

# inspection report

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

## **West Heath**

West Heath School  
Ashgrove Road  
Sevenoaks  
Kent  
TN13 1SR

12th October 2004

## Commission for Social Care Inspection

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

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

### The role of CSCI is to:

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

## Inspection Methods & Findings

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

### The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

**Name of School**

West Heath

**Address**

West Heath School, Ashgrove Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1SR

**Tel No:**

**Fax No:**

**Email Address:**

ali.m@westheath.kent.sch.uk

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

West Heath School

**Name of Head**

West Heath School

**CSCI Classification**

Residential Special School

**Type of school**

**Date of last boarding welfare inspection:**

13/11/03

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		12th October 2004	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		09:30 am	
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	John Walker	126635
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>		
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>3</b>		
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>4</b>		
<b>Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):</b>			
<b>Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)</b> Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>			
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>			

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## INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

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

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

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of West Heath. The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

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

## INSPECTION VISITS

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

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

## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION**

The New School at West Heath is an independent residential special school for 11 to 16 year olds who have experienced the breakdown of traditional mainstream schooling and who have average or above average academic potential. The school opened in 1998 following funding from Mohamed Al Fayed as a “living memorial” to Diana, Princess of Wales and Dodi Al Fayed. Students have experienced trauma of abuse, bullying, bereavement illnesses or have medical conditions such as ADHD, Aspergers Syndrome, epilepsy and diabetes. The school has an aim to “rebuild damaged lives” and this is achieved through its specialised approach to education. The school is located one mile from Sevenoaks set amongst spacious grounds. On the day of the inspection there were 24 boarding students. The school intends to expand the boarding provision and ultimately increase the number of boarders to 36. The boarding accommodation comprises five purpose built houses set within the school grounds and a boarding unit within attached to the main school building. At the time of the inspection Sissons House was not in use.

## **PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE**

The inspection evidence confirmed much of the previous inspection's findings that the children at West Heath School continued to receive high quality care and services from competent staff. The school was well led and managed.

Observation of the interaction between children and staff evidenced the children had very sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect. This continued to be a particular strength of the school. The school's relationships with the children's parents/carers were very sound. Excellent pre-admission procedures had been developed to ensure the parents/carers were fully informed of the work of the school prior to their child being admitted and the procedures also meant that parents/carers had a known point of contact in the school when their child was first placed there. The school's leavers' programme was seen as being commendable and staff worked hard to try to ensure that upon leaving young people were, as far as possible, placed appropriately.

The management of children's negative behaviour continued to be dealt with very effectively by staff, usually in low-key ways, so as to prevent negative behaviour from escalating. On those occasions when children engaged in high levels of challenging behaviour good support systems were in place to de-escalate the behaviour and to try to resolve the immediate causes of it with the child/children concerned.

The school had responded very well to the recommendations and actions indicated in the previous report and the inspector was pleased to note that the majority of care staff had begun their courses at NVQ Level 3. The inspector was interested to note that the school's students services committee was beginning to undertake more of a monitoring role of the school's practice and it will be interesting to see how the committee progresses its work in this area.

#### **WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE**

At the time of the inspection the school the care team was four members short and the school was in the process of recruiting new staff. The consequence of the staff shortage meant that the school was experiencing some slippage in certain areas compared to the findings of the previous inspection. There had been a reduction in the time available for keyworkers to liaise with teaching staff regarding children's progress, the school's evening activity programme had reduced and the supervision of care staff was not taking place on a regular basis. On a number of limited occasions the school was not able to staff boarding units at its own agreed staffing ratios and senior care staff were having to work additional duties. It was acknowledged by the inspector that the shortfalls noted were very largely attributable to the staffing difficulties the school was experiencing and not because of any inefficiency that was occurring on the part of the school. It is to be hoped that once care staffing levels have been restored then the school's performance in the areas outlined will revert to their usual good standard.

Whilst one of the great strengths of the school is the quality of the interaction between staff and children the inspection evidenced there was a need for the school to review its formal complaints procedure so that the children were informed of the outcome of any complaints they raised. The complaints procedure should encompass low-level complaints as well as those of a very serious nature.

The school evidenced that its reporting and recording systems with regard to issues of child protection were very sound though it is recommended that the school shares its practice with a local senior social services officer to ensure a consensus with an outside agency as to when it is appropriate for possible child protection matters to be reported or not.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE**

Despite the staffing difficulties referred to above it is to the great credit of the principal and her staff that the school continues to offer its children such good quality boarding provision. In the view of the inspector this reflects the dedication and commitment the staff show towards the children and for that they are to be congratulated.



## NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

**Is Notification of any failure to safeguard and promote welfare to be made by the Commission for Social Care Inspection to the Local Education Authority or Department for Education and Skills under section 87(4) of the Children Act 1989 arising from this inspection?**

NO

**Notification to be made to:**

**Local Education Authority  
Secretary of State**

NO

NO

**The grounds for any Notification to be made are:**

## IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

Recommended Actions from the last Inspection visit fully implemented?

YES

**If No, the findings of this inspection on any Recommended Actions not implemented are listed below:**

No	Standard	Recommended actions	

## RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

**Action Plan:** The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended actions are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

### RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	RS4	That the school reviews its complaints procedure so as to take into account the requirements outlined in Standard 4.3 particularly with regard to the elements which should be contained in a written complaint record.	

### ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

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

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	RS5	That the school builds on its existing good child protection practice and establishes a link between itself and a local social services department in order to discuss particular issues that arise which may or may not be seen as child protection referrals.
2		That the school redesigns the pro forma it uses to report incidents of restraint taking into account the requirements of Standard 10.14.

3	RS14	That the school should put all medical information about each child into one document as indicated in Standard 14.6.
4	RS25	That the school should review its practice with regard to informing the children of when major maintenance items had been agreed and the timescales for their completion.
5	RS26	That the estates manager should inspect the premises on a more formal basis using an agreed checklist so as to ensure more rigour in such inspections.
6		That the training needs of the care staff be discussed with them by senior staff and recommendations made accordingly.
7		That the regular supervision of care staff be reinstated as soon as staffing levels permit.

Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. RS10 refers to standard 10.

**PART B****INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS**

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

Direct Observation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Accommodation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	YES

Checks with other Organisations

• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	YES
• Independent Person	YES
• Chair of Governors	YES
Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	NO
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	NO
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	12/10/04
Time of Inspection	09.30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	18.5
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	2

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

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

**Age Range of Boarding Pupils**      **From**

11
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**To**

16
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## NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

**BOYS**

20
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**GIRLS**

8
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**TOTAL**

28
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**Number of separate Boarding Houses**

5
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The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the CSCI assessment of the extent to which standards have been met. The following scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

## STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils.

### Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

The school has a written Statement of Purpose, which accurately describes what the school sets out to do for those children it accommodates, and the manner in which care is provided. The Statement can be made up of other documents, e.g., Letter of Approved Arrangements and school prospectus, which are required to include specific information.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	
The documentation which made up the school's Statement of Purpose and Children's Guides were clear and well presented and met the Standard.		

## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)

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

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

4

This inspection confirmed the previous inspection findings that this area continues to be a particular strength of the school. Discussion with children and staff and an examination of relevant documentation indicated children's opinions and views and those of their families were very regularly sought with regard to target planning, house meetings, reviews and key-working sessions. It was part of the ethos of the school to encourage children to make their wishes and feelings known regarding their care and treatment in the school. As an example of this the inspector was informed by children that through the school council a new school timetable implemented in September was amended because of their concerns about various aspects of it. Discussion with a number of children evidenced they did feel the school council to be of value to them.

### Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)

The school and staff respect a child's wish for privacy and confidentiality so far as is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect the child.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

Guidance for staff was covered in the 'Dignity and Privacy' Document. The school did offer guidance on when it may be necessary to search a child's possessions. General observation and discussion with the children confirmed the school and staff respected a child's wish for privacy and confidentiality.

**Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.8)**

**Children know how and feel able to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living in the school, and feel confident that any complaint is addressed seriously and without delay.**

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

This inspection confirmed the previous inspection findings that the children they knew how to complain and would approach staff in the first instance if they had a problem. The children were aware of the school's complaints procedure and support line telephone numbers. In the houses there were few recorded complaints for the past 12 months though it was noted by the inspector that the outcomes of the complaints were not always recorded. This constituted a minor shortfall in this Standard.

It was the view of staff that the lack of formal complaints from the children continued to reflect the fact that the children had many opportunities to air their concerns in key-working, house and school council meetings. The principal, head of care and the independent visitor monitored the complaints logs on a half-termly basis.

However, further discussion with children indicated that they were not always informed as to the outcomes of some of their complaints and did not see the school's formal complaints procedure as being of any great value to them. Given this view, which was given to the inspector by a number of children, it is a recommendation that the school reviews its complaints procedure so as to take into account the requirements outlined in Standard 4.3 particularly with regard to the elements that should be contained in a written complaint record. The complaints procedure should take account of low-level complaints as well as those of a more serious nature.

**Number of complaints about care at the school recorded over last 12 months:**

**0**

**Number of above complaints substantiated:**

**0**

**Number of complaints received by CSCI about the school over last 12 months:**

**0**

**Number of above complaints substantiated:**

**0**



## **CHILD PROTECTION**

**The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:**

- **The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.**
- **Children are protected from bullying by others.**
- **All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the school are notified by the Head of the school to the appropriate authorities.**
- **Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded positively to on return.**

**Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.12)**

**There are systems in place in the school which aim to prevent abuse of children and suspicions or allegations of abuse are properly responded to. These are known and understood by all staff (including junior, ancillary, volunteer and agency staff).**

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

The head of care was responsible for all child protection matters within the school. The inspection confirmed the previous inspection findings that showed the school's child protection procedures were consistent with local policies and those relevant for children placed from out of the local area. The procedures were comprehensive and acted as a basis to the school's ethos of protecting the welfare of children in their care.

Evidence was seen as to how child protection allegations had been dealt with by the school. It was clear the child protection incident sheets were properly completed, followed up with the relevant agencies and the outcomes of such allegations fully recorded. It was also evident the incidents had been monitored by the head of care, principal and chair of governors. Discussion with staff confirmed all new staff received basic training in child protection as part of their induction and training in this area was given to staff on a regular basis.

Despite its good practice in this area the inspector had received some critical comments from a local services department prior to the inspection which suggested the school had not properly followed procedures with regard to reporting two possible child protection matters to them. Discussion with the head of care and an examination of relevant documentation indicated that there were clear reasons as to why the school had acted in the way that it had and the crux of the issue appeared to relate to matters of professional judgement as to when particular matters should be referred to the local social services as child protection matters or not. Given this it is a recommendation that the school builds on its existing good child protection practice and establishes a link between itself and a local social services department in order to discuss particular issues that arise which may or may not be seen as child protection referrals.

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

**2**

**Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5)**

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

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

3

The school had an anti-bullying policy, clear guidelines and procedures to deal with incidents of bullying. The inspection confirmed the previous inspection findings that the children saw bullying as being unacceptable within the culture of the school. They informed the inspector they were confident any complaints they might have had regarding bullying would be taken seriously by staff and dealt with appropriately

**Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied**

90 %

**Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)**

All significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified by the Head of the school or designated person to the appropriate authorities.

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

3

The principal and head of care were well aware of their responsibilities to inform the appropriate authorities and CSCI of all significant events detailed in Standard 7.2. The head of care ensured that all staff were aware of their responsibility to inform him of all significant events which might need to be forwarded to the relevant authorities.

**NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO CSCI DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:**

- conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children
- serious harm to a child
- serious illness or accident of a child
- serious incident requiring police to be called

0

0

0

0

<b>Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)</b> <b>The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>The school had clear written guidance regarding any absences of children without authority. Discussion with staff indicated they were well aware and understood the school's policies and procedures in this area. An examination of relevant records indicated unauthorised absences were not a significant problem at the school.</p>		
<b>Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:</b>		<b>0</b>

## CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
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The inspection confirmed the findings of the previous inspection that the observed interactions between staff and children showed that the quality of the relationships between staff and children was consistently good and was a particular strength of the school. Observation of early morning and evening routines, activities, mealtimes, and discussion with children evidenced that staff dealt with the children in a calm, relaxed manner and it was clear the relationships between staff and children were based on mutual respect and understanding.
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**Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)**

**Staff respond positively to acceptable behaviour, and where the behaviour of children is regarded as unacceptable by staff, it is responded to by constructive disciplinary measures which are approved by the Head of Care.**

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

The school's document 'Promoting Positive Behaviour' formed the basis of staff of staff guidance. General observation of the interactions between staff and pupils, discussion with staff and pupils confirmed staff responded positively to acceptable behaviour and were skilled in de-escalating inappropriate behaviours.

Discussion with the vice principal responsible for personal development and behaviour confirmed that he continued in his role of resolving serious disputes and arguments between children and/or to support staff in managing those high levels of children's challenging behaviour which could not be dealt with effectively by staff after all the usual range of behaviour management strategies had been applied. During the course of the discussion the vice principal described a number of difficult and challenging situations involving arguments and disputes between children that he felt he had successfully resolved and also described staff training in managing challenging behaviour that he had recently led. It was the view of the inspector the school's practice continued to be commendable in having a senior member of staff whose main responsibility was to assist and support staff in managing the children's challenging behaviour.

Discussion with the head of care and staff indicated physical intervention was only used to prevent injury to the child or others and staff received regular training in Team-Teach. During discussion with children a number of them confirmed they had been subject to restraints by staff. All of the children indicated they felt the use of restraint on them by staff was for appropriate reasons and properly applied. Indeed two children were able to demonstrate the types of holds used by staff and they stated that the restraints they demonstrated were not intended to deliberately hurt them.

Records of restraints and incidents were noted in separate bound and numbered logbooks. The actual details of the restraints and incidents were written up in detail on Incident Sheets and each sheet was given a reference number which should be entered into the relevant logbook. Once processed a copy of the Incident Sheet was placed on the relevant children's file. It was the view of the head of care that the pro-forma used by the school to record restraints could be improved so that it included all of the requirements outlined in Standard 10.14.

## QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes.
- The school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school.
- Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within school and in the local community.
- Children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted.
- Children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs.
- Children wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money.

### Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

Admission and leaving processes are planned and agreed with the child – and as appropriate, with parents and carers and placing authorities – as far as possible and handled with sensitivity and care by those concerned.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

4

The inspection confirmed the findings of the previous inspection that there were clear referral and admission procedures. Upon referral it was the expectation of the school that the referring authority should provide comprehensive information upon which the school would make a decision as to whether it should proceed with the placement or not. If, after a pre-admission interview which included a tour of the school and its boarding facilities, it was agreed the child should be admitted each child and his/her carers were sent a Welcome pack which contained much information about the school. Prior to admission the child's nominated keyworker undertook a home visit to meet with the child and his/her carers. Upon admission each new pupil was taken through their own induction process to the school. After a period of initial assessment an Annual Review was held within the first term of a child's admission to ensure the child was settling well and to enable his/her first education/ care plan to be agreed. The procedures adopted by the school with regard to pupil referral and admission was considered to be commendable practice by the inspector.

The head key stage 4 explained the leaving process, which aimed for young people to move on in a positive manner, celebrate their successes and take with them all the information, and guidance they required in assisting them in the transition process. As part of the school's leaving programme the young people attended local colleges of further education, work experience and specifically for boarders the ASDAN Scheme. The young people were made aware of the Connexions scheme and when appropriate the school contributed to Pathway Plans for those young people who would remain in care once they left school. It was the view of the inspector the practice of the school in this area was commendable.

**Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)**

Care staff and the school's residential provision and activities actively contribute to individual children's educational progress, and care staff actively support children's education, ensuring regular attendance, punctuality and a minimum of interruption during the school day.

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

3

At the time of the inspection the school was short of four childcare staff and was actively trying to recruit more staff. Discussion with care staff indicated the staff shortage was affecting their ability to attend the daily tutor groups held at the beginning of each school day and this reduced the opportunities for keyworkers to liaise with the teaching staff and learning assistants. Nonetheless care staff were familiar with the educational needs and progress of individual students and this was evidenced in the documentation seen relating to Individual Education Plans and Review Meetings. When staff rotas permitted care staff worked alongside teaching staff within school classes to support particular children and this ensured good communication links regarding boarding and welfare issues. Homework was a structured time for children and care staff were well informed of expectations and outcomes from the school day. The boarding accommodation provided study desks and areas for the children to pursue their education. Observations and discussion confirmed the relationships between the residential and teaching staff were very good, with

**Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)**

Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community.

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

3

Discussion with the children evidenced that the shortage of care staff at the time of the inspection had impacted on the range of activities the school was able to offer as compared with the findings of the previous inspection. However, despite the staffing shortfall the school was still able to offer the children a range of activities which included football, badminton, art and drama activities as well as trips out to the cinema, bowling and ice-skating. Children's views regarding activities were sought during house meetings and in individual key-working sessions.

Daily newspapers were delivered to the school and a wide variety of books were available from the library and in the boarding houses. Children had access to the school's computer room until 6.00pm each day though their access to the internet was filtered to ensure the children were unable to access inappropriate web-sites. All boarding houses had computers for use by the children though none of them had access to the internet.



**Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.25)**

**The school actively promotes the health care of each child and meets any intimate care needs.**

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

The school has a student health and welfare officer who oversees the receipt of all medication coming into school. Further responsibilities include liaison with the District Nurse and ensuring all boarding pupils are registered with the local GP. Children's files were seen to contain a detailed medical history as well as important information such as allergies, dental and optical needs. However, it was noted by the inspector that different elements of each child's medical and health care needs were to be found in different sections of each child's file and it was a good practice recommendation that the school should put all such information into one document as indicated in Standard 14.6.

Discussion with the student health and welfare officer indicated that the school had not been able to develop workable strategies regarding the issue of children bringing their own medication into school on Monday mornings and take them home each Friday. The student health and welfare officer was well aware of the attendant dangers of such practice but had been unable to see of any other way of managing the situation. The inspector acknowledged the problems and difficulties the school was experiencing but it is a good practice recommendation that the school should revisit this matter to see if there are any ways in which the school might improve its practice in this area.

It is also a good practice recommendation that the school would benefit from a visit by a CSCI pharmaceutical inspector who would be able to advise the school about its own practice with regard to medical matters.

**Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)**

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

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

4

A record of menus showed students are provided with a variety of healthy meals. The inspectors sat and had two mid-day meals in the school's dining room with staff and children. There was a choice of first and second courses and the food served was well cooked, wholesome and nutritious. Staff and children commented very favourably about the quality and variety of meals served by the kitchen staff throughout the year. The mealtimes observed by inspectors were well-ordered, social occasions. A tour of the catering facilities led by the cook showed the kitchen facilities to be clean and tidy. The cook kept food samples and the temperature checks on fridges and freezers were logged twice daily. In the kitchen store cupboards it was self-evident the kitchens used lots of fresh produce such as fruit and vegetables. Conversation with the cook confirmed she was able to meet any child's special dietary needs if required to do so.

Breakfasts and evening meals were provided within the boarding houses. Each house was given a budget to purchase food and the children were actively involved in menu planning and the purchasing of food from local supermarkets. Discussion with the children indicated they were very satisfied with the meals offered in the boarding houses and valued the opportunity to assist with the food shopping. It was the view of the inspector that both the very high standard achieved by the school kitchen and the approach to catering in the boarding houses constituted very good practice.

**Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)**

Children are provided for adequately on an individual basis and encouraged to exercise their own preferences in the choice of clothing and personal requisites. Children who require assistance to choose what they wear and/or how they spend their money are provided with the assistance they need, in a way which maximises their choice.

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

3

The children were able to wear their own clothing outside school time, could secure personal requisites and stationary and were helped to look after their own money. Bedrooms provided adequate storage for clothing and toiletries.

## CARE PLANNING AND PLACEMENT PLAN

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school.
- Children's needs, development and progress is recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions.
- There are adequate records of both the staff and child groups of the school.
- In accordance with their wishes, children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while living away from home at school.
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.
- Children receive individual support when they need it.

### Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

There is a written placement plan specifying how the school will care for each boarding pupil in accordance with his or her assessed needs, the school cares for that child in accordance with that plan, monitors progress in relation to that plan, and updates that plan as necessary.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

The inspection confirmed the previous inspection findings that parents, children and keyworkers were involved in the initial placement plan in which the child's needs were identified and strategies indicated as to how these would be met. However, whilst the previous inspection found that the school was not meeting its own target of holding monthly keyworker/children meetings this inspection evidenced that such meetings were taking place regularly and the children were clearly aware of their individual targets and valued the opportunity for them to be reviewed during their keyworking sessions.

**Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.5)**

**Each child has a permanent private and secure record of their history and progress which can, in compliance with legal requirements for safeguards, be seen by the child.**

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

3

A number of children's files were viewed from each boarding house. They contained relevant information, contact addresses, history, health and educational needs and past school history. Care plans were detailed and specific targets for each student written out in a manner which was child-user friendly. Written entries were clear and the signatory could be easily identified. In addition to their individual file, boarders were also able to work with their keyworkers to complete Lifestory Books.

**Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)**

**The school maintains clear and accurate records on the staff and child groups of the school, and major events affecting the school and children resident there.**

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

3

The school maintained proper records for each child resident in the school, a register of admissions and departures, name of keyworker and important information such as past and present addresses, legal status and placing authority.

It was a finding of the previous inspection that there were serious shortfalls in the personnel files maintained by the school. The inspector was pleased to note that the school had appointed a school administrator who had undertaken a thorough review of all staff personnel files and at the time of the inspection had nearly completed her review to ensure that all staff files contained the items indicated in Standard 19.2

**Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)**

**Subject to their wishes, children are positively encouraged and enabled by the school to maintain contact with their parents and other family members (unless there are welfare concerns) while living at school.**

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

3

This inspection confirmed the previous inspection's findings with regard to this Standard. Details of entries within written care notes evidenced clear liaison between keyworkers and parents. Minutes of review meetings also suggested collaborative working took place between home and school.

Parents were enabled to visit the school unannounced and discussion with the children confirmed they were able to contact their parents/carers by telephone and in private without difficulty.

**Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)**

Where a pupil is in care and will be leaving care on leaving the school, the school agrees with the young person's responsible authority what contribution it should make to implement any Pathway or other plan for the pupil before the pupil leaves school. These arrangements are in line with that young person's needs, and the school implements its contribution where feasible from at least a year before the pupil is expected to leave care or move to independent living. The school works with any Personal Advisor for the child.

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

9

At the time of the inspection the school did not have any children preparing to leave care.

**Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)**

All children are given individualised support in line with their needs and wishes, and children identified as having particular support needs, or particular problems, receive help, guidance and support when needed or requested.

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

3

This inspection confirmed the previous inspection's findings with regard to this Standard. All boarders had their own keyworker to ensure they received regular individual support. Boarders were also able to contact or speak with the school's independent visitor during her regular visits to the school. The school employed a part time communication, speech and language therapists to meet the needs of those pupils requiring such support.

## PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children live in well designed, pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.
- Children live in accommodation that is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.
- Children are able to carry out their ablutions in privacy and with dignity.
- Children live in schools that provide physical safety and security.

### Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The school is located, designed and of a size and layout that is in keeping with its Statement of Purpose. It serves the needs of the children and provides the sort of environment most helpful to each child's development, and is sufficient for the number of children.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

The main school building was a former large 17<sup>th</sup> Century country house set within its own spacious grounds on the edge of the town of Sevenoaks, Kent. The boarding accommodation consists of six boarding houses. Hunniford, Astor, Esther, Ruth and Sissons bungalows are located within the grounds of the school. The bungalows create a homely environment for the children four of which can accommodate up to four children and the remaining one up to seven. Sleep House is part of an extension to the main school building and can accommodate up to ten boys.

### Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)

The school provides adequate good quality and well-maintained accommodation for boarding pupils, which is consistent with their needs.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

This inspection confirmed the previous inspection's findings with regard to this Standard. All of the boarding units were visited. They were clean, well decorated and 'homely' with all children having their own bedroom. These rooms were seen to be decorated in accordance with the individual's own taste. There was adequate storage, including a lockable facility, to be found in each bedroom. The children were encouraged to personalise their own rooms with posters and pictures of their own choosing.

Radiators were covered and furniture and fittings were seen to be in good order and fit for purpose. Logbooks seen indicated maintenance issues were quickly reported and resolved.

**Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)**

The school has sufficient baths, showers and toilets, all of good standard and suitable to meet the needs of the children. The school has appropriate changing and washing facilities for incontinent children where necessary.

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

2

A number of bathrooms visited were in need of some maintenance and repair. Tiles were missing in some areas, grouting had become mouldy and ceiling paper was peeling off in one shower cubicle. Not all showerheads worked properly and children complained that some showers had insufficient water pressure to enable them to shower properly. A number of children informed the inspector they were unhappy about the state of the showers and they stated they had complained about them but, as they saw it, the school was doing nothing to remediate matters. Discussion with the school's estates manager indicated that he was aware of the shortfalls in the bathroom areas and work was due to take place to refurbish the bathrooms. It was a good practice recommendation that the school should review its practice with regard to informing the children of when major maintenance items had been agreed and the timescales for their completion.

**Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.10)**

Positive steps are taken to keep children, staff and visitors safe from risk from fire and other hazards, in accordance with Health and Safety and Fire legislation and guidance.

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

3

This inspection confirmed the previous inspection's findings with regard to this Standard. The school had thorough generic risk assessment procedures in place which were monitored by the school's Health and Safety Committee. A risk assessment report is produced annually and sent to the Trustees some of who sit on the Health and Safety Committee to provide a monitoring role.

Discussion with the estates manager indicated that he and the caretaker regularly undertook an inspection of the premises on an informal basis. It is a good practice recommendation that the estates manager should inspect the premises on a more formal basis using an agreed checklist so as to ensure more rigour in such inspections.

A report from the Fire Service received by the inspector prior to the inspection confirmed there were no concerns regarding fire safety at the school. Evidence seen indicated fire drills occurred at different times and the children interviewed were clearly aware of evacuation procedures.

Certificates were seen evidencing PAT testing, boiler and gas servicing all within required timescales.

## STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There are careful selection and vetting of all staff, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers
- Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.
- Children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs.
- Children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare.

### Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those employed on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with the children in the school includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (at Standard or Enhanced level as appropriate to their role in the school), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

A number of staff files were inspected and found to include evidence of a robust recruitment process. Harrods vetted staff and every employer contacted for a reference and CRB checks undertaken. The inspector was pleased to note that shortfalls in this area identified during the last inspection had been addressed by the school.

Total number of care staff:

17

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

4



**Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)**

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

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

2

Whilst it was the aim of the school to ensure the boarding element of the school was staffed at a ratio of one member of care staff to every four children, at the time of the inspection because of the shortage of care staff, the school was not always operate at this staffing level. The staff shortage also meant that the senior members of care staff were undertaking additional duties to cover the shortfalls, thereby creating additional stress for them. The inspector acknowledged that it was the school's hope the shortfall in staffing was temporary and that suitable staff would soon be recruited to the school. However, the scoring of this Standard reflects the staffing situation which was current at the time of the inspection.

**Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)**

Staff receive training and development opportunities that equip them with the skills required to meet the needs of the children and the purpose of the school.

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

3

Discussion with staff confirmed there was a comprehensive staff induction programme which included training in areas such as child protection, behaviour management, first aid and principles of care.

Progress had been made since the last inspection with regard to NVQ training for care staff. At the time of the inspection eight care staff had recently started NVQ level 3 and it was the aim for all staff to complete their course by summer 2005.

All staff had recently completed an NSPCC child protection course.

Care staff informed the inspector that they were required to attend all of the school's INSET days. The care staff stated that whilst they appreciated the reasons for this there were occasions when they felt the training was not always relevant to them. It was their view that when this occurred their time could be better spent in training directed at meeting their particular needs. It is a good practice recommendation that the training needs of the care staff be discussed with them by senior staff and recommendations made accordingly.

**Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)**

**All staff, including domestic staff and the Head of the school, are properly accountable and supported.**

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

Discussion with care staff indicated that they had been receiving regular supervision up until the end of the summer term 2004. However, it was the case that it had not been possible for regular supervision to take place since the start of the autumn term 2004 because of the shortfall in care staff. Discussion with the head of care indicated it was his intention to re-introduce regular supervision for care staff once the current staffing issues had been addressed.

Discussion with the principal indicated that she was not receiving professional supervision though she did meet with the chair of the student services committee on a regular basis to discuss school matters.

## ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children receive the care and services they need from competent staff.
- Children enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools.
- The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school.

### Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.17)

The school is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers the best possible childcare.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

The head of care has had extensive experience in residential and field social work. He holds both a Diploma in Approved Social Work and CQSW. Staff members had backgrounds in childcare and education. Examination of staff rotas indicated of scheduled time for handovers, record keeping, care planning and for time spent with individual children.

Percentage of care staff with relevant NVQ or equivalent child care qualification:

13 %

### Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

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

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

Much evidence was offered which indicated the principal or senior members of staff monitor the records indicated in Performance Indicators 32.2. Discussion with the head of care indicated he monitored all records regularly to identify patterns or issues requiring action.

**Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)**

The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body receive a written report on the conduct of the school from a person visiting the school on their behalf every half term.

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

Discussion with the chair of the student services committee indicated the Trustees took a very active role in monitoring all aspects of the organisation and management of the school. Written reports about the areas monitored by the various sub-committees were submitted to the Trustees for discussion at their regular meetings. Examination of the minutes of sub-committee and Trustees meetings indicated the Trustees were meeting this standard. It was interesting to note that the chair of the students services committee had been changing the role of the committee so that it was beginning to take on a monitoring role of the school's practice to ensure it was meeting the National Minimum Standards and the requirements made of the school by OFSTED.

**PART C**

**LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY**

**(where applicable)**

**Lay Assessor**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Lead Inspector**

John Walker

**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

01/11/04

*J Walker*

## PART D

## HEAD'S RESPONSE

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

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

Overall we are very pleased with the report. It highlights our strengths whilst fairly notes the few areas for development due to staff shortage. However, we are well on the way with this development.

We are about to embark on a significant project, which involves the development of a training centre dedicated to enhancing the lives of underprivileged and undervalued children and young people both Nationally and Internationally as part of our school. This will be a 'leading edge' facility and accessible to our own staff. We would be very interested in setting up a feedback facility designed to inform and enhance the practice of C.S.C.I. inspections as part of this facility.

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

YES

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

**Note:**

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

**D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 10<sup>th</sup> December 2004, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.**

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

### D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

**D.3.1 I Mrs Valerie May of West Heath School confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the recommended actions made and will seek to comply with these.**

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**

### Designation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Or**

**D.3.2 I Mrs Valerie May of West Heath School am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) for the following reasons:**

--

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**

### Designation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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



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