



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Farney Close School

**Farney Close
Bolney Court
Crossways, Bolney
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH17 5RD**

Lead Inspector
Mrs E Southall

Announced Inspection
6th December 2006 09:30

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

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

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

Those outcomes are:

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

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

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

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of school	Farney Close School
Address	Farney Close Bolney Court Crossways, Bolney Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 5RD
Telephone number	01444 881811
Fax number	01444 881957
Email address	
Provider Web address	www.farneyclose.co.uk
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Farney Close School Limited
Name of Head	Mr Barry Robinson
Name of Head of Care	Ms Sara Hack
Age range of residential pupils	11 – 17 years
Date of last welfare inspection	16 th January 2006

Brief Description of the School:

Farney Close School is an independent residential special school for young people aged 11-17 years who experience social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties. All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The school's stated aim is to provide a well-ordered and stable environment, giving pupils a framework for choice and change in their lives.

Farney Close is a limited company and also a registered charity. A Board of Directors, a Board of Governors and a Board of Trustees oversee the running of the school.

The school buildings are set in extensive and attractive grounds at Bolney, close to the A23. Farney Close is approved to accommodate a maximum of 72 residential pupils, both male and female. At the time of this inspection 62 young people were resident at the school, 19 girls and 43 boys. They are accommodated in 10 different houses. All pupils board on a weekly basis and return home at weekends.

The Head of the school is Mr Barry Robinson. The Care Manager is Ms Sara Hack.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection began at 9.30 am and took place over the next seven hours. The Inspectors, Elaine Southall and Liz Driver, spent time with the Head, Barry Robinson and interviewed two groups of residential staff and one teacher. The members of the School Forum met with an Inspector and the designated member of staff with responsibility for medical procedures was interviewed. A sample of pupil case files was seen, together with written records, logs, policies and procedures. The Inspectors shared lunch with the staff and pupils. Two residential units were visited and the Inspector was shown round by some of the young people living there. Questionnaires were completed by the pupils,

The care programme at Farney Close School continues to be of an exceptionally high quality. There is a very stable team of staff at the school who are committed to the continuing development of best practice in all areas.

The young people clearly benefit from the integrated whole school approach to management of their needs. Pupils told Inspectors that: "I am looked after very well and am happy being here." "It's fun, I do stuff that I can't do at home – share a room and talk. People care about me." And – "I just like it. Care staff. Hot chocolate."

Farney Close was judged to be an "outstanding" school following an OfSTED inspection in May 2006.

The Inspectors were made very welcome by both staff and pupils, and would like to thank the staff for the work and planning that was carried out in order to ensure that all the necessary information was available both before and during the inspection.

What the school does well:

BEING HEALTHY

- Procedures relating to pupil's healthcare needs are of a commendably high quality. Staff receive intensive training in medicine administration.
- The food provided at the school is fresh, appetising and of a very high quality. Food is discussed at every meeting of the school Forum.

STAYING SAFE

- The school places great emphasis on the confidentiality and privacy of the young people.
- Pupils are confident in their ability to make a complaint.
- The school's commitment to protecting pupils from abuse is commendable. Procedures and training are of a high quality.
- Strong and effective measures are in place to address bullying.

- Measures taken to manage young people who are absent without authority are of a high standard.
- The strategies used at Farney Close to help young people develop appropriate and responsible behaviour have resulted in a very positive and enabling environment for them.
- The Health and Safety and security procedures at the school provide a safe environment at all times.
- The recruitment procedure is sound. The school is vigilant in ensuring that all necessary checks are completed before new staff begin to work with the young people.

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING

- The organisation of the school is based upon a close liaison between care, teaching and therapeutic staff that ensures that each pupil's care, social and educational needs are consistently addressed within an integrated and interactive framework.
- The activities programme is varied, imaginative and very popular with the pupils.
- Individualised support in line with the assessed needs of each pupil is central to the care programme. The staff clearly know each young person as an individual and work closely together to recognise and manage specific needs.

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION

- The young people are well supported and always involved in decisions that are made about their lives. They clearly feel that the School Forum has given them a voice in the way the school is run.
- The young people appear confident and safe in their relationships with staff. They are treated with respect and sensitivity at all times.
- The admission and leaving processes for pupils at Farney Close are thorough and informed by detailed assessments and care planning procedures.
- All care planning is carried out to the highest standard and plans are regularly reviewed and monitored. Young people are involved at every stage.

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING

- All pupils have a notably well-dressed and healthy appearance.
- Young people about to leave care are well prepared for the transition into independent living.
- The school premises provide an attractive, spacious and well-maintained environment.
- The residential accommodation at the school is comfortable and well equipped.

MANAGEMENT

- The Statement of Purpose is presented to a particularly high standard, with the school's care principles clearly described and incorporated within the overall purpose of the school.

- All pupil and school records are maintained to a commendably high standard. The systems and procedures used in the school are excellent. All information is relevant, well ordered and easily accessed.
- There is a very stable group of care staff at the school, who are committed to the welfare of the pupils. They are able to provide continuity and consistency in their relationships with the young people.
- The training programme provided for the care staff is of a very high quality.
- Farney Close is a well-run school. There is a strong and well-respected team of Senior Managers who have established a culture of open and effective communication at all levels. The school is committed to continuing development in order to promote best practice in all areas.

What has improved since the last inspection?

- The care staff team has been restructured to include two Assistants to the Care Manager.
- There is now a designated member of the care staff team with responsibility for overseeing management of the pupil's health and medical needs.
- All senior staff that administer medication are undertaking an NVQ level 2 training course in medicine administration.
- The school is consolidating their close working links with the local Social Services Child Protection team and Area Child Protection Committee.
- Young people have been provided with details of an independent person that they may contact directly themselves with any concerns.
- The format of the Standard 33 report has been reviewed. The report now contains clear details of observations made during monitoring visits, together with any practice recommendations made by the visitor.
- Hard backed logs have been introduced to record key details of complaints, serious incidents and child protection concerns.

What they could do better:

The Inspectors considered that the school is operating to a commendably high standard in all areas. The evident commitment of the staff team to achieving excellence ensures that the school works hard to identify any areas of practice where they can adapt and develop in order to improve outcomes for the young people in their care.

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

inspection.

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

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

14 & 15

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Comprehensive and well-managed procedures for meeting pupils' health needs are in place. They are continually reviewed and updated. The meals provided at the school are of a very high quality.

EVIDENCE:

All pupils receive a detailed Health Evaluation on admission to the school, when parents/carers complete a medical history form. The majority of young people are registered with a local GP practice. Medical files contain written authorisation for medical treatment, signed by a person with parental authority. Only senior care staff can administer and handle medication and ten members of the team are currently undertaking an NVQ 2 in Medicine Administration. Those who spoke with the Inspector described their current concerns that one young person may be over-medicated. The development of their professional skills means that they are confident that their assessment has a key part to play in ensuring that the pupil's needs are recognised and met.

An Inspector spent time at the school's medical centre with the designated member of staff responsible for overseeing medicine procedures. She told the Inspector that she is currently attending two specialised courses in medicine

administration, in addition to the NVQ 2. She is also, as are all the care staff, fully trained in first aid and child protection. A new safe is in place in the medical centre for the storage of controlled drugs and a lockable fridge is due to be installed.

The Inspector was told that the designated member of staff is working closely with the local Nurse Practitioner, who now carries out the school medicals, instead of the local GP, in a more informal atmosphere. All Looked After Children receive their statutory medicals at the school.

The Inspector saw that all medical records are up-to-date, in good order, and regularly monitored by the Care Manager, Sara Hack. They are securely stored. Pupils who are ill can stay in their own bed in their house, regularly checked by care staff, who bring food and medication to the unit. Staff always watch to see that medication is taken by the young person. Pupils are sent home if their illness lasts longer than 48 hours. The procedure is clearly laid out in the 'Care of Young People Who Feel Unwell during the School Day' document and the 'Pupil Sickness and Injury Procedure'. All care decisions are authorised by a senior manager.

The Inspectors shared lunch with the pupils and staff and considered that the food provided continues to be of the highest quality. Hot dishes and a variety of salads, cold meat, and fresh fruit were available. The young people can choose what they want to eat from the selection on offer. The Inspectors noted that young people chose varied and nutritious meals for themselves. The dining room is pleasant, light, and well furnished in a cafeteria style. Groups of pupils eat in stages. Care and teaching staff eat with them and provide sensitive and unobtrusive supervision of their behaviour during the meal. Pupils can choose where they sit at lunch, and eat with others from their residential unit at tea, which is the main meal of the day. More than one young person said in their questionnaire that the thing they like best about living at the school is: "Eating with my mates". None had any complaint about the food.

All food at the school is prepared and cooked with fresh ingredients. The Inspectors felt that the healthy appearance of the young people and their obvious enjoyment of their food was a clear outcome of the care taken to avoid the use of pre-prepared and processed foods where possible.

The individual boarding houses order food for supper and snacks from the catering department as and when needed. The Catering Manager meets regularly with the senior management team and also attends the School Forum meetings each half-term where she can speak directly with pupil representatives about any issues about food that have been raised. Food is a fixed item on the agenda. Minutes of the November meeting showed that the Forum members have been asked to get feedback from the other members of their house about whether they would prefer a cake for their supper on some evenings instead of toast, as some young people have requested a change.

The minutes record that the catering manager spoke about it not being possible to please everyone, although she wishes that she could. The open and responsive communication with the pupils about their food is to be commended.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

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

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Confidentiality is a priority in all systems and procedures used in the school. Arrangements for complaints and protection from abuse and bullying are very well managed. Effective strategies are in place to help pupils develop responsible behaviour. Health and Safety policies and procedures are of a high standard. A robust recruitment procedure is in place.

EVIDENCE:

All pupil records are kept safely and securely. Although most of the young people are under close supervision at all times, none who spoke with the Inspectors or who filled in questionnaires felt that they lacked privacy. Mobile phones are handed in to the school at the beginning of the week and returned when the pupil arrives at home at the weekend. All of the pupils who spoke with the Inspectors and filled in questionnaires were clear about what they would do if they wanted to make a complaint, naming the Head, the Care Manager, their Link Worker, the Company Secretary- Peter Copperthwaite, or a member of the School Forum as the person they would approach. They said that they found out how to make a complaint when they arrived at the school from their Link Worker, or the information in their Welcome Pack. The procedure for recording complaints is satisfactory.

All care staff have received training in child protection and are clear about their role and responsibilities. The Head, Barry Robinson and the Care Manager Sara Hack are the school's designated child protection officers. Both meet each half-term with the school liaison officer from the local social services Child Protection team in order to discuss management of individual cases and to ensure best practice. Both have also attended local Safeguarding courses during 2006, and have been pro-active in ensuring that the updated West Sussex Area Child Protection Committee Child Protection Procedures, issued on 4th December, have been made available at the school. Case tracking and records seen during this inspection show that the school takes appropriate action when dealing with any child protection issues. The Senior Management Team should be commended in respect of its vigilance in this area.

The school maintains a file with key information about Looked After Children who are placed at the school.

Care staff told an Inspector that they have received intensive training in management of bullying. The school took part in the national Anti-Bullying week in November 2006. All pupils filled in a questionnaire "Tell us about bullying" issued by the National Children's Bureau. The school adapted the form slightly, in order to obtain more in-depth information. The Inspectors saw a detailed analysis of the results. Of 35 boys and 11 girls questioned, 22 boys and 7 girls said that they had not experienced any bullying at the school. Copies of reports written following incidents at school include the nature of the incident, action taken and any further action required. Minutes of Child Care Meetings contain specific reference to incidents involving individual young people and note the need for staff vigilance at key times of the day, including breaks and lesson changes. Evaluation of Bullying Incidents forms seen by the Inspectors include detailed written action plans and evidence of follow-up

monitoring of behaviour. Records seen in the Bullying Incidents File show that staff work closely with the bully as well as the victim. Minutes of the November meeting of the school Forum record that the pupils have suggested that an Anti-Bullying Club be started.

Records and case tracking showed that the school notifies the appropriate authorities of all significant events relating to the protection of young people in the school.

The Missing Persons report file contains comprehensive and detailed reports of each unauthorised absence. Records show that very few events have occurred - 9 since the last inspection in January and none since June.

The school's behaviour management strategy is based upon the consistent reinforcement of positive attitudes and responsible behaviour. Clear written guidelines are incorporated in the Welcome Pack that detail the expectations of the young people's behaviour while in school and on the residential units. Each residential unit organises an earned reward system appropriate to its age group and gender. Small rewards can be earned each week, or longer-term prizes such as trips out, gift vouchers or computer software. Each house has a sanction diary where sanctions administered out of school time are recorded. Sanctions can include Confinement to the pupil's own room, or the 'house' for a stated period of time, time spent in the Head's office, early bedtime, loss of activities and deduction from pocket money for repair of damage to property. Records of sanctions are held on each boarding unit and were seen by an Inspector who visited two of the houses. The records are monitored by senior residential care workers. Some young people who completed questionnaires said that they did not like some of the sanctions used, however all said that they felt that they were always treated fairly and that staff spend time with them to help them understand why the sanction was used.

All members of staff are trained in the Team Teach strategy of de-escalation of confrontational situations and planned and staged methods of intervention in incidents. Records of incidents when restraint is used are detailed, well written and routinely monitored by the Head, Barry Robinson. Each half term the school carries out an analysis of the number and type of restraints that have been used. The analysis informs an action plan in respect of management of the needs of the specific children involved. Individual Behaviour Management Plans seen by an Inspector include positive handling strategies and a debriefing procedure. They identify the young person's behavioural triggers and preferred supportive and handling strategies. The use of a hand-held radio system is a clear benefit in the staff's opportunity for early intervention in confrontational situations. Its use is backed by a detailed written policy and procedure.

The school's Health and Safety policies and procedures continue to be maintained to a particularly high standard. The Inspectors were told that the

policy was audited and rewritten in September 2006. An independent company took an advisory role and stated that they were very impressed with the school's arrangements for protecting the physical safety and security of the pupils. Records show that fire drills take place each half term in each boarding house and the main school building. Young people who showed an Inspector round their boarding houses were clearly aware of the evacuation procedure.

A sample of staff files was checked and showed that a robust recruitment procedure is in place and all necessary checks are completed before new staff begin work at the school. The school has a written Safe Recruitment policy and staff receive training in safe recruitment.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

12, 13 & 22.

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Care staff actively support pupil's educational progress at the school. Activities provided for boarders are varied, imaginative, and very popular with them. Support for individual children lies at the heart of the care programme.

EVIDENCE:

Care staff at Farney Close liaise closely with teaching staff and work flexibly throughout the day in the school, providing extra support for individual young people in the classroom if needed. Inspectors were told by both care and teaching staff of the good relationships that exist between them and all emphasised that they work as a team to implement the whole school approach to address the needs of the young people. Members of the care staff team said that they feel that all staff in the school are becoming more open about sharing the outcome of their specific area of work, with the result there is a clearer sense of the full history of each young person.

The young people are clearly proud of their educational achievements, when asked: "What is the best thing that has happened whilst living at the school?" answers included: "Stopped absconding and working hard now in school." "I

skipped from Bronze to Gold levels in Maths and got moved up” and: “Winning the cookery trophy”.

An activities programme operates for the four nights each week that pupils are at the school. Boarding houses are well equipped with games, pool tables, TV, DVD, computer games and Playstation. Two nights each week are house nights; on the other two evenings activities in the community are available. These can include Laser quest, swimming, bowling, trips to the cinema and local youth and rugby clubs. Favourite activities identified included art, cooking, bowling, Karaoke, fishing in the lakes, pottery and the school play. Off site activities are also very popular. One young person said: “Going off site on house nights is good – I particularly like Laser Quest and the shops.” Others like: “Chilling on the house” and “Hanging around with my friends”.

The school holds an Activities week in the summer that this year included trips to London and Hurstmonceux, rock climbing and work experience for the older pupils. 2006 is the school’s 60th Anniversary, and a summer celebration was held. The annual Christmas show was in rehearsal on the day of this inspection.

Discussion with pupils, observation of interaction with staff, and documents seen in a sample of pupil files demonstrated that the support provided for individual children at Farney Close lies at the heart of the school’s approach. The consistency of care supports and promotes the development of the security, self-confidence and responsibility of each pupil. Those who spent time with the Inspectors were clear in their understanding of the school system and confident in stating their own thoughts and feelings in response to questions. All pupils have a designated Link Worker who is available for them to seek individual guidance, support and advice on personal matters. Questionnaires show clearly that the young people value the support of their Link Worker. When asked what she liked best about living at the school, one young woman said that: “People care about me.”

Records show close liaison between care and teaching staff in recognising and addressing individual needs. Care and teaching staff have separate weekly meetings. The Care Manager attends the teachers meeting, and the Deputy Head attends the care meeting. A whole school meeting is held each term, and care and teaching staff routinely attend joint training. Care and behaviour programmes are built around the specific needs of each pupil, and can take into account the differing behaviour patterns of each young person. To strengthen the commitment to meeting individual need, the school has a particularly wide range of specific therapeutic provision available to pupils, including Drama, Art, and Speech and Language therapy, counselling and specialist help with dyslexia.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

2, 9, 11, 17 & 20.

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Pupil's views are taken into account in all aspects of their care. Relationships between care staff and children are sound. All assessments of need are completed to a high standard.

EVIDENCE:

Pupils who spoke with the Inspectors told them that they feel able to approach members of staff with their views about their day-to-day care. Most of the pupil questionnaires mentioned the School Forum as somewhere that young people's opinions have made a difference to how the school is run. Suggestion boxes are in each boarding house and house meetings are held each week to talk through and agree the plan for the week.

Records seen in pupils' care files showed that they are fully involved in all meetings where care and education plans are reviewed. They work closely with their Link Worker to discuss their thought and feelings about their care plan. Short-term care plans are reviewed each month and signed by the pupil and their Link Worker.

Comments in questionnaires show that pupils understand why they are at Farney Close, what targets they have achieved and what they hope for in the future. One said that he enjoys: "Sensible conversations with staff – you can talk to the Headmaster when you want." Another said that the best things to do are: "Getting the GCSEs I need." One young man is pleased that he has curbed his temper, and another feels that being at Farney has: "Changed my life, I'm feeling more caring for my family and my life."

During the time spent in the school the Inspectors observed that relationships between care staff and pupils were relaxed, open and respectful. Staff set clear and consistent professional and personal boundaries within which the young people are secure while still able to express their individuality. Although the young people are under close supervision at all times, strategies used by staff to promote responsible behaviour were sensitive and respectful at all times.

The care staff group is very stable and therefore able to offer consistency in their relationships with the young people. None spoke of any difficulties in their relationships with staff at the school. One young woman said in her questionnaire that: "The care staff are really good and kind."

Records in case files show that all assessment and planning is consistently carried out to a commendably high standard. The admissions procedure includes a detailed assessment and young people can visit the school before admission. All new pupils are given a copy of the Welcome Book, which is accessible and useful for the young people, many of whom said that it told them the things that they needed to know when they arrived about what happens at school.

Care plans address longer-term goals that are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by all those who will help the pupil when they leave Farney Close. Transition planning begins in Year 9 and Pathway Plans compiled with the

placing authority. Parents/carers are fully involved and consulted at every stage. The fact that pupils return home every weekend means that they maintain regular contact with their family and friends. Parents/carers are free to telephone the school at any time and complete an annual questionnaire when they are asked their views about the care provided by the school.

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 area is **excellent**. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Arrangements for pupils' personal needs while in school are excellent. Young people who leave the school are well prepared for the transition to independent living. The accommodation provided at Farney Close is of a high quality.

EVIDENCE:

As at the previous inspection, the Inspectors considered that the pupils at Farney Close have a commendably well-dressed and healthy appearance. All are provided with PE Kit and two sets of uniform on admission to the school. There are clear guidelines in place about the school uniform, including the fact that shoes, not trainers, must be worn. However the pupils, most often the girls, are able to add small items that express their individuality. Pupils can wear their own clothes out of school hours.

Arrangements made for each pupil leaving the care of the school and moving on to more independent living are of the highest standard. The school works closely and co-operatively with parents/carers and the placing agency through

the statutory review and Pathway Planning process. All of the young people are fully involved when plans for their future are agreed. The local Connexions officer will attend reviews and liaise with the Connexions team in the young person's home area. All year 11 pupils have the option of undertaking work experience from home on Fridays, which helps them to find their feet in the world of work away from school and is also an opportunity for them to find paid weekend employment which may help them in their search for permanent work when they leave school.

The pupils at Farney Close enjoy the benefits of an attractive historic house and the space to play in the extensive grounds, which include wooded areas, lakes and activity areas. The buildings are very well maintained and decorated. In answer to the question "What are the best things about the school's buildings and grounds?" one pupil answered: "All of it – the building looks like a castle." and others: "The space" and: "Nice atmosphere." All areas are subject to detailed risk assessment.

An Inspector visited two of the boarding houses and was shown round by some of the young people who live there. None of the pupils identified any problems with their accommodation. Houses are well and attractively decorated and have a warm and homely feel. All of the young people who showed the Inspectors round said that they are happy with their house. Most bedrooms are double rooms and the toilet, bath and shower facilities are satisfactory. All bedrooms have storage space for clothes and personal possessions. The young people are able to personalise their rooms and can bring in their own bedding if they wish. A member of staff sleeps in each house at night.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

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

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school's care principles are clearly laid out in the Statement of Purpose. All records are up-to-date and in good order. The staff group is very stable and committed to the pupil's welfare. The training they receive is excellent. The school is run efficiently and the management team is focussed upon achieving best practice in all areas.

EVIDENCE:

The Farney Close Statement of Purpose is presented to a commendably high standard. It is routinely reviewed and updated, most recently in November 2006, and clearly states the manner in which the residential provision contributes to the whole school approach to meeting pupil's needs.

All records seen during the inspection were detailed, up-to-date and maintained to the highest standard. Pupil records are kept in two files, one for day-to-day recording and kept on the boarding house, and the main file that contains key assessments, planning/review documents and correspondence. Information is routinely transferred and a member of the care staff team is responsible for regularly monitoring the content of the files. The system continues to operate to a very high standard and all key information is easily accessed.

The school's two Standard 33 visitors also monitor records. The layout of the report that is completed following each monitoring visit has been reviewed and now contains detailed evidence of observations made, and any good practice recommendations that are made as a result.

The school benefits from a team of established and experienced care staff who provide a continuity of care that is obviously valued by the pupils. Records show that all staff receive regular supervision. Those who spent time with the Inspectors spoke of the outstanding level of support that they receive from managers and other team members. They are a close team, who are confident and trusting of each other's practice. All staff spoke very highly of the 'open door' policy that is operated by the Head and also his ongoing support. They told the Inspectors that they enjoy working in such an energetic and forward-thinking school, where the input of the care staff team is highly valued. All absences are covered from within the staff team. A Senior Residential Care Worker or a member of the Senior Management Team is always available for back-up support.

Care staff are provided with extensive training opportunities and are very well equipped to meet the needs of the pupils in their care. At the time of this inspection every member of the care staff team had achieved NVQ 3 in Caring for Children and Young People or were working towards the qualification. Two senior staff hold NVQ 4 in Health and Social Care and three others are completing the award. Within the school staff team there are four NVQ Assessors and an Internal Verifier. The Inspectors were impressed by the Senior Management Team's commitment to investment in a training programme that results in a qualified and skilled team of care staff, who are clearly proud of their key role in the whole school strategy.

Members of the Senior Care Staff team told the Inspector that during April 2006 they made visits to other Residential Special Schools in the South East in order to liaise with other care staff teams, and as a fact finding exercise in order to reflect upon their practice and identify any areas that could be adapted or improved. They are also happy to receive visits to Farney Close from staff at other schools.

The Inspectors also saw the school's most recent audit of data that informs the outcomes for the pupils under the "Every Child Matters" framework. The data obtained in each of the five areas is used to identify specific points of action that the school will address over the coming year. Current targets include increasing the amount of young people who eat five portions of fruit and vegetables each day from 51% to 70% and to reduce the number of young people that regularly drink alcohol from 33% to 25% through direct work with individuals in liaison with the school's therapists and the local Substance Misuse Team. The Inspectors considered this piece of work to be innovative and of a particularly high quality.

Farney Close is a well-managed school. The Head and his team of Senior Managers have established a culture of good and open communication at all levels, which is clearly appreciated by both staff and pupils. All systems and procedures are operating commendably well and provide evidence of a high quality care programme that promotes the welfare of the young people who board at the school and offers them the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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	4
15	4

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

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	4
17	4
20	4

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

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

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection? N/A

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)

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