



Making Social Care  
Better for People

# inspection report

## RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

### St Nicholas School

**Taynton Drive  
Merstham  
Redhill  
Surrey  
RH1 3PU**

*Lead Inspector*  
Ms R Coler

*Announced Inspection*  
2nd November 2005      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](http://www.dh.gov.uk) or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

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

Those outcomes are:

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

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

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

# SERVICE INFORMATION

<b>Name of school</b>	St Nicholas School
<b>Address</b>	Taynton Drive Merstham Redhill Surrey RH1 3PU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01737 215488
<b>Fax number</b>	01999 999999
<b>Email address</b>	
<b>Provider Web address</b>	
<b>Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school</b>	Surrey Childrens Service
<b>Name of Head</b>	Mr Clive Weeks
<b>Name of Head of Care</b>	Ms Beverly Whittaker
<b>Age range of residential pupils</b>	
<b>Date of last welfare inspection</b>	01 December 2004

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

St Nicholas School is a residential special school, which provides education to boys aged between 10 and 16 years who have a primary need in relation to their emotional/behavioural difficulties. A number of pupils have additional needs that range from having a minor to a major affect on their education. Surrey County Council places the majority of pupils. The range of identified needs of the pupils to be admitted to the school cannot be confirmed within this report as this is still in discussion with Surrey County Council.

Please note that a new Head Teacher, Mr. Craig Anderson, had been appointed to the school from September 2005 and is not as reported in the service information section of this report Mr. C Weeks. The fax number for the school provided in the service information section of this report is also incorrect and should read 01737 646173.

# SUMMARY

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

This inspection was undertaken as a joint inspection with OfSTED. Separate reports were produced with the CSCI taking the lead on welfare issues.

Significant positive developments had occurred at the school within all but one area of practice, recruitment. Vision for the school was being translated into actions and actual change that pupils and staff recognised, supported and appreciated.

Inspectors wish to thank all the pupils and staff for making them welcome and supporting the inspection in a positive manner.

## **What the school does well:**

Health care arrangements are well organised and pupils health care needs kept under review.

The children's complaint procedure leaflet was a good example of an engaging, thoughtful document, which provided pupils with a variety of avenues to make their complaints known both in person and anonymously.

Standard 13 was not inspected in detail on this occasion. Evidence provided by pupils confirmed that the range of activities on offer was of an even higher standard than at the last inspection. Pupils spoke very positively regarding the activities they took part in and the school management team confirmed that they were continuing develop opportunities available. Therefore this standard was found to continue to exceed national minimum standards.

Generally pupils reported that they were treated as individuals and the practice seen on the day of the inspection confirmed this view. Boarding staff continued to have an awareness of the needs of each child, and were observed to show an understanding of how a pupil's needs may affect their behaviour. Staff also showed a strong commitment to meeting any needs identified.

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

Overall the atmosphere and ethos of the school had changed positively. The whole school resonated that change for the better could be achieved. Pupils comment made in the school's comment book completed in September 2005 summed up well the current position of improvements. For example " Its better, no fighting. People are smiling" and "We are more positive. I feel like I can work...school is more comfortable".

The changes to dining arrangements throughout the day made significant improvements to the homeliness and atmosphere of meal times. The further development of a breakfast club in January 2006 is another good initiative, which will enhance this area of practice.

Child protection, support for anti-bullying and behaviour management had been improved by the overall changes made in the school. For example greater monitoring of incidents had increased the ability of staff to consider the appropriate actions needed for each situation. In addition the levels of child protection training provided to staff had increased and records of child protection referrals were well organised and detailed. Pupils reported that they felt safe this term this was not the case at the last CSCI inspection. They also reported that there was a reduction in bullying.

However, child protection, support for anti-bullying and behaviour management continue to require improvement and need to demonstrate that the improvements made are embedded within the school practice.

Health and safety management at the school has improved since the last inspection.

Action had been taken to ensure the buildings were secure and repairs were completed promptly. The maintenance staff reported that they were now able to achieve this, as there was a reduction in the destructive behaviours of pupils. Pupils also noted the difference to the premises for example one pupil commented in the comments book that there was "not so much damage".

The new management team had fully reviewed the effectiveness of the school buildings in meeting the needs of pupils attending an EBD school and were in the process of completing significant improvements the positive outcomes of which were already evident. For example the changes to the school entrance and the change of entrance where young people arrive in the morning resulted in less damage to the property and a calmer start to the school day.

Staff confirmed that communication had improved greatly between the care and teaching staff. The school had introduced a training session on Friday afternoons for all staff that teaches the staff to communicate effectively. The school had also introduced a number of handover and feedback sessions throughout the day, which included a whole school assembly at the beginning and end of the school day.

The link social workers had been provided a dedicated room within the school complex rather than being located within the administration area that was not accessible by pupils and lacked privacy, as they were at the last inspection.

There was evidence that pupils had been consulted about the operation of the school, for example they had taken part in recent staff recruitment, and had influenced decisions regarding the school uniform. Pupils were evidently proud of the new school uniform which they stated made them feel more like pupils at a mainstream school, as they now could wear shirts, ties and blazers if they so wished, which many did.

Pupils reported that relationships with staff were generally good. They stated this was due to having better rules, and staff following these rules. They also attributed better relations to the leadership provided since the beginning of September 2005 many specifically naming the head teacher as the instigator of this positive change.

One pupil commented in the comments book that " more staff listened to us now" and another " The staff are alright. Some are good, others are nice and some are alright".

The deployment of staff during the daytime was seen to have improved considerably. Deployment of staff in the evening was found to meet the needs of the new boarding arrangements. Throughout the inspection no pupil was found to be without staff supervision for any significant time.

Pupils reported that their possessions were safer than during the previous inspection and lockable facilities were available for all pupils within the boarding houses. No logs of thefts were found in records inspected.

The addition of a two-way radio system was implemented and staff confirmed this was helpful and assisted in getting staff to incidents quickly when they occurred.

The standard of record keeping had improved since the last inspection. No correction fluid was found on records, and all permanent records had been completed in black or blue ink.

However, there were some records that continued to reflect staff's emotional state and opinion, for example within incident reports viewed.

Crisis management plans were available at the time of the inspection.

Additions to the management team had been made. There were two assistant head teachers one of whom was on secondment until the end of December 2005. The Local Authority would be strongly recommended to continue this secondment in order to offer continued support to the new management team and embed the progress that is being made in all areas of the school's management.

Monitoring of the school by both the Governors, school management team and the Local Authority Children's Services team were developing and showed significant improvement.

However, the CSCI is concerned that considering the serious recommendation regarding recruitment made at the last inspection, full action to remedy this was not taken by the school and those responsible for monitoring the school had not followed up whether this had been achieved.



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

Recruitment practice must be undertaken in a safe and satisfactory manner and recruitment records must reflect this level of practice. This is an area, which will continue to form a notification of failure to the Local Authority. This was an area of extreme concern last year and it is worrying to note that satisfactory action has not been taken to fully resolve this matter. The school had not been successful in recruiting a specialist mental health worker. The CSCI would again emphasise the need for this position to be filled however, it is acknowledged that recruitment to this post is not the sole responsibility of the school.

The pupils continued to be concerned about the level of privacy afforded by the bathroom and toilet facilities. Changes should be made to increase privacy in bathrooms and toilets that do not provide sufficient privacy. Action should be taken to resolve issues of privacy where vision panels are placed in existing pupil's bedroom doors but care must be taken to ensure the doors remain suitable as fire doors.

Whilst the dining facilities had been improved the quality and quantity of foods provided at all meal times is strongly recommended to be reviewed and any changes should made reflect the guidance from the East Surrey Primary Health Care's dietician provided in their letter of the 21 October 2005.

Further work is necessary to ensure that the school's main complaint procedure and recording systems fully meets all of Standard Four of The National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools.

There were concerns about the competency of some staff in using positive options, which is the school's preferred method of physical intervention. Records of physical intervention noted the use of prone positions or restraints that were not in accordance with positive options guidance. It was also concerning that there were a number of staff who had not received training in positive options, and that training provided was on a piecemeal basis. In addition staff mentioned that they were receiving injuries during physical restraint and confirmed that these were not always recorded in the accident book.

A clear picture about the use of physical intervention was therefore not reached. It was also not evident that all teaching staff were using effectively training provided in positive care and communication. There were concerns that there continued to be some reliance upon the same members of staff to intervene or manage incidents. Patterns were noted in records; however, the management team had already identified these and were considering action.

The school needs to fully review the use of physical restraint to ensure that staff are trained and its use is safe, correct and consistent. Further all injuries received by both staff and pupils as a result of physical intervention need to be recorded in the accident book.

The admission procedure had not been agreed with Surrey County Council at the time of the inspection. This continued to be of concern, however, since the inspection the CSCI Surrey Local Office has been provided with detail of action that the school has taken to resolve this issue and detail of the proposed admissions criteria. The CSCI were intending to make this part of the notification to the DfES, but in light of the developments, have decided that the school has taken prompt and appropriate action to resolve this and will no longer include this. However, there is an expectation that the admission criteria be implemented in full for all future admissions. Failure to comply will result in the CSCI reconsidering whether notification is necessary.

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

The report of this inspection is available from [enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk) or by contacting your local CSCI office.

# **DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS**

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# Being Healthy

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

14, 15

Whilst healthcare within the school is well organised and promoted, further work is necessary to improve the quality and quantity of food provided.

## EVIDENCE:

The inspection of medication focused on the procedures, which were considered to be in need of development following the last CSCI inspection of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2004. The school had not fully developed a secondary dispensing medication procedure. However, this was produced during the inspection and was discussed further with the CSCI pharmacist inspector following the inspection. Staff confirmed that the amendments discussed would be made, and therefore no recommendation is made.

Observations of practice regarding medication confirmed that staff were vigilant and attentive to ensuring safe practice was followed. Staff also showed an understanding of contraindications to medication and were able to describe what differing medications were being administered for.

The sample of health plans viewed demonstrated that these had been had been reviewed.

The inspectors took lunch and breakfast with the pupils. The school's lunch service had changed since the last inspection; meals were 'family service' in style, with a group of pupils and staff being assigned specific tables to sit at. Lunchtime was observed to be a calmer affair than at the last CSCI inspection. In addition new dining tables and chairs had been purchased.

Pupils commented positively about the change in dining arrangements however, some concern was raised about the more restricted choice of meals available at lunchtimes. One comment in pupil the comment book stated "Miss choice at lunchtime as I liked ...". However, the inspectors observed that a small green salad, bread rolls and filings were available on each table, and one pupil confirmed that they had been provided with an alternative meal when staff knew that they did not like the choice offered.

Breakfast was taken by pupils in the units, with provisions being supplied to each unit from the main kitchen. This is again a change from previous practice where breakfast took place in the main dining room. Breakfast was observed to be calm, inclusive and domestic in style, allowing the pupils to get up, get ready for school and eat breakfast in a relaxed manner.

There were concerns about the quality and quantity of the food provided. For example the remains of an evening meal that had not been taken by the pupils on one unit demonstrated that one part of this meal had been overcooked and pupils had not eaten the meal. Pupils confirmed this was because they did not like the meals. In addition the quality and quantity of provisions available at breakfast were poor. For example staff confirmed that only one jar of jam per unit was provided to them each week. Some food items had been purchased in bulk sized containers by the catering team and was decanted into tubs for use by each unit. The CSCI would discourage this practice.

Several discussions took place during the inspection about the quality and quantity of food available. The inspectors felt that the opinions raised were conflicting and as a result the inspectors could not evidence that the meal provision always met pupils' needs. The inspectors were provided with a copy of the response from the dietician that the school consulted following the last inspection. It is recognised that neither the Head teacher nor the Catering Manager had seen this correspondence at the time of the inspection. The CSCI would support the recommendations made in this letter, and the school should use this as part of comprehensive review of the quality and quantity of food provided within the school.

It was helpful to note that the school's Chair of Governors was aware of the issues and intended to take action; the CSCI would ask that this action be taken promptly as there is clearly discourse with regard to meals, which as a result could adversely affect the pupils.

Pupils made a variety of comments regarding food. Generally the lunchtime was found to be of a satisfactory quality and quantity though lacked choice. Pupils' views varied greatly about the quality of food served in the evening and at breakfast. Some pupils considered that the food at these meals was okay whilst others found it to be unsatisfactory. Please note that the inspectors are aware that pupils had already raised a formal complaint about food provision to the previous Head Teacher yet no formal response was available.

The school intends to start a breakfast club for day pupils as from January 2006. This is seen as a development that will positively improve pupil behaviour, and as a result interaction between day and boarding pupils enabling better access to education within classroom.

Current certificates of attendance at food hygiene and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (1988) courses for all catering staff were displayed in the kitchen.

# Staying Safe

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

The systems in place for promoting the safety and welfare of pupils at the school had improved. However, further work is necessary for this to fully meet national minimum standards whilst recruitment practice failed to demonstrate that this was completed safely.

## EVIDENCE:

Due to a change of Head teacher the schools policies and procedures were being reviewed in detail. The school is advised to check that once reviewed, their policies and guidance to staff reflect those detailed in Appendix 3 of the National Minimum Standards for residential special schools.

Discussions with staff confirmed that action had been taken to review the use of IT to ensure this promoted safeguarding pupils from accessing inappropriate websites.

Pupils stated that generally staff respected their privacy. They were able to make private telephone calls by the addition of telephone, which they could move to a more private area.

The school had rewritten the complaints procedure and had developed a child friendly complaints procedure for pupils. This was a bright, engaging bound brochure that included tear out complaints slips, bullying slips, and a word search that could be completed if pupils were concerned about writing formally. The procedure clearly detailed that action would be taken in response to any concern raised and gave contact details for other agencies pupils might wish to contact.

Collection boxes were placed around the school to allow slips to be posted anonymously if pupils so wished. The pupils confirmed that they knew about this document, found it helpful, and knew where to find this information around the school. They stated that this was a good way of raising concerns. The school are commended for the implementation of this procedure.

The school's revised main complaints procedure included a simple flow chart for parents to follow. This was considered good practice as it enabled a potential complainant to quickly identify the route they can take in making complaints. The school is advised to consider cross referencing relevant policies and procedures within the concerns and complaints procedure, for example the whistle blowing policy, child protection policy and the disciplinary policy. The complaint procedure had not been amended to include the detail that any serious complaint must be notified to the CSCI. This was a recommendation of the last inspection report.

Greater clarity is required within the 2.6 of the school's main complaint policy that there is a need for written final responses to complainants to detail whether the complaint has been upheld.

Although records of complaints had been maintained, it was not evident that in all cases what the outcome was to the complaint, what action had been taken by the school, and whether this was feedback to the complainant. This was a recommendation made at the last inspection.

Staff have not received training in the complaints procedure, this is a recommendation carried over from the last inspection.

Fewer complaints than at the last CSCI inspection were made to inspectors, and pupils generally commented favourably about the improvements that had been made.



The school's child protection policy and procedure was reviewed in September 2005. This was found to be a detailed document. The wording of Appendix 1, page 10 of the procedure suggests that the Child Protection Liaison Officer is responsible for making the decision as to whether a referral needs to be made to the relevant assessment team. Discussions demonstrated that in effect this would not be the case, however, the policy must be reviewed to clarify this fact. In addition the inspectors were aware from conversations that concerns regarding child protection were discussed with the link social workers attached to the school, and the school's decision about any child protection referral were based upon this discussion. This practice must cease.

The child protection procedure also advised staff to read the latest guidance for education staff facing allegations of abuse (schools) that was provided to all staff.

Child protection records were viewed during the inspection. These were observed to be well maintained and contained appropriate information.

Those members of staff identified as Child Protection Liaison Officers had received appropriate training in child protection. All other staff had received basic child protection awareness training during in service training (INSET) days at the beginning of term. Staff had also been provided with the Department of Health (joint) publication "what to do if you're worried a child is being abused".

Child protection formed part of the notification of failure to safeguard and promote the welfare of children made to the Local Authority following the inspection in December 2004. The notification to be sent in 2005 will not include this area of practice.

The school reviewed their "bullying policy" in September 2005. This revised document included a definition of bullying, the aim of the policy, what action would be taken by the school, information about recognising bullies, a bullying charter, and a slip that pupils could use to report incidents of bullying to staff. One pupil also advised the inspector that they would be happy to volunteer as a pupil mentor if pupils felt that they could not talk to members of staff. Generally pupils reported a decrease in the level of bullying present at the school from the beginning of September 2005. This is supported by the analysis of incidents supplied to the inspection team, whereby between September and October 2004 there were eight recorded incidents of bullying, and only one had been recorded in the same period in 2005. Pupils also reported that they had greater confidence that staff would respond bullying to appropriately. This had not been the case reported at the last inspection. One pupil reported in the school's comments book "we are talking in a nicer way to each other".

The school stated that they were aware of the importance of identifying possible bullying or victim type behaviours from incidents, and that they were in the process of developing this further, therefore the recommendation made at the last inspection with regard to this matter will remain.

The school confirmed that work had been done with regard to raising staff understanding of bullying during the in service training days, and the Head teacher confirmed he reviewed that staff responses to incidents were appropriate and consistent on a daily basis. The CSCI would support the continuation of this practice.

Anti-bullying formed part of the notification of failure to safeguard and promote the welfare of children made to the Local Authority following the inspection in December 2004. The notification to be sent in 2005 will not include this area of practice.

A notification system has been implemented and used since the last inspection.

There had been only one incident of a pupil absconding since September 2005. The incident report recorded the fact that staff had attempted to talk to the pupil on their return.

The Head teacher confirmed that staff no longer took pupils offsite without informing other members of staff.

A new recording of significant incidents and discipline policy had been rewritten in April 2005 and September 2005 respectively.

Pupils demonstrated they were aware of the new policy and understood how this worked including how they could gain rewards for positive behaviour and how and when sanctions might be applied.

No pupil commented that they considered inappropriate sanctions were used. Sanction logs were viewed during the inspection. No idiosyncratic punishments were identified.

Discussion took place concerning the recording of the behaviour management programmes in the units. It is acknowledged that the use of simple and clear language is an important aspect of highlighting behaviour to the pupils, as part of this programme. However, the definitions of terms used should be discussed and agreed with pupils and staff to ensure consistent application and universal understanding. The use of the agreed terms should also be agreed with the senior management of the school.

The number of significant incidents recorded had reduced since the last inspection. The school defines a significant incident as "one where a person has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm or has caused significant criminal damage". The school has begun to analyse these incidents in relation to the type of incident occurring, where and when incidents were occurring and who was involved. This is good practice and will assist the school in identifying trends and therefore targeting the improvement of behaviour.

The re-organisation of the premises, the changes in routine, the vigilance of staff in ensuring pupils remain supervised when out of class, all contributed to the improved behaviour and atmosphere of the school. Pupils cited that one of the main reasons they considered the school had improved was the successful implementation of school rules and a belief that staff would now challenge poor behaviour. They also expressed that the increased structure of the school day, and clarity of boundaries, gave the pupils a clearer expectation of the level of

behaviour required, thereby increasing pupils' feelings of safety. Examples in the pupil comment book of this were "it's much better. Rules are better. We want to stay in classes" and "I am learning a lot more this year. The teachers keep us in class more because they are happier. It is tougher"

The disciplinary policy encourages staff to talk through incidents and not to apply sanctions unless absolutely necessary. This policy also refers to other behaviour management policies which were not available at the time of inspection, which are in the process of being developed, the completion of this should be made a priority, in order to move the staff team forward from relying on certain members of staff to deal with incidents of challenging behaviour. One pupil in the comment book stated, "The teachers are stricter now. You need to have a bit in you to take them on as they work together."

The inspectors had concerns about the competency of some staff in using positive options, which is the school's preferred method of physical intervention. Records of physical intervention noted the use of prone positions or restraints that were not in accordance with positive options guidance. It was also concerning that there were a number of staff who had not received training in positive options, and that training provided was on a piecemeal basis. In addition staff mentioned that they were receiving injuries during physical restraint and confirmed that these were not always recorded in the accident book.

A clear picture about the use of physical intervention was therefore not reached. The school needs to fully review the use of physical restraint to ensure that staff are trained and its use is safe, correct and consistent. Further all injuries received by both staff and pupils as a result of physical intervention need to be recorded in the accident book.

Measures of control, discipline and physical intervention formed part of the notification of failure to safeguard and promote the welfare of children made to the Local Authority following the inspection in December 2004. The notification to be sent in 2005 will not include this area of practice. However, the detailed review of how restraints are being used must be completed and detail of the results of this review sent to the CSCI including what action the school intends to take.

Health and safety management at the school have improved since the last inspection. Action had been taken to ensure the buildings were secure and repairs were completed promptly. The maintenance staff reported that they were now able to achieve this, as there was a reduction in the destructive behaviours of pupils. Pupils also noted the difference to the premises for example one pupil commented in the comments book that there was "not so much damage".

The school had actioned any recommendations made at the last inspection, including a good refurbishment of the changing rooms for sports activities. Further work is being completed within the school, which will assist security and safety of pupils. When completed these plans will be very positive improvements.

However, there were some issues concerning how staff make checks that areas of the school remain safe. For example where a new counter top had been installed in one unit this was placed on the top of a refrigerator with no attachment to the wall. In addition within the new activity centre wires for televisions and game consoles were left on the top of beanbags. Action was taken in respect of these examples during the inspection and therefore no specific recommendations are made regarding these issues. The school is asked to ensure that greater vigilance regarding health and safety matters is implemented.

The school reported that a new health and safety committee was meeting on the evening of the second day of the inspection. The school is advised to consider the training needs of the health and safety officer and develop a training programme for this post.

Premises safety and security formed part of the notification of failure to safeguard and promote the welfare of children made to the Local Authority following the inspection in December 2004. The notification to be sent in 2005 will not include this area of practice.

The school failed to meet the strong recommendations made at the last CSCI inspection regarding recruitment practice and procedures. This was of grave concern last year and continues to be the case.

A review of recruitment records held had been undertaken by the school but no action had occurred to rectify any deficiencies.

In addition recruitment practice since the last inspection did not confirm that this complied with either guidance within the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools or guidance from the DfES.

The school is therefore asked to provide the CSCI with immediate actions they intend to take regarding this matter that will be followed up by the CSCI at a further inspection during the coming term. The school is also advised to review the school's recruitment policy and procedure using the DfES guidance issued to schools in June 2005.

Staff recruitment will continue to form part of the notice of failure to safeguard and promote welfare, made to the DfES.

# Enjoying and Achieving

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

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

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

12, 13, 22

There is evidence of pupils enjoying and achieving at the school. Some further improvements were necessary to ensure positive developments become imbedded in practice. In addition it is important for the school staff team to include the full range of professionals necessary to meet pupils' needs.

## **EVIDENCE:**

Standard 13 was not inspected in detail on this occasion. Evidence provided by pupils confirmed that the range of activities on offer was of an even higher standard than at the last inspection. Pupils spoke very positively regarding the activities they took part in and the school management team confirmed that they were continuing develop opportunities available. Therefore this standard was found to continue to exceed national minimum standards.

Staff confirmed that communication had greatly improved between the care staff and teaching staff. The school had introduced a training session on Friday afternoons for all staff that teaches the staff to communicate effectively. The school has also introduced a number of handover and feedback sessions throughout the day, which includes a whole school assembly at the beginning and end of the school day. Positive feedback about pupils' behaviour is given to pupils and staff during lunchtime, afternoon assembly and at the handover to the care staff at the end of the day. Any negative feedback is given directly to staff on a need to know basis. Feedback sessions were observed to positive occasions, which enabled the pupils to be proud of their achievements.

The school had not been successful in recruiting a specialist mental health worker. The CSCI would again emphasise the need for this position to be filled however, it is acknowledged that recruitment to this post is not the sole responsibility of the school.

The link social workers had been provided a dedicated room within the school complex rather than being located within the administration area that was not accessible by pupils and lacked privacy, as they were at the last inspection.

Generally pupils reported that they were treated as individuals and the practice seen on the day of the inspection confirmed this view. Boarding staff continued to have an awareness of the needs of each child, and were observed to show an understanding of how a pupil's needs may affect their behaviour. Staff also showed a strong commitment to meeting any needs identified.

# **Making a Positive Contribution**

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

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

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

2, 9, 11, 17.

Positive developments had occurred to how pupils are able to influence the school operation and make their views known to the school. Relationships between staff and pupils had also improved with some further work necessary to ensure staff behave in a consistent manner towards pupils at all times.

## **EVIDENCE:**

Standard 20 was not inspected on this occasion. This standard was met at the last CSCI inspection on the 01, 02 and 03 December 2004.

There was evidence that pupils had been consulted about the operation of the school, for example they had taken part in recent staff recruitment, and had influenced decisions regarding the school uniform. Pupils were evidently proud of the new school uniform which they stated made them feel more like children at a mainstream school, as they now could wear shirts, ties and blazers if they so wished, which many did. The second day of the inspection was a charity "MUFTI" day, however some pupils wore school uniforms and smart clothes that day out of pride and to show the inspectors how smart they looked. This was a positive area of development for both the school and the pupils.

The pupils had been involved in a consultation process, which involved completing a comments book about the school, and interviewing the local community about perceptions of the school. Copies of these were available during the inspection and contained positive evidence about the growth and change within the school. Comments from these consultations are included throughout the report.

Several mechanisms, as identified elsewhere in this report, had been introduced to ensure that pupils knew how to and could easily communicate with staff and raise concerns.

Pupils were due to elect the school council members during the week following the inspection. New election procedures had been introduced and the teachers involved had worked closely with each class to ensure that they were aware of the benefits of having a school council, how it would work, and how to elect the members.

Pupils reported that relationships with staff were generally good. They stated this was due to having better rules, and staff following these rules. They also attributed better relations to the leadership provided since the beginning of term, many specifically naming the head teacher as the instigator of this positive change. One pupil commented in the comments book that " more staff listened to us now" and another " The staff are alright. Some are good, others are nice and some are alright".

Relationships viewed during the inspection were appropriate, friendly and supported pupils in maintaining good behaviour. As discussed earlier in this report the school has worked hard to build better communication between the teaching and welfare staff. Five days of INSET training had been provided to all staff at the beginning of the school term in September 2005.

However, records of incidents identified continuing concerns about some teaching staff and how they manage pupils' behaviour. It was not evident that all teaching staff were using effectively training provided in positive care and communication. In addition it was not clear that teaching staff had received or were always using the training in positive options, Surrey County Council's preferred behaviour management approach. The inspectors also had concerns that there continued to be some reliance upon the same members of staff to intervene or manage incidents. Patterns were noted in records; however, the management team had already identified these and were considering action.

The deployment of staff during the daytime was seen to have improved considerably. Deployment of staff in the evening was found to meet the needs of the new boarding arrangements. No pupil was found to be without staff supervision for any significant time throughout the inspection.

Pre-admission arrangements were generally organised by the school's link social workers, following Surrey County Council's assessment that the school could meet the pupil's needs. In relation to the advisory recommendation made at the last inspection, arrangements were being made for boarding staff to have greater involvement in the admission process, including for example,



visiting pupils in their homes before admission. Therefore no further recommendations will be made.

Those care plans sampled during the inspection were found to be detailed and up-to-date and provided good information. Pupils were aware of the plans and involved daily in checking how these were progressing.

# 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, 23, 24, 25

The school premises were improved and continuous development was in place to increase their suitability and ensure damage is repaired quickly. Greater privacy within the bathroom and toilet facilities provided is necessary to fully meet pupils' needs.

## EVIDENCE:

Standard 21 was not inspected on this occasion. It was found to be met at the last CSCI inspection of the 01, 02 and 03 December 2004.

Pupils reported that their possessions were safer than during the previous inspection and lockable facilities were available for all pupils within the boarding houses. No logs of thefts were found in records inspected. Pupils wore their own clothes after the school day had concluded and their own personal requisites were noted to be available on each unit usually these were stored in their own personal containers. Pocket money records were inspected and found to be handled appropriately. Pupils were encouraged to sign the records each time that they took money out.

The new management team had fully reviewed the effectiveness of the school buildings in meeting the needs of pupils attending an EBD school and were in the process of completing significant improvements the positive outcomes of which were already evident. For example the changes to the school entrance and the change of entrance where young people arrive in the morning resulted in less damage to the property and a calmer start to the school day. Please see comments in the previous section of this report regarding how the school has resolved the issues of the maintenance budget and damage.

The addition of a two-way radio system was implemented and staff confirmed this was helpful and assisted in getting staff to incidents quickly when they occurred.

Neither staff nor pupils raised concerns regarding the school's laundry service.

The use of pupil accommodation had been changed since the last inspection and one unit was no longer in use for boarding but was in development as an activity centre. The boarding units continued to be homely and comfortable. Pupils confirmed that they liked the boarding houses and raised no issues regarding the boarding premises. The addition of doors to all pupils' bedroom areas increased their privacy. The CSCI confirms that vision panels in bedroom doors are not necessary and in fact detract from pupil privacy. Action should be taken to resolve issues of privacy where these are placed in existing doors but ensure the doors remain suitable as fire doors. The CSCI continues to recommend that the school pursue long-term developments to build a separate purpose built boarding unit, which fully meets national minimum standards for residential Special Schools.

The state of bathrooms and toilets had improved since the last inspection. However, concerns remain that the layout of most of the bathrooms did not provide sufficient privacy. For example when standing in a shower pupils would be visible through the glass panel. Pupils confirmed that this was an issue that they considered unsatisfactory.

Premises Bathrooms and lavatories formed part of the notification of failure to safeguard and promote the welfare of children made to the Local Authority following the inspection in December 2004. The notification to be sent in 2005 will not include this area of practice. However the school are strongly recommended to further improve the quality of the pupils' bathroom facilities and ensure pupils' rights to privacy is upheld by the design of bathrooms and toilets throughout the school.

# Management

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

The management of the school is proactive, supportive and provided vision for the future. There are monitoring systems within the school, which continue to grow. Attention must be paid to ensuring that all aspects of the school's operation are monitored appropriately.

## EVIDENCE:

As new management had taken up post since September 2005, a reviewed copy of the statement of purpose was not available. The headmaster wished to complete a further review of this document to ensure that it reflected the schools new ethos and development. The school would be asked to forward a copy of the updated statement of purpose to the CSCI Surrey Local Office.

The inspectors would also note that the atmosphere in the school had changed from the last inspection. Staff were positive and had a sense of purpose. All staff and pupils who commented to inspectors made positive remarks concerning the change in management and stated that they considered this change was due to the new Head Teacher, citing reasons such as his enthusiasm, drive, commitment and vision had made the difference. There was a belief by staff that the school could change.

The admission procedure had not been agreed with Surrey County Council at the time of the inspection. This continued to be of concern, however, since the inspection the CSCI Surrey Local Office has been provided with detail of action that the school has taken to resolve this issue and detail of the proposed admissions criteria. The CSCI were intending to make this part of the notification to the DfES, but in light of the developments, have decided that the school has taken prompt and appropriate action to resolve this and will no longer include this. However, there is an expectation that the admission criteria be implemented in full for all future admissions. Failure to comply will result in the CSCI reconsidering whether notification is necessary.

The standard of record keeping had improved since the last inspection. No correction fluid was found on records, and all permanent records had been completed in black or blue ink. The content of records was generally considered to be satisfactory in that it showed respect for pupils and recognition that these records were legal documents. However, there were some records that continued to reflect staff's emotional state and opinion, for example within incident reports viewed. Please refer to earlier comments within the staying safe section.

Records regarding pupils were up-to-date and met National Minimum standards for Residential Special Schools. The quality and content of records regarding staff continued to cause concern, and therefore it is considered that this standard has not been met. Other records as detailed within standard 19 were available but not inspected on this occasion.

As changes have been made to boarding arrangements, it is considered that the advisory recommendation regarding risk assessing nighttime staffing is no longer necessary.

Staff training plans had been developed, however these should be individualised as identified in standard 29.5. Arrangements had been made for the supervision of the head of care and this now included supervision with the head teacher and external supervision from Surrey County Council's children's services. Staff appraisals had not been completed for all staff, but arrangements were in place for this to occur in the next few months. Therefore no further recommendation is made.

Staff reported that they were encouraged to attend training and that they were completing or had completed NVQ's in child care. Some staff raised concerns about further development once the NVQ was completed and the school is advised to consider what training and professional development opportunities will be available to staff in these circumstances.

Crisis management plans were available at the time of the inspection.

Additions to the management team had been made. There were two assistant head teachers one of whom was on secondment until the end of December 2005. The Local Authority would be strongly recommended to continue this secondment in order to offer continued support to the new management team and embed the progress that is being made in all areas of the school's management. Considering the short length of time that the new management team has been in place, considerable action had been taken to improve the school's monitoring systems, and this was demonstrated by the awareness that the headmaster had of incidents occurring throughout the school. This was also backed up by documentation provided at the inspection. However, it was acknowledged by the school that further work is necessary in this area. No further recommendation is made in light of the progress made.

Monitoring of the school by both the Governors and the Local Authority Children's Services team were developing and showed significant improvement. However, the CSCI is concerned that considering the serious recommendation regarding recruitment made at the last inspection, no action was taken by the school and this was not identified and followed up by those responsible for monitoring the school. Therefore a further recommendation is made that those responsible for monitoring the school ensure that all elements of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools are covered by monitoring systems to ensure that these standards and any recommendations made are met. Please also refer to comments made regarding a specialist mental health worker being recruited to the staff team made in the Enjoying and Achieving section of this report.

# SCORING OF OUTCOMES

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

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

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion

"N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>14</b>	3
<b>15</b>	2

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>3</b>	2
<b>4</b>	2
<b>5</b>	2
<b>6</b>	2
<b>7</b>	3
<b>8</b>	3
<b>10</b>	2
<b>26</b>	2
<b>27</b>	1

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>12</b>	3
<b>13</b>	4
<b>22</b>	3

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

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>16</b>	3
<b>21</b>	X
<b>23</b>	2
<b>24</b>	3
<b>25</b>	1

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>1</b>	2
<b>18</b>	3
<b>19</b>	1
<b>28</b>	2
<b>29</b>	3
<b>30</b>	2
<b>31</b>	2
<b>32</b>	2
<b>33</b>	2

Yes

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b></p> <p>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.</p>			
No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1	RS15	The CSCI support the recommendations made in the dietician's letter of the 21/10/05. The school should use this as part of comprehensive review of the quality and quantity of food provided within the school and provide the CSCI Surrey Area Office with a copy of this review including detail of actions to be taken.	31/01/06
2	RS15	The practice of food items being purchased in bulk sized containers and decanted into tubs for use by each unit should cease.	01/01/06
3	RS4	The school is advised to consider cross referencing relevant policies and procedures within the concerns and complaints procedure, for example the whistle blowing policy, child protection policy and the disciplinary policy.	31/01/06
4	RS4	Greater clarity is required within the 2.6 of the complaints policy that there is a need for written final responses to complainants to detail whether the complaint has been upheld.	31/01/06



5	RS4	All complaint records must detail what the outcome was to the complaint, what action had been taken by the school, and whether this was fed back to the complainant.	31/01/06
6	RS4	Staff have not received training in the complaints procedure, <u>This recommendation is carried over from the last CSCI inspection of the 01 December 2004.</u>	31/01/06
7	RS4	The complaint procedure must be amended to include the detail that any serious complaint must be notified to the CSCI. <u>This was a recommendation of the last CSCI inspection report of the 01 December 2004.</u>	01/01/06
8	RS5	The wording of Appendix 1, page 10 of the school's child protection procedure must be reworded to ensure it does not suggest that the Child Protection Liaison Officer is responsible for making the decision as to whether a referral needs to be made to the relevant assessment team.	01/01/06
9	RS5	Discussions with the school's link social workers leading to decisions as to whether it is appropriate to make a child protection referral must cease.	01/01/06
10	RS6	Formal documented support for bullies/victims be implemented and recorded.	01/01/06
11	RS10	The definitions of terms used by staff to describe behaviours in a simple manner to pupils should be discussed and agreed with pupils, staff and management to ensure consistent application and universal understanding.	01/01/06
12	RS10	The school needs to fully review the use of physical restraint to ensure that staff are trained and its use is safe, correct and consistent. A report of this review must be sent to the CSCI Surrey Area Office and include detail of the actions the school intends to take regarding any issues identified.	01/01/06

13	RS10	The completion of all inter-relating behaviour management policies should be made a priority.	01/01/06
14	RS10	All injuries received by both staff and pupils as a result of physical intervention need to be recorded in the accident book.	01/12/05
15	RS26	Greater vigilance regarding health and safety matters is implemented.	01/12/05
16	RS26	The training needs of the health and safety officer and develop a training programme for this post.	01/02/06
17	RS27	The school is therefore asked to provide the CSCI with any immediate actions they intend to take regarding improving staff recruitment practice and the deficiencies identified in the school's review of recruitment records. <u>This recommendation is carried over from the last CSCI inspection of the 01 December 2004.</u>	01/01/06
18	RS27	A review of the school's recruitment policy and procedure is completed using the DfES guidance issued to schools issued in June 2005.	01/01/06
19	RS28	A specialist mental health worker should be recruited to work at the school.	31/03/06
20	RS24	Action should be taken to resolve issues of privacy where these are placed in existing bedroom doors but care must be taken to ensure the doors remain suitable as fire doors.	01/01/06
21	RS24	The CSCI continues to recommend that the school pursue long-term developments to build a separate purpose built boarding unit, which fully meets national minimum standards for residential Special Schools.	01/03/06
22	RS25	The school are strongly recommended to further improve the quality of the pupils bathroom facilities and ensure pupils' rights to privacy is upheld by the design of bathrooms and toilets throughout the school. Plans should be developed to achieve this by the date given.	01/03/06

23	RS1	A copy of the updated statement of purpose to the CSCI Surrey Local Office.	01/01/06
24	RS1	The admission criteria be implemented in full for all future admissions. Failure to comply will result in the CSCI reconsidering whether notification is necessary.	01/12/05
25	RS3	School records be monitored to ensure that these do not reflect staff's emotional state and opinion but are more factual statements.	01/01/06
26	RS29	Individualised personal development plans as detailed in standard 29.5 be implemented.	01/01/06
27	RS31	The continuation of the secondment of an additional deputy head is strongly advised to be continued beyond January 2006.	01/01/06
28	RS33	Those responsible for monitoring the school ensure that all elements of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools are covered by monitoring systems to ensure that these standards and any recommendations made are met.	01/01/06

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

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