



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Stone Bay School

**Stone Bay
70 Stone Road
Broadstairs
Kent
CT10 1EB**

Lead Inspector
Pat Gough

Announced Inspection
18th September 2006 9:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

Reader Information	
Document Purpose	Inspection Report
Author	CSCI
Audience	General Public
Further copies from	0870 240 7535 (telephone order line)
Copyright	This report is copyright Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and may only be used in its entirety. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the express permission of CSCI
Internet address	www.csci.org.uk

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

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

Those outcomes are:

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

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

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

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of school Stone Bay School

Address Stone Bay
70 Stone Road
Broadstairs
Kent
CT10 1EB

Telephone number 01843 863421

Fax number

Email address

Provider Web address

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

Name of Head Mr Richard Edey

Name of Head of Care Mr Derek Whitfield

**Age range of residential
pupils** 11-19 years

**Date of last welfare
inspection** 7/11/05

Brief Description of the School:

Stone Bay School is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of Broadstairs, near to shops and beaches, on an elevated site overlooking the sea. It is owned and managed by Kent County Council. There is ample car parking space, on-road and off-road, to the front and side of the premises. There are large, secure gardens, at the rear of the school, with seaside views, which have a number of play and leisure facilities.

The school provides specialised education, for children and young people, aged 11 to 19 years, who exhibit communication difficulties, moderate to severe learning difficulties, challenging behaviours and Autistic Spectrum Disorders. The TEACHH approach to caring for and teaching the pupils, is used at the school. Currently the school, uses nationally accredited schemes, including ASDAN, to support its planning, teaching and monitoring of students' achievement.

The residential accommodation is divided into four separate units, as well as a Lodge, in the grounds, where young people can further develop their independent living skills. Both waking night and sleeping in staff are available to care for the students each night, and the staff rota ensures that senior residential staff are available throughout most of the day.

The current placement fee is £41,003.00 and is based on additional fees claimed for level 6 pupils at the school. There is no additional monthly charge for other services. The statement of purpose, is sent to placing authorities and inspection reports are made available. Pre admission documentation is made available for the pupil and their parent(s) prior to placement.

SUMMARY

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

The site visit, which was announced, was conducted following a pre inspection visit and as part of the whole inspection process. It focussed on the management of the young people's behaviour, the support given for their health and education needs, their safeguarding, their living environment and their preparation for adulthood. Evidence was also sought on how staff are being supported, how training needs are being identified and being met and how the provision is being monitored to provide effective feedback and to inform the school improvement plan.

The visit started on 18/09/06 at 9am and lasted for two days. During that time the inspector had individual meetings with the head of care, senior residential staff with additional responsibilities, the three recently recruited apprentices, team leaders, the student union co-ordinator, a group of care staff and spoke with some of the children. The inspector also met with the person responsible for medical matters to view medication administration and disposal records, and to discuss the management of medicines in the school.

The inspector had lunch with the pupils, spent some time in two of the residences speaking with staff and pupils, observing practice, looking at practice documentation and the pupil's accommodation and accompanied staff and pupils on an evening activity in the local community.

Throughout the visit there was discussion with the head of care and some feedback was given, whilst more detailed feedback was given at the end of the visit.

One pupil returned a completed pre-inspection questionnaire and stated, 'I want to stay here because I love it and the staff'. Twenty parents responded and on the whole gave very positive feedback including, 'very caring, wonderful atmosphere', 'I am very happy with the way my child is looked after', 'communication is good between school and home', 'since my son started there he has become more confident and able', 'they provide support to parents as well as children'. Four parents stated that communication could be improved and two were concerned about care of their child's clothing. Two responses, whilst commenting favourably about the school raised a concern about the lack of isolation facilities when a child has an infectious condition. These issues were discussed with the head of care following the inspection visit.

Other comments in letters sent to school include, 'I cannot believe the difference you made to him' and 'the difference in (pupil) since he has been with you is huge'.

One of the apprentices commented 'I think the school is particularly good at trying to get the best out of all the pupils'.

What the school does well:

The school continues to benefit from good management and leadership. The head teacher is highly respected by the staff and the parents and he is fully involved in whole school practice, demonstrating a good knowledge of the students' needs and achievements as well as the abilities and strengths of the staff. The staff repeated their appreciation of the guidance and support they receive from the experienced head of care. The head of care is to be commended for maintaining a focussed approach on good practice and achieving a high standard of care for the pupils. The team leaders, a strong, cohesive and stable group, ably support senior management in implementing the principles of practice and encourage their teams to attain a high levels of success with the pupils.

The quality relationships that the staff have established with the students is a major contributory factor in the successes that are achieved. The students are happy and clearly respond to the individual support that the staff are able to give. There were a number of examples of pupil's achievements and it was particularly pleasing to hear the staff praise and acclaim pupils for minor achievements. This illustrated the application and determination of the pupils but also the perseverance and commitment of the staff.

The school has made great strides in recognising the efforts but also the potential of its senior care staff in creating roles of additional responsibility, thereby ensuring that they could be more proportionately rewarded for their achievements and continued commitment to the care and support of the pupils.

The support for staff development and training, already a strength of the school continues to provide staff with the specific skills to support pupils with complex communication and behavioural difficulties. The school has demonstrated a commitment to supporting all staff with NVQ training, and it provides other core training and specialist input as necessary. The creation of a dedicated role to promote training resources for care staff will enhance the current provision.

The school works closely with the parents through the key worker and the teacher and the member of staff whose responsibility it is to contact all parents on a regular basis. This regular and purposeful contact is instrumental in creating a uniform approach to supporting the pupils whilst recognising the differences and the values within their respective environments.

The inter-disciplinary co-operation and approach through communication, training, shared experiences and cross-departmental working continues to develop. The new initiative whereby young school leavers, with an interest in pursuing a career in social care, are given the opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge whilst at the same time attaining a relevant qualification, should also be a major benefit to the school.

Given the high incidence of challenging behaviour incidents due to the complex nature of the pupils needs, the school should be commended on the efforts it is making and the success it is achieving to reduce the occurrence of incidents. The challenging behaviour database, which tracks incidents and helps to identify patterns, provides the staff with valuable information likely to lead to increased prevention. The focus on staff development relating to communication methods and their implementation with the pupils has had a significant influence on the reduction of aggressive behaviour.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The structural improvements within the residential areas have made a difference to the quality of the living environment. There is a commitment to providing quality refurbishment within the bedrooms and communal areas, which is led by, and promoted through the person responsible for co-ordinating environmental improvement.

The management of medicines, including protocols, storage and better recording has improved following the school's positive response to the advice and recommendations made by the pharmacist inspector.

The school responded positively to the recommendation that care staff pay differentials be considered with a view to acknowledging and rewarding performance. Senior care staff with stated additional responsibilities now receive additional pay and expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to expand their influence on the school's provision and demonstrate their skills.

The implementation of the ASDAN programme has had a major impact on the recording of evidence related to achievement of targets. This is much improved and will provide a true record of the pupils' success whilst at the school and a true reflection of the staff role and their part in the implementation of agreed care plan interventions.

What they could do better:

Whilst the majority of the personnel records confirmed that the school had followed recruitment processes correctly in selecting staff and making the necessary checks, there were a number of inconsistencies in the personnel files. The school should create a recruitment checklist in each file to record information relating to all required procedural activity and include details of telephone enquiries on references, photograph identification and interview questions and responses.

It is acknowledged that the school is fully committed to supporting staff through NVQ qualification and has demonstrated this with permanent and apprentice staff. This commitment should be maintained in order to achieve full staff qualification at the required NVQ level.

The good staff supervision practice currently in place should be supplemented by an annual appraisal system for non-teaching staff, which adequately reflects on role performance and training and development needs.

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

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

CONTENTS

Being Healthy

Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

Scoring of Outcomes

Recommended Actions identified during the inspection

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)

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

10,12,13

Quality in this outcome is good. The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Much progress has been made in equipping the staff to manage the pupil's healthcare needs and the pupils benefit from the regular monitoring of their health needs by the staff.

The school's participation in national initiatives relating to healthy eating and healthy living has enhanced the care and guidance given to the children.

EVIDENCE:

The school has responded in robust fashion to the recommendations made by the pharmacist inspector on 11/01/06 and major progress has been made. All staff responsible for the administration of medicines receive accredited training on medicine supply, storage and disposal, the safe administration of medicine, quality control and record keeping as well as issues surrounding accountability, responsibility and confidentiality. Each pupil has a health care plan, which refers to their medical history and data relevant to their ongoing physical development such as dental, optical and aural screening. Where there is a need for assistance with personal hygiene, this is detailed in their individual residential care plan. There was reference in one pupil's annual review to sex and relationship education and other health education matters. Another review document had comments relating to diet and physical development, 'he is eating well and putting on some weight'. The staff, which were interviewed by the inspector confirmed that the healthcare aspects in the plan are monitored regularly and updated accordingly.

The ASDAN module on 'relationships' covers subjects such as, 'likes and dislikes', 'emotions', 'personal relationships' and 'healthy lifestyle and healthy living'. Having participated in the 'Kent Healthy Schools Programme', the school achieved healthy schools status in July 2006. A positive feature in the

school is the close liaison it maintains with community health services. The community health nurse provides a monthly monitoring and advice service and those pupils registered with a local (to the school) medical practitioner have access to all the relevant medical services. The school does not have a sick bay and pupils who are ill and are confined to bed remain in their own residential area.

The 'healthy schools' initiative has contributed to the schools success in empowering the pupils, with the assistance and support of the staff, to be more conscious of diet, healthy foods and appropriate eating habits. A school 'healthy eating' group has been established with the help of a nominated teacher, and catering staff. Pupil representatives on the school council have played a prominent part in the drive to introduce healthier options, such as fruit instead of biscuits, at school break time. Water coolers are positioned strategically within the school and in a residential area, which did not have easy access to a kitchen. Catering staff are fully up to date with health and safety requirements and many individual specialist meals are produced daily to meet the dietary needs of individual pupils. Pupils are given the opportunity to shop for ingredients and help in the preparation of meals. A sample of menus confirmed that the pupils enjoy a variety of content with a good choice of vegetables, meat and pasta on offer. The inspector participated in two mealtimes and observed that the meals were tasty, the pupils were given adequate quantities and were assisted with their eating, where appropriate. The staff were flexible in their approach and focussed on ensuring that the pupil enjoyed their meal and supplied alternatives to the prepared meal where necessary.

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)

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

3,4,5,6,7,8,10,26,27

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

The complaints process and other forums, which can be used, provide the pupils with the opportunity to express their view and opinions. There are countering bullying policies to keep pupils safe. The reporting procedures of the school ensure that any incidents are notified to the appropriate people and action is taken as required.

The pupils are provided with a high level of quality care, which respects their privacy, provides them with a secure living environment, good behaviour management structures and protection from possible causes of abuse and harm.

EVIDENCE:

Most of the pupils have their own room and there are policies and procedures in place to assure their right to privacy. Many of the pupils require close supervision, however the staff are sensitive to their need and desire to be alone at times. Thoughtful consideration of privacy matters has resulted in some bedroom windows being fitted with window blinds rather than curtains. All pupil records are stored in a safe and secure place and are accessible only to relevant staff.

There were no complaints registered in the complaints book by the pupils and the head of care confirmed that the staff have a good knowledge of and relationship with the pupils, enabling them to deal with concerns as they become evident. There is weekly contact between the key worker and the pupil's parents, when any issues of concern can be discussed and dealt with. The school has designated 'parental liaison' responsibility to a teaching assistant who ensures that each parent, irrespective of the key worker/parent contact, is contacted on a regular basis. This gives the parents an additional opportunity to discuss matters of concern, should they arise. The communication process requires that all contact is recorded and communicated to relevant staff. The inspector viewed records of such contact.

The staff confirmed that they receive child protection training on a regular basis. One member of staff stated that she had three sessions of training in a four-year period. Child protection issues are addressed in induction also. The staff training records confirmed regularity of training. The staff, in discussion, indicated their awareness of signs and symptoms of abuse and how they would respond in the event of a disclosure or incident of abuse. There have been no recorded incidents or referrals over the past year. There is a very low incidence of bullying and this is mainly resulting from 'individual behaviours' and not directed at individual peers in a malicious way. Such behaviours may involve slapping or hitting, thereby antagonising other pupils. There are interventions in place to discourage and manage such behaviour and good staff supervision/support to engage preventative measures. The head of care and the staff confirmed that aggression by pupils to peers is usually spontaneous and rarely pre-meditated.

There have been no incidents of unauthorised absence. There is a good security system in place, with all exit doors key coded. The staff/pupil ratios are appropriate at all times, thereby maintaining adequate supervision. The inspector noted that staff were vigilant at all times and mindful of the vulnerability of the pupils. The staff demonstrated that they have a thorough understanding of each pupils' abilities and needs, a good knowledge of the pupils' possible behaviours and are fully conversant with the necessary controls agreed between all parties to support the pupils with behaviour

management. One parent's commented on the appropriateness of imposed sanctions was, 'excellent, outstanding in adapting punishments to my son's level of comprehension'. There is a high level of interaction between the staff and the pupils and observation of practice confirmed that the various levels of need were adequately addressed by the staff. There is an emphasis on de-escalation through vigilance and positive interaction with individual pupils, thereby obviating the need for major interventions.

The behaviour management plans are well constructed with suggested interventions clearly detailed. Sanction and physical intervention logs were completed appropriately and there was clear evidence that these are monitored regularly by senior staff and visiting monitors. The school established a challenging behaviour database in May 2006 and a senior member of the care staff has been designated to manage it. Following behavioural incidents, the incident information is sent to the head teacher and the head of care for their information and comments and is then entered on the database. A graphic illustration of all incidents is produced each half term as well as individual graphs covering incidents in the classroom and the residential area. This information is discussed with the challenging behaviour co-ordinator and then shared with both class based residential area staff. The patterns and trends identified through this process contribute to behaviour management plan amendments. The school has seen a considerable reduction in challenging behaviours over the past three years, in pupils who are using the picture exchange card communication system. Parents have also confirmed that it has led to improvements in the family setting and to their quality of life when the pupil is at home.

The school has addressed the recommendation made at the previous inspection relating to the provision of radiator covers. Portable appliances had been tested during the preceding summer holiday and the equipment was clearly labelled with the date of the test. Electrical and gas installations are routinely checked and serviced. There were no obvious signs of routine maintenance needs. All visitors must sign in on arrival and staff are encouraged to challenge strangers if unsure of their identity. Risk assessments, generic and individual, are completed and reviewed as necessary.

Although the school follows stringent recruitment processes, it had omitted to conduct telephone enquiries following receipt of applicant's references. There were inconsistencies in the compilation of information in the personnel files and the school should consider a recruitment file checklist. All other required checks were completed.

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)

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

12,13,22

Quality in this outcome is good. The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school provides a stable environment for the children through consistent work practices and appropriate levels of support and continues to look at strategies, which will further enhance this provision.

The pupils enjoy a range of purposeful activities on site and are encouraged to engage in community based leisure opportunities and events.

EVIDENCE:

Teachers and their assistants communicate information about pupils' progress in the classroom to the care staff and care staff, in turn, relay information on the pupils' performance in the residential area. Some teaching assistants also work part time hours within the residential areas. This helps to ensure that care and interventions are consistent over the 24-hour curriculum. In addition, there are home/school books, which are completed by care staff, teachers and parents to ensure that any issues relevant to the care of pupils are passed on. There is a multi-disciplinary approach to behaviour management and communication work with the pupils with much evidence of teaching staff and care staff working together. This is particularly evident through the implementation of the ASDAN programme and Makaton teaching and use. The head of care gave an example of when the Makaton teacher visited a residential area prior to the start of the school day to observe and advise on the use of the communication method. The key workers telephone parents on a weekly basis to report on the care of pupils and also send home progress/liaison reports every two weeks. A useful link is also provided by a designated person, who maintains regular contact with each parent.

Activities offered to pupils are varied and there is good use of community facilities. These include swimming, golf, wall climbing, going out for beach walks, cinema and trips to places of interest. Activities have been risk assessed to ensure they are safe for pupils to engage in. The school has installed outside play equipment with individual pupil's needs in mind and intends to develop play opportunities further. The inspector observed some pupils engaging in a 'crazy golf' activity within the local area and was impressed by the interaction of the staff, their sensitive management of the pupils, the opportunities given to the pupils and their level of enjoyment.

Each pupil has a key worker who gives them support and is responsible for making sure that care plan targets are being met. In addition, there is psychology, speech and language and occupational therapy support for pupils, and this forms part of their individual education plan and individual residential care plan whilst at the school. Pupils have access to an independent visitor who regularly visit the school and reports the findings.

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)

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

2,9,11,17,20

Quality in this outcome is excellent. The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

There is meaningful consultation and relationships between the staff and the pupils are having a positive impact on their lives. The relationships between staff and pupils are good and the school offers a supportive and caring atmosphere in which the young people feel secure and comfortable.

The admission and leaving procedures for the school make sure that pupil's needs are addressed in a planned way. The processes used to encourage and enable the children to make a positive contribution are being implemented through effective care planning and careful monitoring of progress.

The school encourages pupil's to maintain contact with families and friends.

EVIDENCE:

There were numerous examples, cited by staff, and others included in written documentation, of effective and purposeful consultation with the pupils. One member of staff commented on the how pupils are given the opportunity to choose colour schemes in the residential area. The School Council, now firmly established, has nine pupil representatives and minutes of their meetings

indicate the relevance of their contribution and influence on decisions. At the most recent meeting, on 7/7/06, the pupils made suggestions relating to playground activities, the management of litter, after school activities and at a previous meeting suggested locations for water coolers. The school also used the council meeting to update the pupils on the building work within the school and surveyed their views on how annual review meetings could be improved to better facilitate pupil participation. Three editions of the school newsletter, the 'Stone Bay Times' have been produced and contain reports on various events, activities and visits as well as a message from the head teacher.

The staff continue to maintain excellent relationships with the pupils. There is a good staff/pupil ratio within the residential units, which gives adequate supervision and affords the staff to spend quality time with individual pupils. Much thought is given to formation of the residential teams, with experienced senior staff providing good leadership to committed team members. In some residential areas there is a 1:1 ratio, determined by the needs of the pupils and additionally based on risk assessments. Good boundary setting, applied through a sensitive and non-threatening approach, was observed in a number of different locations including an activity in the community. The staff were participating with and interacting with the children and excellent relationships were observed.

Many parents describe the staff as, 'warm', 'caring', 'friendly' and 'welcoming'. The pupils were observed to interact trustingly with the staff and indicated through their responses, their fondness and respect for staff. The staff communicated effectively with the pupils, were clearly conversant with the particular needs of each pupil, and demonstrated good skills when managing difficult behaviour. There are good in-house systems of communication in place, with daily handover sessions, weekly care staff meetings and fortnightly inter-disciplinary meetings.

Prospective pupils and their families are provided with the necessary information and advice following a referral and the school invests much time and effort in ensuring that the pupil, their family and the staff are well informed prior to admission. Following referral, information is shared with the Senior Team, and visits are arranged to the young person's current school and to their home, with agreement from their parents. The head of care or a team leader, a senior carer and a teacher conduct these visits. The parents and the young person are invited to visit the school on a number of occasions, including weekends and the school's sports day. The inspector was informed of the process involved in the successful admission of a pupil, from a different ethnic background, just a few days earlier. The admission policy and process is designed to orientate and prepare the prospective student, collate essential information, assure the parents and enable the staff to prepare adequately for the commencement of the placement. The inspector formed the view that such meticulous preparation is

a major contributory factor in the school's success in providing quality care to the young people.

Each student has a placement plan which is linked to the individual education plan. The plan contains essential information necessary for the key worker and any other member of staff to liaise appropriately with parents and relevant agencies. The structure of the plan has been well considered and covers all the required elements of the standard incorporating, personal needs, specific care needs communication skills, self-help, social skills, behaviour, healthcare, social and leisure, and more. The school has considerably improved the recording process in that there is now much more evidence of the implementation of the care plan targets and the achievements of the young people. The implementation of the ASDAN programme has contributed to this improvement, whereby 1:1 work with pupils on small tasks are recorded in detail in written and pictorial form.

The systems, which the school operate to maintain effective contact with the parents and the contribution the resulting cooperation has on the students' stability and progress, is another noted strength. The weekly key worker telephone contact with parents has already been mentioned. When each student returns home for the weekend on a fortnightly cycle, the key worker and class teacher provide written comments, relating to the student's performance, in the home/school liaison book. The parent is invited to comment on the child's performance whilst at home. The content of the information given to the parent covers many aspects of the student's life at the school and is a qualitative summary of their progress over the preceding two-week period. There are various rooms in the school, where parents and other adults significant to the young person can meet them in private.

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):

16,21,23,24,25

Quality in this outcome is good. The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Pupils are able to wear clothes of their choice, are assisted to shop for personal items and have access to money to meet their individual needs. The school's location, design and layout are in keeping with its statement of purpose and the accommodation and resources available to the pupils are of a good standard. The school continually strives to improve the service. Much attention is given to preparing the pupils for transition through life skills teaching and practical experience.

EVIDENCE:

Team leaders have responsibility for the safe management of the pupils' pocket money and clothing, which are supplied by the parents. The pupils, who were observed to be appropriately dressed, are able to store their own possessions and clothing in good quality furniture and are assisted by staff, on shopping trips, in making choices and with purchases of personal items. The students are allowed to bring their personal possessions from home and their pocket money is stored safely and properly accounted for.

There is ongoing communication between the main school and the further education unit, which promotes continuity and supports the smooth transition, for pupils, from the security of school life to new challenges. The 16+ curriculum is specially designed to provide the young people with the necessary skills to assist them in obtaining the best possible placement when they leave the unit at the age of 19. Much of the curriculum is practice based and involves the students in experiential learning. Pathway and leaving care plans are developed and agreed between the unit, the placing authority and the parents.

The school is in a good location, within a residential community, close to the sea and other local amenities. Although the building is old, it is well maintained and has a homely feel. The head teacher is progressing plans to upgrade and improve facilities and with the support of the governing body is committed to providing the most appropriate resources for the scope of disability that they cater for. There is an adequate security system in place to prevent access to unauthorised persons and to prevent very vulnerable young people exiting the building, without the support of staff. Where students have an additional sensory disability, the staff have considered appropriate aids and they have been acquired. There are positive links with the community through leisure pursuits and involvement in events.

The accommodation provided for the boarders, is of a high quality and as with other parts of the school premises the head teacher has plans to improve it further. Double glazed windows are due to be installed in the pupils' bedrooms during the coming months. The interior of the building is in good structural repair and nicely decorated. Structural changes in one residential area has, albeit with the loss of one bedroom, enhanced the dining facilities and addressed some safety issues. All but a few of the students are accommodated in single bedrooms, which are adequately furnished with stylish and good quality 'tough' furniture. The rooms have been personalised to suit the individual taste of the young people, with laminated posters adorning the walls and giving them a relaxed and comfortable feel. The school has designated a member of care staff to monitor and respond to decoration needs and physical resources within the residential areas. The inspector was told that much consideration is given to each pupil's needs, their expressed wish and desire relating to colour scheme and furniture and that pupils and staff contribute to decision-making. Parents are consulted on décor, where young people are unable to indicate preferences. Some students have their own television and music entertainment.

There is an adequate number of bathrooms and toilets for the number of students accommodated, in each unit, and they are easily accessible. The school has improved, through decoration and replacement of equipment, the bathroom facilities in most of the accommodation. The location of the bathrooms and the locking device, used on the doors, ensure the students' safety and privacy. Where students require assistance with their personal care

needs, there is guidance on good practice, relating to the students' dignity, as well as safeguards for the staff. Where it is appropriate for a student to move to another setting, there are robust processes in place to ensure that the transition is made as smooth as possible.

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)

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

1,18,19,28,29,30,31,32,33

Quality in this outcome is good. The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school has recognised the value of its senior residential staff in a purposeful way and this has enhanced their status, increased their commitment to good practice and improved the level of service to the pupils.

There are good supervision and support systems in place, which enable the staff to assess and improve their practice. The training and professional development needs of the staff are adequately met, which ensures that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their role.

There are sufficient staff on duty at all times and this ensures that the children are provided with the necessary supervision and interaction in order to keep them safe and maintain their development.

Pupil files contained information to record their needs and progress. Adequate records were being kept on staff and pupils.

The internal and external monitoring arrangements work effectively in order to check the welfare of pupils living at the school.

EVIDENCE:

The statement of purpose has been amended and was recently ratified by the governing body. It outlines its designation, admission criteria, care philosophy, how it values diversity and focuses on the close links between education and care staff and the importance of working closely with families. Much thought is given to and emphasis placed upon the flexibility of approach and the provision of a quality living environment for the pupils.

Observation of practice indicated that there was a good staff/pupil ratio and that each residential area was adequately staffed. Some staff commented that the current level of staffing is 'the best it has been for a long time'. Each residential area has at least two team leaders. There are sufficient staff to ensure that the pupils have support to access activities and events within the local community. Risk assessments dictate the level of staffing required for the number, age and ability of the pupils involved. At mealtimes there are appropriate levels of support with eating and behaviour management. Some teaching assistants participate in residential duties on a planned basis and during periods of shortages. This supports the continuity of practice with the pupils.

The head of care is NVQ level 4 qualified and holds the Diploma in Welfare Studies. He is also an NVQ assessor and has considerable experience as a practitioner and manager. All the team leaders hold the NVQ level 3 qualification and have the relevant experience and skills to advise and guide staff on good practice. The school is committed to achieving the required level of NVQ qualification for all its staff and has successfully encouraged a minority of staff, previously resistant to participating on the course, to enrol. The school has its own group of assessors and a designated member of staff to provide extra support for participants, as required.

Staff supervision and staff meetings are held on a regular basis and the staff confirmed that they are useful. The staff gave examples of how and when they completed practice records during their working hours. The school has responded positively to the recommendation made at a previous inspection relating to pay differentials within the staff team. Some senior staff have been given additional duties and responsibilities and have been awarded additional payment for this. There is a clear purpose to additional responsibility and the staff that are assigned to these tasks have responded in an enthusiastic and focussed fashion. These additional responsibilities include, communication support, residential staff training, the challenging

behaviour database and absence monitoring, and environmental refurbishment and ASDAN monitoring.

The school is, with the co-operation of their local schools and college, participating in an 'apprentice scheme' whereby school leavers who wish to embark on social service career are given the opportunity to gain work experience whilst attaining the relevant NVQ qualification. A senior member of staff has responsibility for overseeing the management of the 'apprentices' who are supervised and supported at all times, work in both the education and residential settings and are surplus to staffing requirements. Each 'apprentice' has a mentor and is subject to the same recruitment process as permanent staff. The three 'apprentices' currently working at the school informed the inspector that they were enjoying the experience and made very favourable comments about the thorough induction they had received and the ongoing support from the staff.

The head of care and senior staff regularly monitors the care plans, daily logs, incidents, sanctions and physical interventions. Team leaders have responsibility for monitoring the implementation of practice and any records, within their residential area, reflecting practice. An independent visitor attends the school at regular intervals and reports findings with recommendations if necessary.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
18	3
19	3
28	3
29	3
30	4
31	2
32	3
33	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.	RS27	The school should ensure that telephone enquiries are conducted on all references received and that the recruitment process is consistently recorded in each personnel file.	
2.	RS30	The school should establish an annual appraisal system for all non-teaching staff	
3.	RS31	The school should continue to strive to meet the target of NVQ qualification for all care staff.	

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Maidstone Local Office

The Oast

Hermitage Court

Hermitage Lane

Maidstone

ME16 9NT

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120

Email: enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.csci.org.uk

© This report is copyright Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and may only be used in its entirety. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the express permission of CSCI.