



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

## RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

**West Of England School For Children With Little  
Or No Sight**

**Topsham Road  
Countess Wear  
Exeter  
Devon  
EX2 6HA**

*Lead Inspector*  
**Alison Clark**

*Announced Inspection*  
**22nd January 2007 09:30am**



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](http://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](http://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

<b>Name of school</b>	West Of England School For Children With Little Or No Sight
<b>Address</b>	Topsham Road Countess Wear Exeter Devon EX2 6HA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 454200
<b>Fax number</b>	01392 428048
<b>Email address</b>	
<b>Provider Web address</b>	
<b>Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school</b>	West of England School and College
<b>Name of Head</b>	Tracy De Bernhardt Dunkin
<b>Name of Director of Care</b>	Paula Lahey
<b>Age range of residential pupils</b>	5 to 22 years.
<b>Date of last welfare inspection</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> March 2006.

## **Brief Description of the School:**

The West of England School and College is a non-maintained residential special school for children and young people with visual impairment and other special needs. There are four departments: The Nursery, St David's House, the Main School and the College, providing education and specialist intervention for 153 children and young people of whom 95 were boarding at the time of this inspection. Boarding is provided in St David's, the School and in the College. A 24 hour nursing service is provided in addition to physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and education in mobility. The School Doctor visits weekly and when called. Other services are arranged as necessary. The four departments are situated on a pleasant, well maintained and level campus on the outskirts of Exeter with easy access to the M5 Motorway and with a frequent bus service to the centre of the city. The West of England School and College has charitable status and is managed by the Board of Governors. All information provided for the learners is available in Braille or large print.

Since the last inspection, there have been significant developments across the whole establishment. The new Senior Management Team has been established and each department has as Executive Manager. The school and college now operate as pre 16 and post 16 across the campus, which has led to the integration of what was St. David's, Main School and College students and staff. The Director of Learner Services manages the nursing care, therapy teams and the new development of Family Support and Assessment. Other members of the Senior Management Team are Director of Education, Director of External Relations, Director of Resources and Director of Quality Assurance.

# SUMMARY

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

The inspection was carried out over 3 days by 3 inspectors, one of whom is a Nursing Inspector. The inspection covered hours in early morning and late evening. The inspectors spent time with learners at meal times and activity times in the boarding houses. The inspectors were very impressed by the confidence of the learners, some of whom were interested to know what the inspectors were doing in "our school". The learners talked freely to the inspectors and were not in the least inhibited by staff members being nearby. The Director of Care was most helpful by supplying the inspectors with a great deal of relevant information about the learners, the school and the college. All of this information gave the inspectors a good insight into how things are done in the school and college. High standards were found in all areas of the campus and members of staff who were spoken with, showed a great commitment to the learners.

A number of parents completed questionnaires and the inspectors thank them for doing so and for their many positive comments about the school.

A number of learners completed questionnaires and the inspectors thank them for doing so and their many positive comments about the school.

A number of Placing Authorities also completed questionnaires but the Learning and Skills Council felt that it was inappropriate for them to do so.

The inspectors found that the recommended actions from the inspection of 14/03/06 had been dealt with or were still being developed. There are no major recommendations from this inspection, rather a continuing of plans to formalise the supervision programme for the nursing staff, continue with the development of the sheet to record the recruitment process and the discontinuation of using the back door into St. David's.

## What the school does well:

A well managed team of highly motivated and enthusiastic staff, from many disciplines, provide a good level of support to the learners. The administration team, the catering team, the ancillary team and the campus management team all play their part in supporting the learners. Communication amongst the various groups of professionals is good and they work together for the welfare of the learners. The school and college are situated in a very attractive location, with public transport nearby.

All planning and reporting is done in great detail, paying attention to the very individual needs of each learner. Work is being done to produce a "front sheet" for each learner to record all essential information and a photograph.

## **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The school and college have dealt with the recommendations made at the last inspection.

Debriefing is part of the procedure for any member of staff who has been involved in an incident of physical restraint. Details of the debriefing are recorded on the record of physical restraint form.

The school and college have discontinued the storage of oxygen.

Formal supervision for nursing staff is still being arranged.

The school and college are still working towards 80% of the care staff having NVQ3 qualification.

## **What they could do better:**

The school and college should continue with the plans to set up formal and regular supervision for the members of the nursing team.

The back door into St. David's should not be used as this opens into the bedroom area of the students.

The sheet to record all the details of the recruitment process should be finalised.

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](mailto: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.



# DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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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 and 15.

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

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The learners live in a healthy environment and their health and intimate care needs are identified and promoted.

The learners are provided with healthy and nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The care plan contains all details pertaining to the physical, mental, emotional and social needs of each learner. All learners are given the appropriate help and support with any health issues. The health of all the learners is promoted through good food, exercise, fresh air, good hygiene and safety. A detailed health plan is in place for every learner. All of the learners are encouraged to have a high standard of personal hygiene. Throughout the inspection, the learners were clean and smart in their school uniforms and the same was true for those learners who wore casual clothing.

The school and college have a team of fourteen nurses that provide 24-hour cover for learners throughout the term. Since the last inspection, the Director of Care and the Nursing team have worked hard to implement the recommendations from that report. Professional links have continued over the year, and new links forged with key professionals in skin care and also health protection and promotion. The nursing staff are exploring other links to assist with their changing role in the school. This will enable them to keep pace with recent developments and good practice provision for the learners. Since the last inspection, the school and college have moved away from the medical

model of health care provision, to a more integrated and community approach. This has benefited the learners as they now receive their regular medication in the houses and do not need to go to the medical centre 3 times a day. A medical room has been created in Dinham House and in Haldon House. To assist with this integration of their health care needs into daily life, the nursing team no longer wear a uniform. Thus a more holistic approach to care is made, which is of enormous benefit to the learners.

Supervision within the nursing team continues on an informal basis. Formal supervision has commenced and evidence was seen of clear and full records covering all aspects of practice, together with application to the school's and college's philosophy. This is not however done regularly and the team are working towards ensuring that formal supervision takes place twice a term to meet the standards and to provide support for the staff to give best practice care to the learners.

A good practice implementation has been that of annual training and competency assessment of staff in the administration of medicines and the treatment of sudden collapse. Staff are currently looking at the skills they have and the changes in their role within the school. They are seeking to attend training that is learner focussed and relevant to the vision of the school and college, which is to provide excellent care whilst enabling the learners to be as independent as possible.

The care of learners when they are ill is caring and positive. All of the staff involved in boarding, receive regular first aid training. Parental consent for the administration of first aid and non-prescribed medication is also obtained.

Records sampled demonstrated that staff have been fully involved with parents and medical colleagues in maintaining the health needs of the learners.

Arrangements for learners to see a doctor or paediatrician are in place.

Regular monitoring of each learner's condition is maintained. A consultant optician holds regular clinics and provides advice and support to staff, learners and parents as needed.

Interactions with the learners were respectful of their age and ability, allowing choice as appropriate and demonstrating good communication. All intimate procedures were carried out with privacy and dignity protected. There are call bell systems in the boarding houses.

The team of nurses was seen to actively seek to promote the health and well being of the learners by accessing specialist advice, support and assessment at the earliest point of need. The school has good links with the local GP practice. The Paediatrician visits weekly to review and assess the students as need requires. Staff said that learners could request to see a same gender doctor, to see them alone or to go to the local surgery.

Currently there is no formal psychological input and support. The post became vacant last year and a replacement is starting in April 2007. Since the last inspection, the nursing team have reviewed the use and storage of oxygen in the school. The inspector was informed that, following a risk assessment, it was decided not to have oxygen on the school campus for general use and that learners' specific instances will be assessed as required. This provides greater safeguards for learners in case of fire.

Mealtimes were well managed by the staff and were social occasions for the learners. The inspectors were impressed by how well the learners interacted with them. The learners were keen to know why the inspectors were in school and offered information on how happy they were there. Breakfast, lunch and tea were taken with the learners. The catering team works hard to provide a varied and nutritious diet for the learners. They know the learners by name and help them to choose their food. There is always a choice of dishes, with salad available at lunchtime and teatime. Special diets are provided. Learners in College have similar arrangements, as well as the opportunity to prepare their own food. Much of the food is sourced locally. The learners had good appetites. Menus are kept and were seen by an inspector. There are no outstanding issues from the local Environmental Health Service. Members of staff supervise mealtimes to ensure that the learners are eating an appropriate amount of food. The main dining room in school and other dining rooms on the campus are all appropriately furnished. The learners have cutlery and crockery that meets their individual needs. Members of staff are alert for any one who might need help and this is given with dignity. The school has set up a SNAG [school nutrition action group] to discuss the issues around food and nutrition. The group is composed of a cross section of members of staff, as well as a college learner.

## 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, 7, 8, 10, 26 and 27.

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

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The privacy of the learners is respected and information about them is handled confidentially. Learners are aware of how to make a complaint and are protected from abuse and bullying. There are procedures to be followed should a learner be absent without authority. The learners are encouraged to behave in an acceptable manner. The school is a safe place for the learners live, supported by staff who have been carefully selected.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The school and college provide policies and procedures to support staff in caring for the learners, particularly in the area of privacy and confidentiality. Members of staff were seen to knock on bedroom doors prior to entering and bathroom and toilet doors were always closed. All information about the learners was stored in secure cabinets. All members of staff had undergone child protection training and /or vulnerable adult training and knew about sharing information. The learners were able to make and receive telephone calls, letters etc. in private. Some learners had their own mobile phones. There were some learners who needed help from members of staff to make calls. There was accommodation in the school that could be used by visiting parents. All members of staff were aware of the issues around dealing intimately with learners of the opposite gender. There was a policy and procedures, known to staff and learners, on when it might be necessary to search the possessions of a learner.

There is a complaints procedure for the school and college, which is known to members of staff and learners. Members of staff work so closely with the learners that they are able to pick up any unhappiness or distress. Staff are in close touch with parents, thereby being able to deal with any concerns at the start. The complaints book was seen by the inspectors.

A copy of the Local Safeguarding Board handbook was available in the school. There are detailed procedures to deal with child protection issues in the school. These include guidance for members of staff against whom an allegation is made. All members of staff are trained to at least a basic level. More senior staff members are trained to a higher level that befits their position in the school. Child protection training is part of the on going training programme in the school and college. Training is done "in house" as well as provided by external trainers. Senior staff have links with other schools and agencies. All members of staff are well aware that the campus is not secure and that learners could be at risk, particularly at night. There are digital locks on the outside doors of the buildings.

Bullying is not tolerated within the school and college. There are procedures to deal with the issue of bullying. Bullying is discussed in school as well as in the boarding areas. An anti-bullying week is a feature in the school and college programme. This week serves to ensure that the staff and the learners are aware of the importance of being alert to the possibility of bullying happening in the school and college. Members of staff work closely with the learners, which means that any bullying would be noticed before it became a major issue. However, care staff and school staff are very aware of how easily bullying can be carried out.

There are systems in place for the school to notify the appropriate authorities, including the Commission for Social Care Inspection, of any event relating to

the protection and welfare of the learners. The majority of parents felt that communication between themselves and the school and college was good. The Director of Care explained to the inspectors that the staff work very closely with the parents of the learners. If a learner is unable to return to school, the parent would telephone the school with the reason why. Should a learner not return from work/college or an activity, there are detailed procedures to be followed. This would include informing the senior manager on call. Members of staff have access to information on each learner, which includes a photograph. The security of the open campus is under constant review. There are clear policies and procedures to deal with behaviour of the learners on the whole of the campus. There is an expectation throughout the school and college that the learners will behave in an acceptable manner. This expectation is supported by caring and sensitive members of staff who work closely with the learners. Praise is used generously and rewards and privileges are evident throughout the school and college. There is a staged approach to unacceptable behaviour and sanctions are rarely used. Sanctions applied in school/college do not carry over to boarding time. Records are kept of sanctions and physical interventions. The recording sheet for physical intervention now includes a section to record the debriefing of members of staff who have been involved in a holding event. This was an issue raised at the previous inspection. The school is looking at its behaviour policy, updating its approach to include the social and emotional aspect of learning and physical intervention.

There is a detailed risk assessment of all areas of the campus. It is the responsibility of every member of staff to ensure that the learners are safe. The Health and Safety group meet regularly and are kept informed of any issues and repairs needing attention. The maintenance team deal with day to day repairs swiftly and efficiently. Fire drills are carried out regularly and fire alarms are tested according to advice from the Devon Fire and Rescue Service. The Head of Maintenance confirmed that the temperature of the water used by the learners is controlled. Members of staff use thermometers for the bath water, just to be extra sure that it is the correct temperature. Medical devices and hoists are serviced regularly, according to advice from the manufacturer. Members of the hydrotherapy team maintain the balance of chemicals in the swimming pool. Oxygen is no longer stored in the school.

The recruitment of staff is handled initially by "First Stop Desk" at Devon County Council, after which the process is carried out internally. The process is carried out satisfactorily. A spreadsheet records the results of checks with the Criminal Records Bureau, including the date that the check was sent off and was returned. Three staff files were inspected. The checklist contained qualifications, health check, two references, identity check, copy of the appointment letter and a copy of the contract. All boxes were ticked on the checklist and some had been initialled and some had a signature, as well. The member of staff responsible said that the checklist was being updated to include all points in Standard 27.2.

# 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 and 22.

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

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The residential provision contributes to the educational progress of the learners by giving them an interesting and varied social life, as well as individual support.

## **EVIDENCE:**

There is good liaison between care staff and the teaching staff in the school and in the college. Teaching staff and care staff meet at the start and end of each school day to pass on relevant information. Members of the care staff reported on the good relationships between themselves and members of the teaching staff. Books, games, craft material etc are available in all the boarding areas.

There is a very good choice of activities for learners of all ages. The college learners go the local pubs and clubs etc. The school learners enjoy activities in house and outdoors. Some activities take place off campus and abroad. The school has its own radio station which broadcasts across the campus at various times of the day. There are plans to move the studio to larger premises that will have enough space for guests to be interviewed. Risk assessments were carried out for all activities.



The learners were relaxed and happy in the care of members of staff. Staff were alert to the needs of the learners and dealt with issues in a calm and relaxed manner. Learners were encouraged to do things for themselves and staff did not "take over". Each learner had a key worker and was able to approach any member of staff. Examination of the files confirmed that the learners enjoyed excellent support systems. The school and college have been without the services of a clinical psychologist for some time. This situation is being remedied as from April 2007, when the services of a clinical psychologist will be obtained from the local PCT. Learners confirmed that members of staff were very kind and supportive. It was obvious throughout the inspection, that the learners and the staff enjoy each other's company and there is a great deal of fun and laughter in the school and college. Any specific therapy given to a learner is in accordance with their written and agreed care plan and provided by a qualified professional from a recognised organisation. The school does not have the services of an independent listener. Senior members of staff confirmed that each learner had a least one person, outside of the school, whom they could contact directly about personal issues.

# 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, 11, 17 and 20.

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

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Excellent admission procedures and placement plans allow staff members to enjoy good relationships with the learners. The learners are encouraged to make decisions about themselves and the school. The learners are able to keep in close contact with their families.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The staff at the school and college work very closely with the learners and with their parents. There is a great amount of talking between members of the teaching staff and the learners and likewise with the care staff. Learners are encouraged to voice their opinions. Members of staff are adept at communicating with learners who use specific methods of communication. The learners are encouraged and are able to make choices in every day situations, for example, at mealtimes, what clothes to wear and what activities to attend.

The Parent Partnership, open to all parents and meeting on exeat Fridays, is an effective way of dealing with strategic matters as well as furthering communication. The school and college use a full range of methods and equipment to effect total communication.

Home/school diaries are used to pass on information. House meetings give the opportunity for the group of learners to discuss how they would like their living situation to be. The school council also plays an important role in the consultation process. Some learners attend Christian Endeavour meetings and Sunday services.

The relationships between the members of the staff groups and the learners are excellent. The various members of staff have high expectations of the learners and the learners are eager to please. This helps to create the caring environment seen by the inspectors throughout their visit. Staff are warm and caring and work within their professional boundaries. All learners are respected as individuals and the learners respect the staff in return. There is a great amount of humour and good hearted teasing when learners and staff are together, for example, during mealtimes. Members of staff receive training in relating to learners with special needs and their families. Learners are able to choose who provides their personal care.

The school and college have good admission and leaving processes. Admission to the school is carefully planned by all concerned, including the young person. A visit to the school or college is arranged after all the relevant information has been gathered. A flat is available on the campus for a family to use if their home is a distance away from the school. Parents have noted on their questionnaires how welcome they felt at the school and college. The "Welcome Pack" provides a good deal of information about the school and college. This enables the learners to know what they can expect from the school and college. As the admission process is carried out with great care, so is the leaving process. The learners are encouraged to be as independent as possible as they may be moving into their own accommodation. "Connexions" play a large part in the leaving process for some learners.

Examination of records indicated that reviews are held regularly with a range of professionals, and the learners and parents, invited to attend.

Each learner has a placement plan which includes details of education, care and therapy needs. The plan is agreed by the parents, the learner, the school, the placing authority and any other relevant professionals. The plans seen during the inspection were up to date, well maintained and included the required information. The placement plans are maintained by the learner's key worker and over seen by a team leader. All members of staff are very aware of the need to work to the care plans and to report any change in the learner's progress or demeanour. The learners are involved in their statutory reviews. The learners are encouraged to keep in contact with their families. There are telephones in the boarding houses and many of the learners have their own mobile telephone. Any restrictions on contact with parents or others would be recorded on the learner's file. Members of staff are in close contact with the parents of the learners. The younger learners go home every weekend and the college learners have one exeat weekend each half term. There are rooms

where learners may meet with visitors. Members of staff receive training in working with learners and their families.

# Achieving Economic Wellbeing

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

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

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

16, 21, 23, 24 and 25.

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

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school is built on a very attractive site, with trees, gardens, walkways, play areas and sports field. Some buildings are more modern than others and all are well maintained and decorated. There are sufficient toilets and bathing areas with specialist equipment as necessary. The learners wore appropriate clothing at all times. Procedures for moving from the school and college were in place.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The learners in the school wear uniform with the school logo. They are able to wear their own clothes out of school time. The learners in college wear their own clothes all the time. All of the learners were very well dressed and were neat and tidy at all times. The laundry staff do a very good job to ensure that the students have a supply of clean clothes. The learners were able to buy personal bits and pieces locally or when they went in to town. Staff keep a supply for emergencies. Pocket money is handed over to the care of the staff

and is drawn out as required. Learners sign for money drawn out. Some learners are able to take care of their own money.

The school and college work with the learners, their parents, the placing authorities and other departments to ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of their life. Members of staff reported on the excellent relationships that the school and college have built up with the local and distant agencies that are concerned with providing for the future needs of the learners. The staff reported that there have been times when the leaving process has not gone as well as it should have done. This is through no fault of the school but rather that of other agencies e.g. lack of finance, failure to secure an appropriate living, working or educational setting for the learner.

The school and college are situated on the outskirts of the city of Exeter and the buildings are arranged in the style of a village. The sports field, running track, sensory garden and new state of the art playground all add to the choice of activities for the learners. All buildings are easily accessible, with sliding doors and handrails in place as necessary. There are digital locks on the front doors. Many of the buildings are wheelchair accessible and those which are not, [Dinham and Haldon], are being considered for refurbishment. Any special equipment, such as wheelchairs, is stored safely. The occupational therapist assesses the needs of the learners. The campus is not secure and it is possible for members of the public to walk around the buildings. The security of the campus is under review.

The boarding houses are all well decorated, furnished and maintained. Walls are painted in bright colours and the learners are able to put up pictures or display art work in the public areas. Many of the learners have photographs of the family, friends and pets on the wall in their bedrooms. Some bedrooms are shared and others are single rooms. Some learners prefer to share, as others prefer to be alone. There is ample storage for clothes and each learner has a locked locker for valuables. Learners have space to do homework, write letters, read, do craft work etc. There is also space to meet with visitors. Staff sleeping in rooms are near to the learners' bedrooms. The maintenance team work hard to repair any damage as soon as possible. The college has plans to set up off campus accommodation as a preparation for independent living. The inspectors were unhappy about a "short cut" into St. David's, using a door that opened into the bedroom area. Staff had already identified this use as not good practice and the inspectors support the plans to insist that everyone finds an alternative entry to the building. This could be through the school door. There is a cost implication in this arrangement and the issue will be part of the development programme.

There are sufficient bathrooms and toilets in the boarding areas to meet the needs of the learners. There are specialist facilities for the learners who need them. Bathrooms and toilets have the appropriate doors, curtains etc, to provide privacy for the learners. The bathrooms and toilets in the school and college were all clean and in good order.

# 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, 18, 19, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

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

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school is managed and monitored well. There is an appropriate number of staff, who are trained, supervised and supported well. Records at the school, including the Statement of Purpose, learners' files and staff personnel files, are all maintained to a high standard.

**EVIDENCE:**

The Statement of Purpose sets out clearly what the school and college seek to achieve with the learners, as well as its ethos and general philosophy. The information is contained in the prospectus, supported by other documentation and a useful video. The information booklets for the learners explain how the school and college function and what can be expected on arrival. The Statement of Purpose and associated documents are reviewed annually by the Board of Governors.

Case files and placement plans comply with the standard in all respects.

Senior staff are working on a revised "front sheet" that will include a photograph of the learner and all relevant details. Each learner has a detailed and confidential record of their history and their progress at the school. The files demonstrate the detailed knowledge that the members of staff have, of the specific needs of every learner. The staff confirmed that entries on to the files are discussed with the learner. The daily record book for each learner has a tactile stiff cover. Whilst these books may be read by the learner and the parents, they are kept in the boarding house. There is also a school/home book which the learner takes home at weekends and holidays. There is a protocol in place to enable a learner to read his/her file.

The general records kept in the school and college are in excellent order and reflect how well the school is managed in all areas. Accident books, menus, duty rosters, diaries and logbooks were seen to be all maintained to a high standard. Accidents are recorded in detail and the school informs CSCI of serious illness etc. Menus are kept for at least a year. Duty rosters record the names of the members of staff who were on duty. Diaries and logbooks record the daily happenings at the school and college. Criminal Records Bureau information is recorded on a spreadsheet. Senior staff in HR have devised a new form that will indicate that Standard 19.2 has been complied with. Duty rosters indicate that the school and college are staffed according to the Statement of Purpose. The staffing establishment is sufficient to meet the needs of the learners and to keep them safe day and night. Additional staff are brought in when necessary and the use of agency staff is kept to a minimum. The school and college endeavour to use adults who are already known to the learners. A member of the Senior Management Team provides on call cover, out of office hours.

The training of staff has a high priority in the school and college. There is a rolling programme of training courses, some of which are carried out in house. Other courses are arranged outside of the school and college. A ten week induction course is undertaken by all new members of staff. Staff reported that this was a very useful course. Members of staff attend training that is pertinent to their role in the school or college. All members of staff have child protection training and fire safety training. Members of staff are able to ask to attend courses that would supplement their knowledge appropriate to their role. The Quality Assurance and Human Resources managers are reviewing all training and appraisal issues, including the induction course. Some members of staff are coming to the end of their NVQ3 training and others are awaiting the arrival of the new training provider.



The members of the care staff who were spoken to confirmed that supervision was arranged and carried out regularly. They also commented on how useful informal supervision is from colleagues and senior staff. Members of staff stated that they felt well supported in their task of caring for the learners. Regular staff meetings and hand over sessions also provide opportunities for informal supervision and support. Some of the training in supervision skills was delivered by a trained social worker on the staff. Staff supervision notes were not read but the infrastructure was seen to be in place.

The school and college are organised, managed and staffed by competent and skilled people. The senior members of staff are trained in their own roles and they work well together as a team. All members of staff know the clear lines of responsibility and to whom they are accountable. Many of the care staff have the NVQ3 qualification and there is a rolling programme of staff waiting to start. The managers of the school recognise that not 80% of the care staff are qualified to NVQ3 level or equivalent. Duty rotas include time for supervision, meetings, administration tasks etc. There are plans in place to deal with any crisis in the school or college.

There are systems in place to carry out the required monitoring of records throughout the school and college, by Heads of Departments. The appropriate action is taken as necessary. The police are not involved in the running of the school and college.

A governor is appointed to carry out the monitoring visits on behalf of the governing body. Monitoring was discussed in some detail during feedback because one inspector could find evidence of only two visits during 2006. Senior staff were adamant that more had taken place but were unaware that at least one visit had not taken place. The inspector asked if the visits were always unannounced and took place after normal working hours. The reports seen were short and to the point and covered relevant areas.

# 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>
<b>14</b>	3
<b>15</b>	4

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

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

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

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

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>1</b>	4
<b>18</b>	3
<b>19</b>	3
<b>28</b>	3
<b>29</b>	3
<b>30</b>	3
<b>31</b>	3
<b>32</b>	3
<b>33</b>	3

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1.	RS14	The supervision of the nursing staff should be carried out regularly each half term.	
2.	RS24	The back door of St. David's should not be used as entry to the house.	
3.	RS27	The recruitment process should record all the details in Standard 27.2	

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

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