satisfied with the food, but it is very different from my country."

"[The boarding house] is almost like my family at home."

"Living at school is interesting and useful for me personally. I always find it very nice."

"There's always something organised for boarders at weekends."

Comments made by parents:

"... life in the boarding house is pretty much perfectly adapted to the needs of the boarding pupils."

What has improved since the last inspection?

- The decoration and furnishing of the boarding houses is now of a similar good standard.
- The school has updated the handbooks and other sources of information about boarding for students and their parents.
- There are more activities for boarders at weekends.
- Boarders meet the Independent Listeners more often and know more about their role.
- The security arrangements have been improved at the boarding houses and across the school site.
- An extra part-time member of staff has been employed to support boarders at Sandon Lodge.
- All of the staff living at Grange Court are now involved in working with the boarders.

What they could do better:

- The school needs to make sure that all of the required checks are always completed before new staff start working at the school. This helps to ensure that people are suitable to work with children.
- The child protection policy should include some additional information.
- The school should make sure that the handbooks for boarders and parents contain the same information about the complaints policy and who to contact regarding any safety concerns.
- The records of any medicines given to boarders should be checked regularly, by a senior member of staff, to make sure that they are correct. This helps to make sure that medicines are being used safely.
- All boarders bedroom furniture should include a lockable cupboard or drawer where they would be able to keep personal possessions safely.

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.

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders' health is promoted. (NMS 6)
- Safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records. (NMS 7)
- Boarders' receive first aid and health care as necessary.(NMS 15)
- Boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill.(NMS 16)
- Boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal Problems.(NMS 17)
- Boarders receive good quality catering provision (NMS 24)
- Boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals.(NMS 25)
- Boarders are suitably accommodated when ill. (NMS 48)
- Boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered.(NMS 49)

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

- 6, 15, 24 and 48

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence, including a visit to the school.

Boarders' first aid and health needs are met. Boarders receive appropriate care when ill. Staff take the confidentiality of boarders' health information seriously.

Meals are of a satisfactory overall standard and boarders' views about the quality and variety of food are taken into account.

EVIDENCE:

The school Medical Centre is staffed by registered nurses. The 'on call' arrangements provide twenty-four hour nurse cover for boarders, supplemented by the Matron who provides medical assistance to all of the boarding houses. All boarders are registered with the school doctor, who holds a weekly surgery at the Medical Centre. A record of accidents was kept in the Medical Centre. Boarders told the inspectors that they were satisfied with their health care.

The inspectors were informed that boarders at Grange Court and Hainault House could be looked after separately from other boarders if they were ill. Boarders at Sandon Lodge are all accommodated in shared rooms and there is no provision there for a boarder who needed to be isolated from other pupils.

The Sister advised the inspectors that such a situation had never arisen for a boarder at Sandon Lodge and that arrangements could be made to use the Medical Centre, subject to the necessary overnight staffing.

The Medical Centre staff held information about boarders' health and welfare needs. The Sister confirmed that signed parental permission forms for the administration of medication were held for boarders. The inspectors were informed that the school's medical records continue to be kept separately from any NHS records held in the Medical Centre. The Sister confirmed that she monitored the storage and recording of any medication administered by boarding house staff. There were, however, no arrangements for the Headmaster or a senior member of staff to monitor any school records of medication administered to boarders. The Sister explained that no-one other than the school doctor was allowed to see these records, due to concerns about breaching medical confidentiality. This issue was raised at the last inspection and was the subject of correspondence and further discussion after that inspection. The inspector acknowledges that the school's nursing staff take the issue of confidentiality regarding boarders' medical treatment very seriously. However, this should not be allowed to override the requirement for appropriate monitoring of school records, in line with the Standards.

The inspectors were advised that none of the boarders were administering their own prescribed medication, but arrangements could be made for them to do so, subject to appropriate risk assessment. It was noted that some boarders' bedroom furniture (for example, in Hainault House) did not include a lockable drawer or cupboard where they would be able to keep medication safely, if necessary.

Medical Centre staff were aware that some overseas boarders brought their own medicines (such as Chinese herbal medicine) into school. The inspectors were told that advice had been sought from the school doctor about the nature of these medicines and any potential risks, so that they could be managed appropriately.

The school doctor sent written comments for the inspection and stated that the welfare and general care of boarders was "excellent".

The school has a clear policy on countering health risks, including smoking, alcohol and drug misuse, which is implemented in practice. The inspectors were informed that boarding house staff and nursing staff provide pupils with information and guidance, when necessary. The school does not teach Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) in the Sixth Form, although some other courses (such as the accreditation course for student Listeners) cover related areas. Most boarders do not attend the school before joining the Sixth Form and staff said that there was considerable variation in the amount and type of PSHE that boarders had received. The School Chaplain (co-ordinator for the school's PSHE programme) and the senior boarding staff were

considering whether there was a need for more structured advice and guidance to be made available to boarders.

In their responses to the boarding survey, 70% of boarders said that school meals 'Always' or 'Usually' provided them with a balanced diet. Comments received from boarders included:

"Balanced meals, but not of very good quality."

"I don't particularly like English food, but I've lived with it and put up with it."

"Not very tasty."

"Fruit and vegetables always available."

"Need more choice for supper."

The inspectors joined boarders for breakfast, lunch and supper. All of these meals were of a satisfactory standard, in terms of quality, choice and quantity. Boarders have access to snacks and drinks in their boarding houses.

The Boarders' Catering Committee is open to all boarders and provides an opportunity for pupils to discuss the catering arrangements and to put forward any ideas or concerns. There was also a comments book in the dining room. Minutes of the most recent committee meeting and discussion with the Catering Manager demonstrated that boarders' comments and suggestions were being taken seriously. The preferences of different cultural groups were being given consideration in menu planning. It was, however, clear from the boarders' survey returns that a number of international students were finding it difficult to get used to the food.

The Catering Manager confirmed that special diets were provided, when required, for medical or religious needs. Catering staff were imaginative and flexible in making arrangements for meals on special occasions and examples were given of other events, such as 'theatre' nights when the chefs had cooked food to order in the dining hall.

The Environmental Health Officer confirmed that there were no outstanding food safety recommendations relating to the school.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders are protected from bullying.(NMS 2)
- Boarders are protected from abuse.(NMS 3)
- Use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate.(NMS 4)
- Boarders' complaints are appropriately responded to.(NMS 5)
- The operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare (NMS 13)
- Boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school.(NMS 22)
- Boarders are protected from the risk of fire. (NMS 26)
- The welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school.(NMS 28)
- Boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high risk activities.(NMS 29)
- Boarders' personal privacy is respected.(NMS 37)
- There is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders.(NMS 38)
- 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.(NMS 39)
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion. (NMS 41)
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.(NMS 47)

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

2, 3, 4, 5, 26, 37, 38, 39, 41 and 47.

Quality in this outcome area is adequate. This judgement has been made using available evidence, including a visit to the school.

The school has a range of appropriate practices and systems in place to keep boarders safe and to respond to any concerns or complaints. There was no evidence of bullying or harassment. The use of discipline is fair and appropriate and the school's approach reflects the age range of boarders. Some staff recruitment records did not provide sufficient evidence of robust procedures being followed at all times.

EVIDENCE:

In the survey carried out for this inspection, boarders were asked whether they were being bullied; 29 pupils responded "No" and one "Don't know". None of the boarders spoken with said that they had experienced bullying. Comments received from boarders indicated that they found other boarders "friendly" and that the atmosphere in was "warm" and "relaxed". The inspectors were told that there had been no reported concerns about bullying amongst boarders since the last inspection. The anti-bullying policy is included in the staff handbook and in information sent to parents.

The school's designated senior member of staff for child protection issues (the Senior Mistress) stated that the school had established effective links with the local authority's child protection service and could consult with them when necessary. Essex County Council advised the Commission that the school had co-operated fully with the child protection service in relation to matters that had arisen since the last inspection.

Annual child protection briefings are provided for the staff team. Staff spoken with confirmed that they had received copies of the child protection policy. They were aware of the procedures and the role of the designated member of staff. The inspectors were shown the minutes of a briefing meeting involving boarders, boarding house staff, the Senior Mistress, the Sister and the school's Independent Listeners. This meeting was held at the start of the new school year to introduce new boarders to key people and to explain their respective roles regarding child protection and pastoral care. Prefects receive a briefing on child protection from the Deputy Head as part of their induction.

The school's written child protection policy and procedure had been improved since the last inspection and was generally satisfactory. However, it needed to include more details about how to report concerns or allegations to the local services and how to notify the Commission. The policy states that the handbooks produced for pupils and parents will explain who to contact with regard to any concerns of a child protection nature. However, not all of the handbooks explicitly stated these contact arrangements.

One of the school's Independent Listeners wrote to the Commission to confirm that they were regularly introduced to boarders to ensure that boarders were aware of their role. They also confirmed that no issues of concern had been brought to their attention and said that the school seeks "to ensure suitable care and safety for the students".

The standard of pupils' behaviour throughout the inspection was observed to be very good. Boarders understood the possible sanctions for any serious breach of the school rules. Handbooks for parents and boarders also included the boarding house rules. Discussions with boarders and staff, together with

responses to the boarders' survey, indicated that boarders generally found the rules fair and that sanctions were seldom used.

Boarders were aware that they could raise any complaints or concerns with staff, but there was some variation in the way that written information about the complaints policy was made available to them and to parents. The inspectors were shown a child-friendly version of the boarders' complaints policy in a handbook for girl boarders. The parents' handbook only contained details of the complaints procedure for parents. The boys' boarding handbook did not explicitly refer to the complaints policy. The staff handbook contained the complaints policy for pupils but did not refer to parents' complaints.

The Headmaster, who is responsible for dealing with any serious complaints, confirmed that the school had not received any complaints relating to boarding welfare.

Records evidenced that regular fire drills were being held in residential time. Boarders were able to give a clear explanation of the fire evacuation procedures. Records indicated that fire safety equipment was being checked regularly. Essex Fire Authority confirmed that the school had no outstanding fire safety recommendations. The school's health and safety records demonstrated awareness of the need to have fire risk assessments in place, following a recent change to the relevant regulations.

Discussions with boarders indicated that staff showed respect for their privacy in the boarding houses. In response to views expressed by boarders, the kitchen in Sandon House was to be relocated to provide better privacy for the girls sharing the adjoining bedroom.

Recruitment records relating to recently appointed teaching staff were sampled. At the time of the first inspection visit, two staff files did not contain evidence to demonstrate that all of the recommended checks had been undertaken before they started work in the school. The Headmaster subsequently located additional documentary evidence in files held by another senior member of staff. The school had obtained an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure and two written references for each of these members of staff. However, the school did not have evidence to demonstrate that all references and professional qualifications had been verified. In addition, a member of staff from abroad had started work before the school had obtained a certificate of good conduct. Issues relating to shortfalls in staff recruitment records were raised at the last full welfare inspection and a subsequent annual visit. The Headmaster recognised the need to make further improvements to recruitment procedures and records, and subsequently supplied the Commission with a copy of a revised checklist and guidance that were being implemented. The recruitment procedures and records of the company that provides the school's ancillary staff were not inspected on this occasion. The Bursar confirmed that an audit of these procedures and records

would be undertaken by the school to ensure that they met the required Standard.

Boarding accommodation is reserved solely for the use of boarders. Staff advised that adults who have not been subject to the necessary vetting checks do not have unsupervised access to boarding houses when boarders are present. One instance where contractors could potentially have unsupervised access to boarders, who returned to the boarding house during the school day, was drawn to the attention of the Senior Boarding Housemaster for consideration.

At the time of the last inspection, the school's health and safety arrangements were assessed as meeting the relevant Standards. The inspectors were advised that the previous Bursar, who had management responsibility for health and safety matters, had left their post at very short notice earlier in the year. The new Bursar and the Health and Safety Committee had started a review of the existing arrangements, including all risk assessments. Recent committee meeting minutes provided evidence of a co-ordinated approach to health and safety matters and of appropriate attention being given to boarding accommodation and issues. The school's Health and Safety Officer had carried out an inspection (in August 2006) of each of the boarding houses and individual reports were available. These reports indicated that the arrangements in place were generally sound and that any identified issues were being addressed by the school.

Risk assessments had been completed for the accommodation and external areas accessible to pupils and these were being kept under review. Since the last annual visit, additional security measures had been put in place for both boarding houses and for other parts of the school site.

Risk assessments for boarders taking part in trips away from the school site were not inspected on this occasion. These arrangements were assessed as being satisfactory at the last inspection. The inspectors were informed that the same senior member of staff was responsible and that there had been no significant changes to the procedure.

Comments received from boarders reflected a high level of satisfaction with the security and safety arrangements:

"We have good security and staff look after us."

"It's a safe boarding house."

"The house is alarmed at night and there are always adults around."

"We have fire drills and other precautions to protect us."

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.(NMS 11)
- Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination.(NMS 18)
- Boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands.(NMS 27)
- Boarders have satisfactory provision to study.(NMS 43)
- Boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas.(NMS 46)

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

11 and 18

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence, including a visit to the school.

Boarders have access to a good range of leisure facilities and activities.

Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination. The school welcomes and celebrates the ethnic and cultural diversity of its boarders.

EVIDENCE:

Responses to the boarders' survey demonstrated that boarders are able to pursue a variety of leisure interests and activities outside of class time. Some boarders commented positively on the support that they had received from boarding house staff, such as helping them with transport to a local club, to enable them to pursue an individual interest. In the school's own boarding survey 90% of respondents rated extra-curricular activities as either 'excellent' or 'good' and gave a similar response when asked about trips and events organised by boarding house staff.

The school boarding population includes students from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This is the first year that all boarders have been Sixth Form students from overseas. Boarding staff said that this enabled them to concentrate on meeting the needs of overseas students and ensured that international boarders formed a significant part of the school's Sixth Form.

Discussions with staff and boarders indicated that the school is sensitive to the individual needs of boarders and is committed to avoiding any inappropriate discrimination. Staff were observed to treat all boarders fairly and with

respect. The inspectors saw positive interaction between boarders of both sexes and from different ethnic backgrounds. Boarders said that they were made welcome when they arrived at the school. The school organises a number of special events, such as international and house dinners. These, together with events to celebrate religious festivals, emphasise the contribution of boarders from different countries and cultures. Boarders appeared to feel that their contributions were valued and that they were well integrated into the life of the school. Appropriate additional support was being provided through the EFL department for pupils whose first language was not English. One area that some boarders thought the school could improve was the food, which did not suit everyone's preferences. The school's boarding survey included a section specifically for international boarders, seeking their views about boarding and studying at Chigwell School.

Some boarders commented positively on the ease with which they were able to travel to London to develop their links with the wider international community. The school gave examples of culturally sensitive support given to particular groups of boarders in relation to specific issues.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school.(NMS 12)
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.(NMS 14)
- Boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families.(NMS 19)
- New boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in.(NMS 21)
- Boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school.(NMS 30)
- There are sound relationships between staff and boarders.(NMS 36)

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

12, 14, 19 21 and 36

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence, including a visit to the school.

Boarders are given a range of opportunities to contribute to the operation of boarding. Staff provide boarders with a very good level of personal support. Boarders are helped to maintain contact with their families. The relationships between staff and boarders are very positive.

EVIDENCE:

The comments made by boarders indicated that they generally feel listened to and have a variety of ways to express their views about the operation the boarding provision. In the Commission's survey of boarders, 50% of those who responded said that they were 'Always' able to have a say about how they live at school and 25% said 'Usually'. Comments from boarders included:

"There is a clear fabric and you have to live within it, but you can sometimes make suggestions and decide what to do."

"I expressed a preference for a single room and I got it."

"I don't have much of a say with some aspects, but I know if I had a problem that my point of view would be listened to."

The school provided examples of changes that had been made to the operation of boarding as a result of the views expressed by boarders. These included the

relocation of the kitchen at Sandon Lodge and the extension of computer networking at Grange Court.

Pupils said that they were able to express their views to their Boarding Housemaster or Housemistress, either informally or during house meetings. The school periodically undertakes surveys of boarders' views. The inspectors were shown the results of the latest survey, which covered a range of areas, such as support with academic work, extra-curricular activities and "life in the boarding house"; there was also a specific section for International students.

The school has sound arrangements for pastoral support. Pupils saw boarding house staff as friendly and approachable and staff clearly knew the boarders well as individuals. In addition to the informal support available from boarding house staff, boarders are members of the day houses, through which the school's pastoral care is organised. The Headmaster said that the experience of the boarding house staff made them particularly well placed to combine pastoral support with advice and guidance for boarders in relation to academic matters. Discussion with staff, together with sampled records and minutes of a Boarding staff meeting, demonstrated that pupils needing additional support (for example, as a result of homesickness) were identified and given appropriate assistance. A boarder told an inspector that it had been particularly helpful to be able to discuss personal and academic concerns with a member of staff from their country of origin. The school also has access to a professional counsellor and links with the local Child and Family Consultation Service for any pupil identified as needing this service. Senior boarding staff explained how they were able to obtain advice about cultural norms, which enabled them to provide better support for overseas boarders in relation to particular personal issues.

The Chaplain runs a course to enable Sixth Formers to gain accreditation as 'Listeners' in the Senior School. The work of the Listeners is supervised by the Chaplain and other pastoral care staff. Some boarders named the Listeners amongst the people to whom they would feel able to go for help with a problem.

The school has been successful in raising the profile of the two 'Independent Listeners', one of whom sent their comments for the inspection. The independent listener said that they (and their colleague) had visited on several occasions to meet pupils in the boarding accommodation and been given the opportunity of "chatting freely and openly" with them.

Boarders are able to contact their parents by e-mail, telephone and letter. Payphones were located in the boarding houses and many boarders had mobile phones, to which they were allowed appropriate access. Overseas boarders were enabled to make cheaper international telephone calls (via the internet) and they appreciated having this facility.

Since the last inspection, the school has developed and refined the Induction Programme for new boarders to provide a very good introduction to the school and local amenities, together with social events and educational trips which continue throughout the first term. The inspectors were advised that these trips are provided free for boarders to encourage their participation. Boarders told the inspectors that, when they first arrived at the school, they were made welcome by staff and other boarders, who helped them to settle in. When they arrive at the school, each new boarder has a 'mentor', who is chosen from the same day house as the boarder; most boarders spoken with had found this helpful.

The school has continued to improve its links with the parents of boarders from overseas and with relevant organisations. This was reported to be enabling the school to obtain better pre-admission information.

A handbook, containing relevant information for new and experienced boarders, was in place for each boarding house. This information had recently been updated.

Friendly and mutually respectful interaction was observed between boarders and staff. Boarders said that they were looked after well and fairly. In the survey for this inspection, boarders made a number of positive comments about individual members of staff and the boarding staff in general. The parent who sent their comments for the inspection expressed confidence in the boarding house staff and praised the way that boarders were looked after.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders' possessions and money are protected.(NMS 20)
- Boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation.(NMS 40)
- Boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.(NMS 42)
- Boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities.(NMS 44)
- Boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day.(NMS 45)
- Boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school.(NMS 50)

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

40, 42 and 44

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence, including a visit to the school.

The boarding accommodation is satisfactory and the school is continuing to upgrade these areas in order of priority.

EVIDENCE:

The boarding accommodation was clean and well decorated. Most of the furniture was in good condition and the school has a 'rolling programme' for replacing older furniture. Sandon Lodge provides a particularly homely environment for boarders. Hainault House and Grange Court and also provide comfortable accommodation. Grange Court had been refurbished since the last inspection and improvements to the décor in Hainault House had made the accommodation more comfortable and homely.

At the time of the inspection visit, work was being undertaken at Grange Court to extend the school's computer network to all boarders' bedrooms.

A number of bookcases and other items belonging to a resident member of staff were being stored temporarily on the ground floor at Grange Court. Although this did not appear to be affecting boarders, the school needs to consider, in its ongoing health and safety inspections, any potential risks that such storage arrangements may present.

As noted elsewhere, some boarders' bedroom furniture (for example, in Hainault House) did not include a lockable drawer or cupboard where they could safely keep personal belongings.

The majority of boarders told the inspectors that they were happy with their accommodation.

Comments received from the boarders' survey included:

"The boarding house is roomy, lots of space, comfortable, old, classy."

"My room is very comfortable."

"Accommodation, furniture and conditions are good."

There were sufficient bathroom and toilet facilities for boarders in all three houses.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- A suitable statement of the school's principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff (NMS 1)
- There is clear leadership of boarding in the school.(NMS 8)
- Crises affecting boarders' welfare are effectively managed.(NMS 9)
- The school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare.(NMS 10)
- Risk assessment and school record keeping contribute to boarders' welfare.(NMS 23)
- Boarders are adequately supervised by staff.(NMS 31)
- Staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site.(NMS 32)
- Boarders are adequately supervised at night.(NMS 33)
- Boarders are looked after by staff with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.(NMS 34)
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.(NMS 35)
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.(NMS 51)
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

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

1, 8, 23, 31, 34 and 51

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence, including a visit to the school.

Written information about boarding principles and practice is made available to pupils, parents and staff. The school's boarding provision is well managed and provides a stable and secure environment for pupils.

EVIDENCE:

A range of information about boarding principles and practice is contained in the school prospectus and in various booklets for parents and pupils. The school also has a website, which includes details of boarding provision. The statement of boarding principles and practice has been updated to reflect changes in boarding, such as the move to Sixth Form international boarding.

There was evidence of clear leadership of boarding by the Headmaster, the Senior Boarding Housemaster and the House Parents. There had been no change to this well-established team in the period since the last inspection. The Senior Boarding Housemaster had, however, recently taken on significant additional responsibilities in the role of Bursar. It was clear that boarders benefit from having a committed and very experienced team of Houseparents.

Records of any serious complaints and major punishments are monitored by the Headmaster. Risk assessments and accident records are monitored by Bursar and the Health and Safety Officer. As already noted, an equivalent arrangement was needed for monitoring records of medication administered to boarders. The school could also improve the effectiveness of monitoring staff recruitment procedures and related records.

The staffing levels and deployment in the boarding houses adequately reflected the number and ages of boarders accommodated. Boarders said that they were well supervised by staff and knew always who was on duty in their boarding houses. Staff described clear cover arrangements to ensure boarders are appropriately supervised. The inspector was informed that all of the resident members of staff at Grange Court were now involved in working directly with the boarders and an additional part-time member of staff had been employed to support the Houseparents at Sandon Lodge. Both of these developments were viewed positively by staff and boarders.

The inspectors were shown the signing in and out records used by boarders when going off the school premises. Staff said that this functioned well for keeping track of boarders' whereabouts. A parent also commented very positively on these arrangements in one of the boarding houses.

New boarding staff, including gap students, described receiving induction training when taking on boarding responsibilities. They had been given copies of relevant policies and procedures. Resident and non-resident boarding staff told the inspectors that they receive supervision and support from the Houseparents. They were aware of their job descriptions, roles and responsibilities in the boarding house. Comments received from staff were indicative of well-supported and enthusiastic teams.

Staff supervision and appraisal structures are in place and appropriately managed. The Senior Boarding Housemaster and Housemistresses have a formal meeting with the Headmaster each term to discuss and review boarding practice. Senior house staff have attended training events organised by the Boarding Schools Association and the school demonstrates commitment to meeting the ongoing development needs of the staff team.

The school does not place boarders in lodgings and Standard 51 is, therefore, not applicable.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 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>
6	3
7	X
15	2
16	X
17	X
24	3
25	X
48	3
49	X

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	3
3	2
4	3
5	2
13	X
22	X
26	3
28	X
29	X
37	3
38	2
39	3
41	3
47	3

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
11	3
18	4
27	X
43	X
46	X

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	3
14	4
19	3
21	3
30	X
36	3

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
20	X
40	3
42	3
44	3
45	X
50	X

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

Continued

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
8	3
9	X
10	X
23	2
31	3
32	X
33	X
34	3
35	X
51	N/A
52	X

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

Yes

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.	BS3	It is recommended that the school's child protection policy is developed to include details of how to make referrals to the local authority's child protection service and to the Commission and to distinguish the respective roles of these agencies.	
2.	BS3	It is recommended that the school reviews the content of boarding handbooks (for parents and boarders) with regard to information about child protection contact persons.	
2.	BS5	It is recommended that the school reviews the content of boarding handbooks (for parents and boarders) with regard to information about the complaints procedures.	
3.	BS6	It is recommended that the school continues to keep the provision of personal, social and health education for boarders under review.	
4.	BS15	It is recommended that records of medication administered to boarders are monitored by the Head or a senior member of staff. This is a repeat recommendation.	
5.	BS20	It is recommended that all boarders have a suitably secure, accessible place to keep personal possessions and valuables.	

6.	BS23	It is recommended that the systems for regular monitoring of records maintained by the school covers all of the areas specified in NMS 23.1, Appendix 3. This is a repeat recommendation.	
7.	BS38	It is strongly recommended that the procedure for recruiting all staff who work with boarders includes a CRB disclosure check at the appropriate level undertaken by the school, verification of identity and verification of references. Records should be held to evidence all parts of the recruitment process. This is a repeat recommendation.	11/01/07
8.	BS38	It is strongly recommended that staff from abroad do not start work in the school until a 'certificate of good conduct' or similar has been obtained from their country of origin.	11/01/07

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Colchester Local Office
1st Floor, Fairfax House
Causton Road
Colchester
Essex
CO1 1RJ

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120

Email: enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.csci.org.uk

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