



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

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

## **Wells Park School**

School Lane

Lambourne Road

Chigwell

Essex

IG7 6NN

10th & 11th March 2004

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

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

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

### **The role of CSCI is to:**

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

## **Inspection Methods & Findings**

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

### **The 4-point scale ranges from:**

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

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

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

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

<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION</b>
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**Name of School**

Wells Park School

**Address**

School Lane, Lambourne Road, Chigwell, Essex, IG7 6NN

**Tel No:**

0208 502 6442

**Fax No:**

0208 502 6729

**Email Address:**

davidwood@wellsark.freereserve.co.uk

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

Essex County Council

**Name of Head**

Mr David Wood

**NCSC Classification**

Residential Special School

**Type of school**

Residential Special School

**Date of last boarding welfare inspection:**

29 <sup>th</sup> , 30 <sup>th</sup> January & 4 <sup>th</sup> February 2003
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<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		10 <sup>th</sup> & 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2004	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		10:30 am; 07:30 am	
<b>Name of NCSC Inspector</b>	1	David Downes	079647
<b>Name of NCSC Inspector</b>	2	Jenny Elliott	076559
<b>Name of NCSC Inspector</b>	3		
<b>Name of NCSC Inspector</b>	4		
<b>Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):</b>			
<b>Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)</b> Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>			
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>		Mr David Wood	

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## INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

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

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

This document summarises the inspection findings of the NCSC in respect of Wells Park School.

The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

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

## INSPECTION VISITS

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

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

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

Wells Park School is owned and managed by Essex County Council. The school provides boarding education for up to 40 boys or girls of primary school age during the working week. The school is closed at weekends and for the usual school holidays.

At the time of the inspection, the school was accommodating 31 children, each of whom was subject to a Statement of Special Educational Needs, identifying emotional and behavioural difficulties that affected their education.

Children are accommodated in four groups. The boarding areas are all located in the main school building.

The ultimate aim of the school is to reintegrate children into their home or family environments with appropriate schooling.

In addition to the outdoor play areas, the school has a sports hall and an indoor swimming pool.

The school is an approved provider of teacher training. The Head Teacher, Mr David Wood, is the Director of the combined school and training centre. During term time, some twenty adults are based at the school, in accommodation adjoining the teaching areas, while they are undertaking their training.

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

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

The school provides a safe and stimulating environment for children, appropriate to their ages and developmental needs.

The staff team presented as competent, enthusiastic and committed to meeting the complex social and emotional needs of pupils. Staff develop caring, professional relationships with children and treat them as individuals.

Staff respond positively and consistently to children's behaviour, using an approach underpinned by the token economy system. Children's achievements are recognised and praised. Children demonstrate a level of age-appropriate understanding of how staff are trying to help them.

Teaching and care staff work well together as a team, with clear leadership, support and supervision provided by the Head Teacher, Head of Care and Head of Education. Staff work hard to involve parents and other main carers and keep them well informed about children's progress. Parents value highly the support and advice provided by staff. The school premises were clean, well maintained and decorated in a child-centred manner.

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

Some aspects of the school's staff recruitment practice did not meet the requirements of the National Minimum Standards.

Some written guidance relating to aspects of child care practice in the school did not meet the requirements of the National Minimum Standards and needed further development.

## CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This was the second inspection of the school by National Care Standards Commission against the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. Since the last inspection, a number of positive developments have taken place in relation to aspects of practice and record-keeping, following internal review by the school. The school has also made a number of developments in line with the advisory recommendations made after the last inspection. These developments are reflected in the fact that the school met a higher proportion of the National Minimum Standards at this second inspection. Out of a total of 31 Standards that were inspected on this occasion, the school met 27 and partially met a further 4, compared with the first inspection when 24 were met and 8 were partially met. These achievements are particularly noteworthy because they have taken place in the same year that the school has experienced a change in its Head of Care and Deputy Head of Care.

The observations made during the inspection, together with information obtained from discussions with pupils and staff, and responses to questionnaires, were all indicative of a good overall level of child care practice. Parents who completed questionnaires expressed a range of particularly positive views about the care provided by the school. Positive comments about the school were also received from placing officers. Staff were knowledgeable and committed to their work. A good standard of record keeping was in evidence. Children clearly enjoyed spending time with the care staff and participating in a variety of evening activities. Routines were well established and pupils were seen to respond well to the consistent and appropriate care provided by staff throughout the inspection.





**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION**

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

<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION</b>			
Identified below are the actions recommended on issues addressed in the main body of the report in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders adequately in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.			
No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	RS1	The school should include within the statement of purpose the name of the designated child protection person for the school and the relevant qualifications of staff. NMS 1.3	31/07/2004
2	RS4	The school should review the written complaints policy and procedural guidelines and ensure that all areas specified in NMS 4.3 are addressed, including the provision of information in a form suitable for pupils.	30/08/2004
3	RS10	Records of physical interventions should be kept in a bound and numbered book, in line with the requirements of NMS 10.14.	30/08/2004
4	RS27	The school should ensure that staff recruitment procedures and related records comply with the requirements of NMS 27.2.	31/07/2004
5	RS27	The school should ensure that staff members do not start work in the school until a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure check has been satisfactorily completed at the appropriate level. NMS 27.7	31/07/2004

## ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

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

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	RS5	The school should review the child protection training received by existing ancillary staff and arrange update training, as appropriate.
2	RS6	The school should review the definition of bullying contained in the anti-bullying policy and ensure that it is in line with NMS 6.2.
3	RS10	The school should include, within the written guidance on paying back of tokens, an explanation of how the amount to be paid back is calculated.
4	RS10	Information about the school's use of physical intervention should be included in the children's guide or provided to pupils in another form appropriate to their age and understanding. NMS 10.20
5	RS14	The school should review the form used to obtain written parental consent to medical treatment and ensure that it explicitly covers all areas specified in NMS 14.10
6	RS17	The school should ensure that each child's leisure needs are clearly identified within their placement plan.
7	RS26	The school should review the risk assessments for the low-level glass and the radiator in the sports hall.
8	RS30	The school should review the level of detail in records of staff supervision and ensure that the records contain sufficient detail for the effective monitoring of the supervision process by senior staff.
9	RS30	The school should ensure that records are available to demonstrate that ancillary staff receive supervision in line with NMS 30.2.

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

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

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

Checks with other Organisations

• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	NO
• School Doctor	YES
• Independent Person	NO
• Chair of Governors	YES

Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	YES
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	10/03/04
Time of Inspection	10:30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	19.5
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	4

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

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

### NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

**BOYS**

**GIRLS**

**TOTAL**

**Number of separate Boarding Houses**

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

The scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

## STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

### Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
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The school's Statement of Purpose comprises several documents, which provide the appropriate range of information needed to meet this Standard, with the exception of the name of the school's designated member of staff for child protection and the relevant professional qualifications of staff. The documentation clearly identifies how a continuum of care is created for the children attending the school.

The school had updated and developed the children's guide in the form of a 'PowerPoint' presentation on CD-Rom. This presentation was in a format suitable for the ages and understanding of pupils and contained detailed information about daily life at the school. Copies of the guide were available for children to view on the computers in the school and staff explained that it was also shown to children as part of their pre-admission information. The school is commended for this development.

## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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During the inspection, members of staff were observed offering children choices (appropriate to their ages and ability levels) about aspects of their daily care and helping them to make decisions. For example, at mealtimes children were given choices about their food whilst still being encouraged to eat a balanced diet and, in the Token Shop, children were assisted to consider their options for evening leisure activities.

Children told the Inspectors that the staff listened to their ideas, wishes and feelings.

An Inspector attended a meeting of the School Council where discussion was facilitated and pupils were encouraged to express their views about aspects of daily life at the school. Children told the Inspectors about a number of things that had been changed recently through the School Council. At the observed meeting, it was noted that one of these issues had been addressed and the majority remained current and awaiting change.

In addition to the School Council, children's views were sought in one-to-one discussions with their key workers and in regular house meetings, some of which were attended by the Head of Care or the Deputy.

All of the parents who completed a questionnaire for the inspection said that the school consulted them about key issues and listened to their views on a range of topics, for example, through surveys and parents' meetings.

Records indicated that parents and carers attended children's reviews and that children were helped by staff to express their views in preparation for these meetings.

**Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

The school provided written guidance for staff on privacy and confidentiality, in line with the relevant criteria for this Standard.

Payphones were located on each landing where children sleep. These telephones were positioned away from bedrooms and lounge areas, thereby affording reasonable privacy. Staff were aware of the need to ensure that the children respected each other's privacy when using the telephone. The children had to ask a member of staff for money in order to make a call from a payphone. The school's written policy stated that no child would be denied access to a telephone and that children were allowed a free phone call each evening, with additional calls available "as and when necessary". One child spoken with thought that there was a limit to how many phone calls they could make, while another child was confident that there was no limit.

A member of staff described how they had helped one pupil to develop an understanding of maintaining privacy, for example, in relation to occasions when other pupils could enter their room.

Children's records were kept securely in the school.

The school had developed appropriate written guidance for staff about times when it may be necessary to search a child's possessions. One of the sampled files contained a record of a search undertaken of a child's bedroom. This record indicated that practice in the school met the requirements of this Standard.



**Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.8)**

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

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

The school's complaints policy and procedural guidelines did not include all of the elements required to meet this Standard. This documentation should be reviewed, with particular reference to the areas specified in NMS 4.3. For example, the children's guide did not refer to complaints and the school will need to give further consideration to the accessibility of the policy to children, taking into account their learning needs.

Of the twelve children who completed the pupil questionnaire with the Inspectors' assistance, ten (83%) said that they knew how to make a complaint and two said that they did not. Several of the children said that they did not understand the term "complaint" and others were uncertain about who they should talk to if they were unhappy about some aspect of daily living at the school. Some children said that they would talk to their key worker or the Head of Care, however, they did not appear to know what should happen if this member of staff did not resolve the problem. The Head Teacher commented that the children's experience would have been that adults in the school were always able to respond positively to any complaint made, or concern expressed, by a child and that the children may, therefore, have been unable to understand the questions asked by the Inspectors. The school needs to consider how children can be helped to understand the process that will be followed if they express dissatisfaction about some aspect of their care at the school.

Of the placing officers who completed questionnaires, two said that they had received information about the school's complaints procedure and two said that they had not. Most of the parents (81%) who responded said that they had received information about the school's complaints process. All of the parents or placing officers who completed questionnaires stated that they had never had cause to make a complaint to the school.

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

0

**Number of above complaints substantiated:**

0

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

0

**Number of above complaints substantiated:**

0

**CHILD PROTECTION**

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

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

**Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.12)**

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

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

3

The school's written child protection policy covered the areas specified in this Standard.

The requirement for the school to have written guidance for staff who are subject to allegations against them (NMS 5.6) was not inspected during this inspection.

The school had a clear system for identifying and responding to any concerns that a child may have been harmed, or is at risk of harm, including referral to the relevant investigating authorities. The Head Teacher is the school's designated person for child protection and holds the central record of these concerns, referrals and outcomes. The Head Teacher expressed concerns about the way that some referrals had been responded to by the investigating authorities and stated that the school was continuing to seek clarification and to pursue appropriate action, on behalf of the children involved.

Care staff were able to describe clearly the actions that they would take in the event of a concern about a child or a disclosure of abuse being made. Ancillary staff spoken with during the inspection could not recall receiving basic training in child protection. The school's training officer said that this would have been covered during their induction, but agreed that refresher training in child protection should be provided for ancillary staff.

All but one of the children who completed the pupil questionnaire said that there was an adult to whom they could talk if they were worried at school. Comments made by children in informal discussions with the Inspectors, together with observations made during the inspection, indicated that children felt safe at the school.

One placing officer who completed a questionnaire said that the school "takes extreme measures to ensure that the child remains safe and well cared for" and that they felt "secure" in terms of the child's safety as a result of the school's response to behaviour exhibited by the child.

Staff had received training in de-escalation and physical restraint techniques.

The school had notified the NCSC of the child protection enquiries initiated since the last inspection. The figure given below does not include any child protection enquiries relating to concerns about children's home situations, as these are not directly related to the school setting.

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

3

**Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5)**

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

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

3

With only one exception, the children who completed the pupil questionnaire said that, if another child were to hurt them, the adults at the school would sort out the problem. The Inspectors also talked with a number of other children and none of them spoke of bullying as a significant problem, either for themselves or for other children in the school.

Children and staff spoken with said that bullying was not allowed in the school and that any incidents of bullying reported to staff were taken very seriously. Ancillary staff told the Inspectors that they did not think there was a high level of bullying at the school, and that if there were any incidents they were quickly dealt with by staff.

The high level of staff supervision of children throughout the day helps to minimise the opportunities for bullying to take place.

Staff gave examples of appropriate and sensitive responses to bullying issues that had arisen, including direct work with children to address this behaviour and working closely with parents.

Throughout the inspection, staff provided good role modelling for children in their communication and interaction between each other and with children.

The school has a written anti-bullying policy, however, the definition of bullying contained within this document needed development to cover all of the elements specified in NMS 6.2.

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

X %

**Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)**

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

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

3

The Head Teacher is responsible for notifying the relevant authorities and other appropriate persons of any significant events occurring at the school. The NCSC had been appropriately notified of relevant incidents since the last inspection.

Written records of notifiable incidents were maintained.

As already stated, the school had informed the NCSC of matters referred to the local Child Protection team.

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

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

0

0

0

0

**Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)**

The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.

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

3

Children at the school received a high level of supervision and, as such, the likelihood of a child going missing without this being immediately noticed by staff was minimal.

The school's written policy and procedures met the required Standard.

The Head Teacher stated that there had been no incidents involving a child going missing from the school since the last inspection.

**Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:**

0

## CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The observed interaction between staff and children was encouraging and supportive. Throughout the inspection, the children behaved well and staff responded consistently and positively when children needed support. Children clearly benefited from the enthusiasm and encouragement of staff.

Children told the Inspectors that they liked the staff and that staff helped and cared about them.

Staff members spoken with during the inspection were very knowledgeable about the needs of the children they were caring for and how these needs could best be met.

The school's expectations of pupil behaviour were clearly understood by the children. There was a shared understanding, between children and staff, of terminology used in the school, such as 'safe holding' and 'keeping safe'.

Home/school books sampled during the inspection contained evidence of the development of consistent approaches to children's behaviour between the school and the children's main carers.

Parents who completed questionnaires for the inspection made many very positive comments about relationships between staff and children at the school and the general way in which their children were being looked after.

"Genuinely caring and patient staff." [Parent]

"It is a very friendly and caring environment created by the staff." [Parent]

"All staff from the kitchen staff and cleaners to the teaching and care staff do a fabulous job with the children." [Parent]

**Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**2**

The school used a token system to underpin its management of children's behaviour. Tokens were awarded for acceptable behaviour (including meeting individual targets) at regular intervals throughout the day, thereby providing positive reinforcement of this behaviour. The children were able to exchange their tokens for a variety of items, activities and privileges. Throughout the inspection, the children displayed a clear understanding of the token system and responded very positively to it. Staff told the Inspectors that all children were able to engage with the system and the monitoring arrangements would be able to identify any child who might be having difficulties.

Individual behaviour targets for children reflected their abilities and understanding and were kept under regular review by the school. Certificates were awarded in school assembly to children who had achieved their targets.

Written guidance had been developed to promote a consistent approach on those occasions when tokens are deducted to 'pay back' for staff time or as reparation for deliberate breakages. Whilst acknowledging that responses to individual children will depend on the particular situation giving rise to the sanction, it is recommended that the school reviews this guidance and includes a clear explanation of how the amount of 'pay back' is to be calculated.

Of the children who completed a questionnaire, a high proportion (83%) said that the staff treated them fairly and one responded that they were 'sometimes' fair.

The school had detailed written guidance on how staff were permitted to hold or restrain a child. The techniques used are based on a recognised training course, however, they have been adapted to provide more appropriate methods for the age of the children attending the school. All staff received training in the school's methods of physical intervention during their induction and subsequent refresher sessions. Sampled records of physical interventions indicated that the school's policy was being followed by staff.

Two pupils told the Inspectors that they had been hurt while being physically restrained by staff. The other children spoken with said that they had never been hurt and understood why 'safe holding' by staff was necessary in some situations. One of the children who reported being hurt subsequently told the Inspectors that this had been untrue and that they had not been hurt. The Head Teacher located the records relating to the incident referred to by the second child and, in discussion with the Head Teacher, with the Inspectors present, this child agreed with the account given by staff in the school's record. This record indicated that the school's policy on 'safe holding' had been followed and that no injury had been reported by the child or observed by staff at the time of the incident.

The forms used for recording physical interventions had been reviewed since the last inspection and related training had been provided for staff. These forms provided for the recording of an appropriate range of information. The completed forms were numbered and stored in date order in loose-leaf folders and not in a separate bound and numbered book,

as specified in this Standard. The Inspector was advised that the school considered that the arrangements in place for signing, counter-signing and monitoring of the completed forms provided sufficient safeguards to ensure that records could not be altered or lost. At the time of the inspection, some records relating to one child had been removed so that they could be reviewed by the Head Teacher.

The completed physical intervention forms had been reviewed by a member of the school's governing body and records of this monitoring process included comments on the quality of the reports.

The children's guide to the school included information about the school's expectations of children's behaviour and a detailed explanation of the token system in a format suitable for the age and understanding of children at the school. The children's guide did not, however, include any information about the school's use of physical intervention.

Parents and placing authority officers who completed questionnaires confirmed that they had received information about the school's rules and measures of control. All comments that were received in relation to the way that the school manages children's behaviour were positive. Parents praised the way that staff worked together to provide consistency for children and the emphasis placed on rewarding good behaviour. A number of parents made particular comment on the improvements that they had seen in their child's behaviour and social skills since attending the school.



## QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The school had a written admissions policy and related procedural guidance. Discussions with the Head Teacher and care staff, together with sampled records, demonstrated that this procedure had been followed in practice. Written information had been obtained from professionals already involved with the children and home visits had been undertaken to gather essential information about the children's care needs. The children and their parents had also visited the school. Written records of these admission visits were maintained and, together with other documentation (for example, the child's Statement of Special Educational Need), these formed the basis of the initial placement plan.</p> <p>One placing officer commented that their experience of the school's admission process had been "very positive". All parents who sent comments for the inspection confirmed that they had received written information about the school before their child was admitted.</p> <p>Each child is allocated a key worker who undertakes to ensure the child settles well and that arrangements for their care are appropriately addressed. Key workers are responsible for liaising with the child's parents, by means of regular telephone calls and through the child's home/school book. Sampled records and comments received from parents indicated that these arrangements worked very well.</p> <p>Staff were able to describe appropriate ways in which they helped to prepare children for leaving the school.</p>		

**Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**4**

The school operates a 24-hour curriculum and it was evident from discussions and observations during the inspection that staff work hard to achieve a consistent approach to the children throughout the day, for example, in the operation of the token system.

Care staff spend time in the classrooms working alongside children and teaching staff. In addition, some learning assistants are also employed as care staff and some teaching staff work in the evenings, helping with activities.

Each child has an individual education plan, which is available for all staff to read and contribute to. Teaching and care staff meet regularly to discuss individual children's plans and their progress. In addition, joint staff meetings occur on a weekly basis and the school arranges a variety of joint training for teaching and care staff, for example 'safe holding' and child protection training.

The Inspectors were able to attend the hand-over meetings at the beginning and end of the school day. These meetings were used to identify significant events and issues, including any difficulties children may have experienced. Care staff spoken with demonstrated an appropriate awareness of the educational progress of their 'key' children and the need to provide a safe and secure environment in order to enable children to achieve their educational potential. Formal and informal communication between care and teaching staff demonstrated the importance that the school places on attention to detail in meeting children's needs.

Parents also commented positively on the extent to which the care and teaching staff work together to provide consistency of care.

The boarding areas contained a wide variety of educational books and toys and children were able to supplement these with other items and activities 'bought' from the token shop. Children had access to computers in the boarding areas.

Overall, the arrangements in place and the effectiveness with which these were put into operation in the school exceeded the criteria for this National Minimum Standard.

**Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

Children were able to choose from a wide range of activities in the evenings, with access to additional choices provided through the token system. The children were observed choosing their activities at the Token Shop at the end of the teaching day and then participating enthusiastically later in the evening. Activities were planned a week in advance so that the children knew what would be on offer and would be motivated to earn their tokens.

The school makes good use of its swimming pool, gym and grounds, and also the leisure facilities in the local community.

There was a good range of toys and games available for the children to borrow from the Token Shop.

The children also collect tokens towards 'Saver' trips organised by the school. Recent outings have included visits to London, Duxford and the cinema.

The children were clearly very enthusiastic about the activities available to them. All of the children who completed the pupil questionnaire said that they enjoyed the evening activities and three children identified this as their favourite thing about the school. A number of parents also commented favourably on the range of activities provided for the children outside class time.

The activities observed during the inspection were well supervised. The Inspectors sample read the written risk assessments for a number of activities in which children participate, both on and off the school site and these were found to be satisfactory.

**Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.25)**

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

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

The school's daily routines promoted good health and well-being, with regular mealtimes, nutritious food, physical activity and a constructive, sensitive approach to helping children with identified emotional difficulties.

Children's records were well organised and included written parental consent to medical treatment. The form used by the school for obtaining parents' written consent did not include consent to administration of First Aid. Sampled records of children's regular medical, dental and optical checks were well maintained. The Doctor visits once a month, accompanied by the School Nurse, who also visits at other times. The school has been proactive in seeking to involve the School Nurse in the delivery of aspects of the PHSE curriculum.

The Head of Care described a high level of appropriate emotional support that the school had provided for a child who had been particularly anxious about going to hospital.

The school had developed positive links with local providers of mental health services for children.

The Inspector was advised that all staff receive certificated First Aid training, which is refreshed annually.

The school had developed and implemented a written protocol on the use of non-prescription 'household' medication.

A pharmacist had made an advisory visit, at the school's request, in February 2004. The Inspector was advised that the school had acted on all of the advice received.

An Inspector observed the dispensing of medication and this was carried out by staff in line with the school's procedural guidelines and in a sensitive and friendly manner. Records of medicines administration were appropriately maintained and medication was stored securely at the time of the inspection. The school had developed a robust system for the safe transfer of medication from home to school and maintained clear records of this process. Overall, the systems developed by the school for medication administration, transfer and recording, were of a commendable standard.

**Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)**

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

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

4

All but one of the children who completed a pupil questionnaire said that they liked the food served at the school. Three children said that the food was one of the things that they liked most about the school.

Mealtimes were pleasant, well-ordered social occasions. Children were encouraged to try a variety of food. The overall quality of food provided was good. One of the meals taken with the children was a special lunch, arranged as part of an Italian theme day. This meal was extremely well prepared and presented and the children clearly enjoyed the experience, encouraged by the enthusiasm of the staff.

Children were given choices about their meals and encouraged to try new food, whilst also maintaining a healthy, balanced diet. Care staff were aware of children who did not eat a full meal and dealt with this sensitively at the table. Some children had individual targets linked to mealtimes.

The dining room and equipment were satisfactory.

The school received an award in November 2002 from the local Environmental Health authority and Epping Forest Primary Care Trust for their consistently high standards in food safety and hygiene, along with the healthy diet provided for the children. Together with the observations made during the inspection, this provided evidence that the school's arrangements exceeded the criteria for this National Minimum Standard.

**Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)**

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

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

3

Pupils wore school uniform during class time and changed into their own choice of clothing at the end of school.

Each child had an area within their bedroom where they were able to store clothes and personal possessions. Valuable items can be looked after by staff.

Children made choices about how to spend their tokens in the school's Token Shop, which had recently been developed to include a wider range of toys, activities and other privileges since the last inspection. The children were enthusiastic about this development.

## **CARE PLANNING AND PLACEMENT PLAN**

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

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

**Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

Children's placement plans were made up of a number of documents, including Statements of Educational Needs, Individual Education Plans and Individual Behaviour Plans. The documentation relating to each child was collected together and, as such, can be taken as forming the child's placement plan for the purposes of this Standard. The sampled placement plans covered the areas specified in this Standard (NMS 17.5), however, they did not contain specific information about individual children's leisure needs. Each child's health planning documentation was held in a separate medical file.

Files sampled during the inspection contained evidence of individualised behaviour targets being agreed for each child and reviewed every five weeks. Children were aware of their targets and how the school was helping them to manage their own behaviour.

Each child had an allocated key worker. Key workers contact parents at least fortnightly to discuss their child's progress and home/school communication books were being used effectively.

Placement planning documentation had been regularly reviewed and there was evidence of parents and children being consulted as part of this process. The sampled reports produced by key workers for children's annual reviews were detailed, informative and written in a very positive manner.

Placing authority officers who completed questionnaires for the inspection confirmed that the school was looking after the children in line with their placement plans. The following comments were made by placing officers:

"The care is comprehensive and addresses all areas of the child's functioning."

"Excellent facilities. Well trained staff. Their care towards pupils is excellent."

Three out of four placing officers said that the school worked 'very well' with the child's family and one rated this aspect of the school's practice as 'average'. Overall, however, these placing officers expressed slightly less satisfaction with the extent to which the school worked in partnership with the placing authority.

All of the parents who completed questionnaires said that they were very satisfied with the way in which the school was looking after their children.

**Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.5)**

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

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

3

Sampled files contained the information required to meet this Standard. Children's files had been audited in December 2003 and any omissions had been identified and rectified.

The school had developed written guidance covering the arrangements for enabling children to have access to their records. Staff spoken with were able to explain how children were informed about the content of their files and how to access them. Written information explaining this process had also been developed for children and the children's guide also makes reference to this.

The school held children's records securely.

**Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)**

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

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

3

The school held an appropriate range of records on children, as specified in this Standard.

Records relating to staffing were also met, but please see comments made under Standard 27 in relation to staff recruitment records.

The school retains these records for the specified periods of time in a secure part of the building.



**Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

The school did not restrict children's telephone or letter contact with their families or carers unless this was a specific legal requirement, agreed with the relevant authority. Please see also comments under Standard 3 in relation to telephone access. The Inspectors saw a child being helped by care staff to contact his mother by telephone (in an office) and being given unlimited time to make this call in private. One parent was taking their child to an external leisure activity each week as part of the placement plan.

All of the parents who sent comments for the inspection said that the school always informed them about any significant events affecting their child. Sampled home/school communication books contained weekly entries about the child's progress and behaviour, made by the class teacher, key worker and the child's parents. One placing officer highlighted the arrangements for liaising with parents as a particular strength of the school.

The school made appropriate arrangements for parents to visit and, where appropriate, to meet with their child in private. The Inspectors observed part of an 'open' day at the school when parents were involved in activities with the children, in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. In their written comments for the inspection, three parents said that they particularly valued these opportunities for visiting the school, when they were able to join their child in class and for social events, in addition to discussing their progress with staff.

All of the parents who sent comments for the inspection said that they attended meetings at the school and that their views were listened to.

The children all return home to their parents or other main carers each weekend and for school holidays.

**Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)**

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

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

9

This Standard is not applicable, due to the age group of children accommodated by the school.

**Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)**

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

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

3

Staff spoken with during the inspection demonstrated detailed knowledge of the individual needs of the children.

Key workers described making time for one-to-one discussions with their allocated children.

The day-to-day support needs of individual children were discussed in staff handover meetings to ensure that all staff were aware of any relevant issues and would be able to provide continuity of support.

The school used individualised targets to address children's individual needs within the token system.

Children said that they felt supported and cared for by staff. Children were clear that they could talk to any member of staff if anything was worrying them. The Head Teacher stated that all of the children had an identified adult, who was independent of the school, with whom they could make contact if anything was worrying them.

Discussions with staff and sampling of records demonstrated that the school was supporting children to access a range of professional support services to meet their identified needs.

As noted in relation to Standard 17, all of the parents who completed questionnaires said that they were very satisfied with the way in which the school was looking after their children.

## PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The school's teaching and residential areas were welcoming, spacious and well maintained. Decoration and furnishings had been used to good effect to counteract some of the more institutional features of the communal and residential areas.

The grounds of the school were well maintained.

Appropriate arrangements had been taken to ensure the security of the school building and the Head Teacher advised that these were being kept under review.

There were no outstanding requirements or recommendations relating to the school from the Fire or Environmental Health authorities.

The school was not accommodating any children with physical disabilities.

The school uses a CCTV system in the corridors of each boarding area. This system is used to assist the night-waking member of staff in ensuring that children who require assistance receive it quickly and that children do not go into areas where they are not allowed. Children spoken with knew that there was a camera at the end of their corridor and understood that it was there to help keep them safe at night.

The school is approved as a centre for teacher training. During term time, some twenty adults are based at the school while undertaking their training. These adults have contact with the children, but are never left alone with them and they are not allowed in the boarding areas. Staff assured the Inspectors that the children's care and privacy were not compromised and that the children enjoyed having adult learners in the school. Children spoken with confirmed this view.

**Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)**

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

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

3

The boarding accommodation was well maintained and appropriately decorated in a child-centred manner. Children were provided with a 'quiet area' with books and seating, in addition to the lounge areas where the televisions were situated.

Children were accommodated in a range of single and shared rooms. The Inspectors were informed that children sleep in shared rooms where it is assessed by staff that they are able to do so. All of the children's bedrooms were personalised to varying degrees and appropriately furnished. The children who showed the Inspectors their sleeping areas said that they were happy with their surroundings. The majority (75%) of children who completed the pupil questionnaire described their bedrooms as being comfortable.

Children are looked after during the night by a night-waking member of staff, with the additional support of two staff sleeping-in. Staff bedrooms were suitably sited.

Lighting and heating were satisfactory during the inspection.

**Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)**

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

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

3

The school had sufficient washing and toilet facilities in close proximity to each child's bedroom. Staff and visitors use separate facilities.

Appropriate consideration had been given to the provision of toilet and washing facilities for the single girl pupil accommodated at the school.

All toilets and washing facilities could be opened from the outside by staff in an emergency.

**Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.10)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

The school's maintenance member of staff manages a robust system of regular health and safety checks.

Fire drills and system checks had all occurred at the appropriate frequency. The last inspection by Essex Fire Authority took place on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2004 and the report stated that the school's fire precautions were found to be satisfactory.

Gas safety, portable electrical appliance testing and electrical installation checks had all been carried out at appropriate intervals.

The premises and grounds presented as well maintained. Sampled records demonstrated that risk assessments undertaken in relation to the school's grounds had been acted on where necessary.

Children spoken with were able to describe the areas of the school that were 'out of bounds'.

Sampled hot water temperatures did not exceed the recommended level at the time of the inspection.

The low-level glass in the sports hall was not marked to indicate that it conformed to the relevant safety standard. Additionally, a storage heater in the sports hall did not have a protective covering on a corner and this might present a risk of injury to children using the hall. These matters were drawn to the attention of the Head Teacher at the time of the Inspection who undertook to review the relevant risk assessments.

## STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

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

#### Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The recruitment records for three recently appointed members of staff were inspected.

Two members of care staff had started work at the school without a completed Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure. One of these disclosures had been completed satisfactorily before the inspection and the other disclosure was still outstanding after three months. The Head Teacher stated that the school was continuing to follow the guidance of the LEA's Personnel department in relation to CRB disclosures and that, in line with this guidance, staff were allowed to start work before their CRB disclosures had been returned, provided that they did not have unsupervised contact with children during this time and their continued employment was conditional on a satisfactory disclosure being received.

In the case of one recently employed member of staff, although the school had obtained two references, these did not include the person's most recent employer.

The school's standard reference request letter did not specifically ask referees to provide the information specified by this Standard.

The school had applied for CRB disclosures in respect of everyone, over the age of 16 years, living on the school site. The result of one of these disclosures was still awaited at the time of the inspection.

The other elements of this Standard were met.

**Total number of care staff:**

14

**Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:**

4

**Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

3

Sampled records, discussions with staff and observations made by the Inspectors indicated that staffing levels were in line with the school's written staffing policy and were appropriate to meet the needs of the children accommodated by the school at the time of the inspection.

The school had not used agency staff for over three years. Staff shortages were covered by members of the existing staff team, who confirmed that they preferred this arrangement because it enabled them to provide greater consistency of care for the children.

All other aspects of this Standard were met.

**Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)**

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

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

The school had a dedicated training officer and operates a comprehensive staff training programme to ensure that staff receive appropriate induction and that core knowledge and skills were refreshed on a regular basis. Care staff spoken with praised the extent to which the school provided them with training and other opportunities for development. The school achieved the 'Investors in People' Award in November 2002.

The induction programme for care staff is designed to combine and develop training, theory and practice. This programme takes up to a year to complete, after which staff receive a certificate.

Two members of staff spoken with described the 'buddy' system that had been in place for the first two weeks of their employment as particularly helpful. In addition to this, they had received individual supervision every two weeks and an induction booklet had been used to record their progress. The school's training officer advised the Inspector that new staff are not allowed to have key working responsibility for children until the Head of Care, Head Teacher and herself are all satisfied with their progress through the induction programme.

The Inspectors were advised that there was an induction programme for ancillary staff that included basic child protection awareness training, however, as previously noted (Standard 5), some ancillary staff spoken with said that they had not received such training.

The school organised monthly training meetings for the whole staff team, covering a range of topics relevant to working with the children in the school. Staff have access to an extensive library.

Staff have their performance formally appraised on an annual basis and this evaluation is used to identify individual training needs for the forthcoming year.

Please see also comments made under Standard 31 in relation to the school's progress with National Vocational Qualification Level 3 training for staff.



**Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

Staff talked positively and knowledgeably about their role at the school and the integral part that each adult played in looking after the children.

Staff spoke of being well supported by their managers and peers, both informally and formally. Recently appointed members of care staff confirmed that they had received formal supervision on a fortnightly basis during their induction. Care staff were receiving supervision each half-term. Whole school and care staff meetings were being held on a weekly basis.

Not all sampled records of supervision sessions with care staff contained sufficient detail for the Inspectors to assess, and for the school to monitor, whether these sessions were addressing all of the required topics.

Ancillary staff said that they did not have planned one-to-one supervision, but confirmed that they were in regular contact with managers as part of their normal working day. Staff commented positively on the 'open door' policy operated by the Head of Care and Deputy Head of Care.

The Head Teacher confirmed that he received both clinical and task-related supervision on a regular basis.

Staff had detailed job descriptions that identified to whom in the school they were accountable and the duties and responsibilities of their specific posts.

The Head Teacher reported that the range of written guidance available for staff was in line with NMS 30.7 and that staff handbooks were in the process of being revised and updated for the whole school.

As previously noted, the school has held the 'Investors in People' award since November 2002.

## ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.17)

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

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

The care elements of children's welfare and development in the school were delegated to the Head of Care, who worked with the Head of Education and the Head Teacher to ensure continuity of care for pupils.

Senior care staff had significant experience of working in the school. Since the last inspection, the school's long-standing Head of Care had retired and the Deputy Head of Care had been promoted to fill this post. Discussions with staff and observations during the inspection indicated that this had been a smooth transition, with the new Head of Care and her Deputy becoming firmly established in their leadership roles.

The Head of Care had completed NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People and met the experience element of NMS 31.2. The school will need to consider how it will be able to meet the remaining qualification criterion for the Head of Care (NMS 31.2) by 2005.

The school was aware of the need to meet the requirements of NMS 31.4, which states that by 2005, a minimum of 80% of care staff should have completed their National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People or hold equivalent qualifications. Plans were in place for the majority of care staff to commence this course in April 2004. The Head of Care and Deputy Head of Care were due to commence training to become assessors for NVQ Level 3.

Staff confirmed that time for handover meetings and staff meetings was included in the rota.

Children were not given responsibilities over other children in the school.

The school had procedures in place to deal with emergencies, however, no events of that nature had occurred since the last inspection.

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

14 %

**Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)**

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

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

3

Evidence was available from sampled records to demonstrate that the school had appropriate arrangements in place to monitor the specified records in line with the expectations of this Standard.

The Head of Care completes a report for the Governing body each term. These reports detail any changes and developments in the provision of care at the school. Sampled reports were detailed and informative.

The Head Teacher completes an annual report reviewing the operation of the school.

The outcome for this Standard was met.

**Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)**

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

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

0

This Standard was not assessed during this inspection.

The report of the last inspection included an Advisory Recommendation that the school Governors should complete a written report and sign relevant records as part of their monitoring visits to the school. During this inspection, the Head Teacher advised the Inspectors that appropriate arrangements were in place and that the relevant records were available.

**PART C**

**LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY**

**(where applicable)**

**Lay Assessor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Lead Inspector** David Downes **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** 19/8/2004

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

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> March 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

Comments were received from the provider

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

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

**Note:**

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

**D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 9<sup>th</sup> July 2004, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.**

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

Action plan was required

Action plan was received at the point of publication

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

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

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

**D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT**

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

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

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Designation** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Or**

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

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Designation** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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

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