



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

BOARDING SCHOOL

Farringtons School

**Farringtons School
Perry Street
Chislehurst
Kent
BR7 6LR**

Lead Inspector

Key Announced Inspection
7th November 2006 09:30

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of school	Farringtons School
Address	Farringtons School Perry Street Chislehurst Kent BR7 6LR
Telephone number	020 8467 0256
Fax number	020 8467 5442
Email address	head@farringtons.kent.sch.uk
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Methodist Secondary School Trustees
Name of Head	Catherine James
Name of Head of Boarding	Sally Worth
Age range of boarding pupils	13-19
Date of last welfare inspection	3 rd December 2003

Brief Description of the School:

Farringtons has been in existence since 1911 as a Methodist girls school and merged with Stratford House girls school in 1994. Farringtons School is accommodated in spacious well appointed grounds with its own swimming pool and science laboratories situated independently within the campus.

The main teaching and boarding facilities are provided within the original 20th century East House, extended in 1925 to provide West House, Queens Court and Ferens Hall. New developments include upgrading of South House to accommodate boarders. The school also benefits from separate science and technology departments and a sports hall.

Since the last inspection junior boarding has ceased, and boarders are aged between 13 and 18.

Girls boarding facilities are provided in South, (10) East (18) and West House (16).

Four housemistresses are responsible for the care and oversight of the boarders in boarding accommodation with the Deputy Head having overall responsibility of boarding care.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection took place over the course of two days at various times. They spoke to a number of boarders and staff who work in the boarding houses.

The inspectors also had discussions with the Head, Deputy Head, Bursar, School Nurse and Chaplain.

Inspectors had a tour of the school and boarding houses and sampled the meals at breakfast, lunch and supper. Questionnaires were completed by boarders prior to the inspection and questionnaires sent to relatives for their views. Two responses were received. Letters were also sent to social services children's services and the chairperson of the Board of Governors to enable comments on the service.

Inspectors also read a number of documents.

What the school does well:

Farringtons provides a safe and comfortable environment for boarders to live in with a range of activities suitable for all age groups. When asked what is good about living in the school one girl wrote "I have lots of fun in the boarding house with my friend".

Another comment made was "Boarding life is generally good. Farringtons has tried as much as they can. They've made a great effort indeed...."

"I am very satisfied with the accommodation and the care and even if there is a problem, I can be sure it will be fixed as soon as possible."

The school provides a good balance between studying and free time.

There was positive feedback on how easy it is to talk to the Head and Deputy Head and how fair they both were. One boarder said, "If we need anything, or we have a problem it is usually sorted out in time"

Older boarders value the independence that the school allows:

One boarder wrote "We are very independent in the boarding school, which I value highly, but if we need help..... there is always someone I can turn to."

The quality of food is good with variety and choice. "We always have a mixed variety of different types of food. Everyday we have salad which is healthy and fruit and vegetables are also available" wrote one girl.

The School Nurse holds good records on health and the school has a good system in place for ensuring any sick child is looked after.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Whilst the Deputy Head continues as Head of Boarding there are recognised improvements with her now living on the premises. This enables greater involvement in boarding school life, contact with the boarders and closer supervision of boarding staff.

The last inspection showed there to be problems with the heating and plumbing systems. These have now been overhauled with a new system in place. New beds have been purchased for the older boarders and fire equipment is located appropriately.

Window restrictors have been fitted to first floor windows and above although the school must ensure checks are made to ensure they are functioning safely.

The kitchen has also benefited from a new servery.

Since the last inspection the Head has relocated the Nurse's office to East House. There is a dispensary with two beds to ensure sick boarders are looked after together with improvements in the systems for looking after any boarder who may be ill.

What they could do better:

From discussions with several different groups of boarders many of them felt that they were not always listened to by boarding house staff and that some staff were not approachable. The pastoral care system should be reviewed to provide a more formal supervision system for the boarding staff team.

The Head should also ensure all boarding staff have child protection training in the planned training in February 2007 and ensure this is cascaded down to prefects by the head of the sixth form.

The staff handbook and procedures must include the name and telephone number of any agency involved in the safeguarding of children including social services child protection teams. The school should also ensure that all boarders are given information on bullying and the forms it takes.

Whilst the school has developed a complaints procedure which provides the name, address and telephone number of the Commission, this procedure is located on the school network and not on display in any of the boarding areas. Neither is the information provided in the "Raising Issues" leaflet. The boarders, parents and visitors must have this information provided and it must

be displayed in the boarding areas. The Head of Boarding should also develop a separate system for the recording of complaints, concerns and significant incidents made by boarders- a copy of which is logged in the boarder's file. The inspectors also noted that the Childline number detailed in the information on bullying was incorrect. This must be amended without delay.

A number of girls feedback that they would like locks fitted to the sleeping areas and that staff did not always respect their privacy. This should be considered together with ensuring staff review their current practice in relation to entering the boarders' private rooms.

Whilst the laundry situation is good for some, some older boarders felt that they were not offered facilities which reflected their age and maturity and promoted their independence. The Head should consider providing a washing machine for these boarders.

In general the food was found to be good but some criticised the meals. The Head should review the food provided inviting the boarders to give their views. The use of posters should be considered in the main dining areas to raise awareness and reinforce health eating.

The survey and discussion groups indicated that a number of boarders felt they were not always able to contribute to the development of the boarding houses particularly during house meetings. The system should be reviewed allowing the boarders to bring issues forward. The school should record these meetings as detailed in the staff handbook.

The school has a number of rules and regulation which are given to the boarders in the "Welcome Pack". However, the last inspection recommended that these be on display in the boarding areas for all girls to access. This has not been implemented and the inspectors reiterate this recommendation.

Some boarders said that they were not always clear about which house mistress was on duty. The Head of Boarding should ensure that the whiteboard is always monitored to reflect who is on duty in each boarding house.

In general the recruitment of new staff is well organised with the appropriate checks being completed. However the checks on one housemistress had not been fully completed before she started. There is a need to verify references before commencing employment especially where the school is relying on a police check from abroad.

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

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

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders' health is promoted. (NMS 6)
- Safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records. (NMS 7)
- Boarders' receive first aid and health care as necessary.(NMS 15)
- Boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill.(NMS 16)
- Boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal Problems.(NMS 17)
- Boarders receive good quality catering provision (NMS 24)
- Boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals.(NMS 25)
- Boarders are suitably accommodated when ill. (NMS 48)
- Boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered.(NMS 49)

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

6,715,16,24,48, 49

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. Boarders' health and well-being are generally promoted. The quality of the food ensures boarders are provided with a healthy and varied diet although boarders should be more involved in choices

EVIDENCE:

There is information for staff and boarders on drugs and alcohol, and the whole site is a non-smoking area. Personal, social and health education covers a wide variety of issues in this area, and the library has new books relating to sex and puberty, asthma, eating disorders and teenage pregnancy. The school has a nurse who promotes good health and offers advice and guidance, although boarders spoken with felt that she was unable to understand what they say. Some of the pupils said that they would not approach her for advice about personal matters.

The School Nurse is on duty during normal working day hours. The Nurse's office with sick- bay of two beds has been relocated since the last inspection and is now located in East House. During "out of school hours" the house staff are responsible for the medical well-being and are first aid trained with access to an "on-call" GP with emergency A & E facilities at a hospital located a few minutes drive away. The staff handbook provides details of how a boarder's health and well-being is supported with changing routines dependent on the age of the boarder. The Nurse maintains details of dentists and opticians in case they are required, although these are normally accessed during holiday

times. Boarders spoken to were unaware of whether they could access a dentist or an optician and had a mixed view about how their healthcare needs were being met. It is appreciated that she is new in post but there is a need to develop improved communication and a more approachable manner. There are two beds located in the sick bay for girls who are unwell or they may be monitored in the boarding accommodation, if there is appropriate supervision available. Children with infectious diseases may have a period of exclusion if the GP or other specialist healthcare professional determines this to be safest.

Each boarder's family is asked to complete a health check sheet at the beginning of each term with an initial examination taking place. The school also request parents to authorise medication and hospital treatment.

The school has appropriate policies and procedures relating to the medical and healthcare needs of the girls. This information is stored on each individuals health file and is kept in a locked filing cabinet in the medication room.

The School Nurse maintains a record of medications administered and medications are kept in a locked cabinet in the office as are the records. These are checked regularly by the Head. Certain medications, that may be required in an emergency, are located in locked areas in the school.

Boarders over the age of 16 can manage their own medication and a lockable space is available for each girl to ensure it is kept secure. **(See recommendation 1)**

First aid boxes are located around the school and the school has a number of first aid trained staff, including staff responsible for the boarding girls.

A four-week sample menu was viewed which showed various choices of hot and cold meals each day for lunch and supper. The menu for the week is published and available for students to see. The menu on offer during the inspection showed a range of traditional English dishes, such as shepherd's pie or roast beef, and includes a vegetarian option at each mealtime. Pasta dishes were also regularly on the menu. There is also a salad bar, with a huge range of salad items, and this is replenished at each mealtime. There is the option of a hot dessert or fresh fruit. The breakfast menu consisted of croissants, toast and jam, fruit and a choice of beverages and a cooked breakfast on alternate days. One student misses porridge whilst a few others asked for more variety of fruit offered.

When asked, "Do you think the boarding school gives you a balanced diet?" 16 responded "usually" and 18 "sometimes". The survey completed by the boarders provided mixed views. A small percentage felt that the food was too oily/fatty for their taste and therefore grilling may be more beneficial. Another said "We always have a mixed variety of different types of food. Everyday we have salad which is healthy and fruit and vegetables is also available."

Although healthy options are available, boarders should be monitored to ensure that they take a healthy diet. It is also recommended that posters and

information about healthy eating be available, and these could well be displayed in and around the dining area to reinforce the message. At the last inspection in 2003, it was recommended that there be more Chinese dishes on the menu. Boarders said that whilst sometimes there was a Chinese dish, and sometimes a curry they would value more Chinese and other cultural meals. Inspectors felt that it would benefit boarders if they were consulted about the menus, especially at breakfast and suppertimes. The inspectors recommend a review of the food provided included the availability of snacks for the boarders' kitchen.

During the meals observed there was sufficient time, taking into account queuing time for everyone to be able to eat in comfort and without being rushed. The school has staggered lunchtime eating times on a rotational basis to ensure all girls have fair access.

A Clean Food Award was issued after a recent Environmental Health survey. The Bursar confirmed that the whole servery was recently replaced, and she was pleased with the new catering arrangements. The meals are taken in large canteen style dining room with little additional furnishing to provide a more comfortable environment.

There was bottled water in the boarding house kitchens, and bread and fruit for boarders to make themselves snacks between meals. A greater selection of fillings was suggested by a number of boarders. Younger boarders benefit from a cooker whilst Year 13 students have a microwave. Within the discussion group they indicated they would also like a cooker in their kitchen so that they can prepare their own meals. Given their age and maturity, it would seem appropriate to promote their independence skills in this way. **(See recommendation 2)**

There is a school laundry, and boarders are encouraged to bring their laundry down when required. The laundry attendants maintained that the laundry is usually turned round the same day, but some boarders reported that sometimes there are delays in returning some laundry. Although the laundry attendants will iron clothes, boarders can iron their own clothes and there are facilities for this in the boarding houses. Boarders in East House said that whilst there were only two washing machines and one tumble-drier in the houses they would like to be able to do their own washing. Discussions with the Head and Deputy indicate that previously there had been a washing machine but they had a number of problems where it was situated and it had to be removed.. The Head and Deputy also agreed to investigate other locations for the siting of the equipment. Again, where students are keen to practise these 'life skills', this should be encouraged. **(See recommendation 3)**

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders are protected from bullying.(NMS 2)
- Boarders are protected from abuse.(NMS 3)
- Use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate.(NMS 4)
- Boarders' complaints are appropriately responded to.(NMS 5)
- The operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare (NMS 13)
- Boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school.(NMS 22)
- Boarders are protected from the risk of fire. (NMS 26)
- The welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school.(NMS 28)
- Boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high risk activities.(NMS 29)
- Boarders' personal privacy is respected.(NMS 37)
- There is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders.(NMS 38)
- Boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures and there is supervision of all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises.(NMS 39)
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion. (NMS 41)
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.(NMS 47)

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

2,34,513,22,26,29,37,38,39,41,47

Quality in this outcome area is adequate. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The school has systems in place to ensure the safety and security of the boarders. However, there is a need for more robust procedures.

EVIDENCE:

The school has an anti-bullying policy. This is located on the school network under Teachshare and contains a definition of bullying. Guidance for house staff is also contained in the Boarding School handbook with boarders having information supplied in the form of a document "Who can help me". This details a list of who they can contact and what to do. The information pack for new boarders also contains a leaflet "Raising Concerns" providing information

and guidance on how to complain. The procedures state that, where there is indication of bullying, allegations of abuse or accidents etc the incident report form is to be completed. It is evident that bullying or similar practices are not tolerated and dealt with by the House staff. However, the inspector discussed with the Head and Deputy the circumstances when the form is completed. It was indicated that forms are completed in relation to the school and not within the boarding section. It was acknowledged that The Head of Boarding should review the system for recording such issues and incidents.

Out of the 42 surveys completed two stated that they had been bullied, thirty-one said they were not bullied whilst nine were not sure whether they had been bullied or not. It would be difficult to judge if this is because of any language barriers or whether girls were not sure if any instance could be reported as bullying. It is suggested that the school takes into consideration possible language barriers and provides clear guidance to boarders on this area. The school should consider the use of an independent listener of the culture of the boarders, someone to be contacted or consulted in a language reflecting the boarders own. **(See recommendation 4)**

There is a Child Protection Policy consistent with the document "Working Together" and it includes a requirement for a referral to be made within 24 hours of any allegations of abuse to the local social services department to carry out an investigation. This information is also detailed in the boarders' handbook where the Deputy Head is named as the person responsible. The information gives guidance on types of abuse and what action staff should take. The handbook states that staff should consider referral to social services with the number available in telephone book. This information should be provided in the handbook together with a named person within the Child Protection team. Neither the Independent Schools Inspectorate or the local child protection team have had any referral or information on child protection issues.

Three members of staff spoken to had some knowledge of what to do in the event of allegations or concerns being raised, although they would all benefit from the arranged training occurring in the new year. All were aware of Whistle-blowing with guidance available in the staff handbook. Of the boarding staff only the Head teacher and the Deputy Head teacher have received Child Protection training, and it is essential that all pastoral staff receive training in child protection in order to properly safeguard the welfare of the students. Once staff receive the training prefects should benefit from this information being cascaded to them as apart of their welfare role. **(See recommendation 5)**

Whilst there were telephone numbers, including Childline and an independent counsellor, on display in the boarding areas, these should be available close to the telephones in the boarding units. The number for Childline was incorrectly recorded on the leaflet, 'Who can help me?' **(See recommendation 5)**

Discussions with young people said that they would speak to their guardian, the Head Teacher, Deputy Head or friends if they had any concerns. Worryingly, some students seemed reluctant to approach their housemistress, and comments made by several students indicated that they had little confidence in two of the housemistresses.

There is a policy on discipline for the school which is also used for boarders. This focuses on praise and concern with the procedure stating "Any punishment intended to cause pain, anxiety or humiliation ie corporal punishment, deprivation of access to food or drink, enforced eating or drinking, prevention of contact is not acceptable. Students spoken to understood that punishments were things like early bedtimes, prep duty or being 'gated'. The Deputy Head said that there were, "not many punishments", and she preferred to "talk it through" with students, and to stress the 'reparation' side, in terms of writing letters of apology if appropriate. **(See recommendation 6)**

The Staff handbook shows a list of rewards and sanctions and what they would be given for. The School needs to ensure that there are equitable throughout the houses and take into consideration the age group and appropriate responses. These, together with the rules and regulations, should also be made clear to boarders with some suggesting they be kept on display to ensure boarders are fully aware, especially when they are new to the school. **(See recommendation 7)** Discussions with the independent counsellor showed that no person had contacted her for any advice to talk through things

The school has a complaints procedure which is on the school network system. It includes what to do if you wish to complain and contains the CSCI address and telephone number. This is not on display in the boarding areas and is not part of the information sent to families. The "Raising Issues" leaflet is provided to visitors and relatives but does not contain the above information. With The majority of boarders from overseas it may be beneficial to have an independent person from their culture to support them.

The Head stated that they had not received any complaints, although there is evidence that some of the issues had not been recorded, as they had not been perceived as serious. The school is advised of the need to keep accurate and clear records especially where there may be issues over a boarders' well-being in respect of suspected bullying. **(See recommendation 8)**

There is a prefect system in place with eleven prefects in total, two of which are from Year 13. Their role was a "helping role" and not to exert authority or power over younger boarders.

The majority of pupils boarding at Farringtons are from overseas and therefore guardians are required. However, the school does not become involved in this but require the parents to arrange guardians or through agencies.

There are two fire drills each term specifically at night for the boarders, and additional drills during the day for the benefit of day students, and also when there are visiting parties of students. One student said "In case of fire a very

loud bell rings and we are evacuated from the building even if it is smoke." All boarders spoken to were aware of the procedure in the event of a fire.

A principle needs to be adopted to ensure that a younger person's privacy is respected by knocking and waiting before entering, which we understood, through discussion groups, does not always occur. (NMS Standard 37) **(See recommendation 9)**

The inspectors viewed the files of four personnel. The checks were in the main adequate with most viewed having had criminal records bureau checks (CRB) completed. A recent addition to the house team includes a member of staff from abroad. A police check had been completed in that country and the school was awaiting the CRB from our country. References had been provided. These were in the process of being verified although the housemistress had already commenced employment. These checks must be completed prior to commencing their role. Standard 38.2 requires the school to make direct contact with each referee. The inspectors noted that CRB checks had also been completed on adults living in the school (without employment eg spouses of those employed and living on the premises) Volunteers are also checked and supervised by staff when on the premises. **(See recommendation 10)**

The estates manager is responsible for the supervision of anyone working on the site. Staff are vigilant to ensure that students are not allowed to go off the premises with adults other than nominated people. Whilst the school uses nominated taxi services the Head should check with the company that their staff have been police checked.

The boarding areas are located on three sites. There are security entry systems into the main buildings and although inspectors are concerned about the internal system in the main building the Head assured the Commission subsequently that there are internal security locks to prevent unauthorised access.

A CCTV is in place on the outside of the school with the monitor located in the main reception office. It is practice that no student is allowed in to the boarding areas during school hours.

The school has a Health and Safety Policy which includes general fire safety; road safety; supervision of grounds during the day; hazards; supervision of science laboratories and security of the buildings. It details CCTV alarms also in different areas of the school and visitors and monitored by staff. This not specific to the boarding areas. The staff handbook also includes elements of health and safety appertaining to boarders and their duties in relation to the health and safety of the girls and their accommodation. The inspectors noted risk assessments for a number of areas. No hazards were noted during a tour of the boarding accommodation, except where window restrictors were broken.

The use of sports facilities are restricted to ensure they can be adequately supervised with the exception of the 6th form boarders who are able to use the gym.

The school has good systems in place for monitoring the coming and going of boarders. One girl wrote "Whenever we go out we have to say exactly where we are going, and if anything happens the school will be contacted as we all have Farringtons contact card in our wallets." Whilst another wrote "When you go out and you can't come back on time, you have the housemistress' number who you can call and sometimes she could come and fetch me especially if it is a case where trains are delayed or something."

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.(NMS 11)
- Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination.(NMS 18)
- Boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands.(NMS 27)
- Boarders have satisfactory provision to study.(NMS 43)
- Boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas.(NMS 46)

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

11,18,43,46

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. Boarders are offered a range of activities to choose from with adequate free time to ensure they have a varied and enjoyable time.

EVIDENCE:

There were mixed reactions to the activities provided for boarders. One activity a week is compulsory, and sixth form students sometimes resented this, especially if they had "lots of homework". Yet where they are not compelled to attend weekend activities they state they are "bored." Whilst the inspectors did not observe the actual activities it is clear that some mandatory activity and participation benefits the individual. The Deputy Head has responsibility for the Friday activity and has organized a quiz, a DVD night, a challenge night and ten-pin bowling. She considers that the compulsory activity is helpful in allowing the girls to integrate, and said that however they may grumble, they do enjoy it. Photos of the girls attending activities are evidence that the girls actually do enjoy this involvement. The Deputy Head has also introduced a scheme for the girls in groups to invite a staff member for tea with the girls issuing a personal invitation to the staff member of their choice. To provide the boarders with cultural foods the school may wish to consider having cultural cookery classes. Younger boarders have more structured activities during free periods and sixth formers benefit from more informal activities such as shopping trips etc.

Televisions are available in common rooms and boarders can watch DVDs on their laptop computers. The Deputy Head is newly in post as the Head of Boarding provision, and her aim is to "enhance the quality of life" for the boarders, so actual development and review of the service can take place.

There is free time in the evening and at the weekend access with supervision to sports areas particularly on a Sunday afternoon when there is supervision by staff.

Boarders have access to churches (with a chapel on site and compulsory attendance on some days) or local mosques.

Younger girls cannot go out without supervision whilst six form girls can go out weeknight evenings without supervision as long as they make the housemistresses aware of where they are going.

Each boarder must do prep at stated times with additional voluntary prep after supper. Prep rooms are available for use by younger pupils. Other rooms are also available such as ICT and library. Private rooms contain study desks.

Boarders benefit from some free time after prep and activities for watching TV, listening to music and chatting with friends. Freeview TV is available and sixth formers benefit from internet access, whilst younger boarders have access in the common rooms.

The school has a policy on discrimination and some documents contain statements on equal opportunities. The school is managed with a Christian ethos which promotes tolerance and empathy and encourages groups from different cultural backgrounds. It is positive that the school offers help with English for those requiring such assistance.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school.(NMS 12)
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.(NMS 14)
- Boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families.(NMS 19)
- New boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in.(NMS 21)
- Boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school.(NMS 30)
- There are sound relationships between staff and boarders.(NMS 36)

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

12,14,19,21,30,36

Quality in this outcome area is adequate. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The boarders did not always feel that they were listened to or their views heard. The quality of the relationship with boarding staff was mixed which meant that they may not always be able to have the care and support they need.

EVIDENCE:

House meetings are one of the more formal ways in which boarders can have their say with the staff handbook stating they are held to talk about problems; organise activities and give praise. Tabled items should be recorded in the book and followed up at the next week if need be.

The frequency of these was disputed by a number of boarders in the discussion groups. It was felt that the meetings were not always a way for them to state their views and they had little control over the agenda. Of the 42 boarders providing written feedback when asked the question: Are there different ways that you can have a say about how you live at school? 4 said always; 7 usually; 4 never; 22 sometimes. A few did not provide a response. The house record books viewed showed that very little information is recorded from these meetings. There is a need to ensure records reflect discussions and the inspectors suggest the school review the system whereby boarders can contribute items to the agenda. **(See recommendation 11)**

The School Council is another way in which students can make their views known and contribute to school life to make changes.

To maintain contact with family and friends many students have mobile telephones and there are telephone booths in all boarding houses. The Handbook states that the telephone in East House can only be used for outbound calls. The Head confirmed that it can take outgoing and incoming calls. The Head stated that the girls are also able to use the telephones in the duty rooms. These are portable and can therefore be used for private calls.

Students confirmed that they did not have to seek permission to use the phone, but the difficulty was finding a time when it was free. Phone cards are sold at boarding houses or can be purchased from the school office. The use of telephones is restricted during prep time.

Boarders can receive visitors in meeting rooms which are located on the ground floor of the main buildings.

There is a ten-day familiarisation programme in school for students coming from abroad with limited English. They have intensive English lessons in the morning, and outings to places of interest in the afternoon. They are also given tours of the site to help them get accustomed to the layout of the school before the start of the term. Some of the boarders spoken to said how this helped them a lot when term started.

Boarders are also provided with support from other more experienced boarders for the initial few days and have information sent to them before starting.

All boarding lounges have a TV fitted with Freeview. Sixth formers also benefit from internet access and there is access to IT rooms for younger boarders. The school asks for various authorisations to ensure the school meets any restrictions family want to place on access.

Girls can go off campus as long as they meet the school guidelines. For example younger ones can go out in groups and are restricted to certain areas locally. There is more freedom for sixth formers who can go out alone and sign in and out. They are also able to travel further afield eg to London, Bluewater and Bromley.

There were some concerns expressed about the communication with some of the Housemistresses. Some boarders felt that they were not being listened to and confidentiality not always respected. **(See recommendation 5)**

There was good feedback regarding the approach of Head and Deputy with many boarders naming them as a person to speak and stating that they were fair and listened to them. "Mrs James, the Headmistress is always helpful and nice" said one girl. In the main sixth formers were happy with the care and support provided.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders' possessions and money are protected.(NMS 20)
- Boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation.(NMS 40)
- Boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.(NMS 42)
- Boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities.(NMS 44)
- Boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day.(NMS 45)
- Boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school.(NMS 50)

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

20,40,42,44,45,50

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. Whilst the school has made improvements in the heating and water systems there continues to be minor problems. Accommodation and furnishings are of a good standard and provide boarders with a comfortable environment.

EVIDENCE:

Boarders do not have keys to their rooms, and rooms are left with the door unlocked. However, security locks are in place to ensure the security of each house and prevent access by strangers. Each boarder has a locker for personal belongings in the house and lockers are located around the school for belongings to be stored during the day. Students confirmed that from time to time things do go missing. The school suggests that any other items of value such as large amounts of monies or passports are given to the school for safe-keeping. It is recommended that the school gives consideration to fitting locks to bedroom doors, so that boarders can safeguard their possessions.

The boarding accommodation was light, warm, comfortable and well-maintained. There are some issues reported by boarders but these are currently being addressed by the school.

The report has previously commented on the need to ensure the window restrictors are all fitted correctly. **(See recommendation 12)**

Accommodation is overall satisfactory as far as heating, ventilation, lighting and furniture. There is an adequate number of showers for boarders. However, a number of pupils in East House detailed, both in discussions and the survey, the variability of the water systems, as a problem which is understood to be

linked to an original hot water service. The operation of the showers should be reviewed. **(See recommendation 13)**

The dormitories are clean and adequately decorated. Boarders are able to put posters on the walls and bring a few personal items. The furniture is in good condition and suitable for the numbers of boarders.

The school is set in its own grounds and bedrooms are not affected by outside noise. All exit doors are code protected and locked at night.

Most of the rooms were of a good size, and there was a mixture of shared or single rooms. Beds and bed linen were clean and in good condition. Floors were carpeted, and students said that there were extra blankets available if they felt cold.

All children sleep in bedrooms with others of a similar age. Some of the rooms are small but on the whole they are of a good size although there were storage problems at times. The children are able to choose who they share a room with at the beginning of the term and can request to change rooms if there is a valid reason during the term.

Girls are not allowed to go back to boarding house during the day unless they have staff permission and sixth formers can go back in the afternoon if they have no classes.

Boarders are able to visit the local shops (younger ones in groups and older ones alone) as long as staff are informed. The school also has a tuck shop on certain days each week.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- A suitable statement of the school's principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff (NMS 1)
- There is clear leadership of boarding in the school.(NMS 8)
- Crises affecting boarders' welfare are effectively managed.(NMS 9)
- The school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare.(NMS 10)
- Risk assessment and school record keeping contribute to boarders' welfare.(NMS 23)
- Boarders are adequately supervised by staff.(NMS 31)
- Staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site.(NMS 32)
- Boarders are adequately supervised at night.(NMS 33)
- Boarders are looked after by staff with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.(NMS 34)
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.(NMS 35)
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.(NMS 51)
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

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

1,8,9,10,23,31,32,33,34,35,52

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The school provides sufficient information to boarders, their parents and staff and is generally well organised providing a comfortable environment for the girls living there.

EVIDENCE:

Farringtons provides new boarders and their families with a brochure/ Welcome Pack containing information on the principles on which the school is run. The school also has a website providing much of the information required for prospective boarders and parents.

The staff handbook provides information for staff. This is quite comprehensive. A boarders' handbook has been produced which provides basic information. Consideration to producing it in the child's first language especially with a high number of Chinese and Hong Kong boarders.

The school is able to deal with any crisis and ensures the welfare of the girls. The Deputy meets with the housemistresses on a Saturday morning to discuss any issues that have arisen. Incident books are viewed and the Deputy Head countersigns them. Each housemistress has a specific area of responsibility, such as activities or the newsletter. One of the housemistresses is responsible for developing risk assessments for activities undertaken by boarders. There was evidence of this in a number of assessments viewed. There is currently no formal supervision process. However, the Deputy Head understands the need for 1:1 discussions with staff on a regular basis. **(See recommendation 14)**

From discussions with the Head and boarding staff and observations on the day and there is evidence of clear leadership and guidance from the Head and the Deputy. The surveys received and discussions with boarders also showed that both are respected for their fairness and approach. The Deputy Head has overall responsibility for the boarders and the girls have said that she is open and friendly and appears to care about them, if anyone is ill she will check on them in their rooms throughout the day.

One house has two housemistresses and two have one. They take it in turn to be on duty in the evenings, weekends and at night. The boarders have reported that they are not always sure who is on duty, as the whiteboard is often not completed. Once the housemistress has gone to their quarters, often as soon as they have said goodnight to the boarders, the students are reluctant to knock on the door unless in emergencies. Housemistresses remain on duty and are accessible to the girls according to published times in the Boarding Handbook. These vary according to the ages of the students. **(See recommendation 7)**

The system used for supervision of boarders include signing out books in all the boarding houses, and students leaving the site are required to say where they are going and who with. All boarders are expected to have mobile phones on them with the housemistresses number for emergencies. Boarders also know they are able to contact the Head and her Deputy in any sort of emergency and this is very clearly reported in the feedback. A list of emergency numbers is also available. The parents are given clear guidance on when permission and authorisation is required including written consent from parents and requests for staying out etc

The school has comprehensive procedures for the use of minibuses, public transport and use of taxis. The Head should check with the taxi firm that all drivers are CRB checked.

Boarding staff are provided with a copy of the boarding policies and procedures in the form of a handbook. A copy of this is maintained in each house. They also have access to the school network to ensure they understand the schools procedures.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 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>
6	3
7	3
15	2
16	3
17	x
24	3
25	2
48	3
49	2

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	2
3	2
4	3
5	2
13	2
22	3
26	3
28	X
29	3
37	2
38	2
39	3
41	3
47	2

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
11	3
18	2
27	X
43	3
46	3

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	2
14	3
19	2
21	3
30	3
36	3

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
20	3
40	3
42	2
44	2
45	3
50	3

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

Continued

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
8	3
9	3
10	3
23	3
31	2
32	3
33	3
34	2
35	3
51	N/a
52	3

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection? yes

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the proprietor meets the Children Act 1989, Inspection of Schools and Colleges Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards.

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1	BS15	Staff should only administer medication prescribed for the child. Stock medication should not be used.	
2	BS24	The Head Mistress should review the quality and provision of food to boarders and include consultation with boarders as part of the process.	
3	BS49	The Head Mistress should review the laundry facilities in boarding houses.	
4	BS2	The Head Mistress should provide more information in bullying to boarders, preferably in the language of the child. Any incidents of suspected bullying should be fully recorded.	
5	BS3	Child protection information should include the contact name and telephone numbers of agencies involved in child protection and boarding staff and prefects should be provided with training on the guidance.	
6	BS14 BS36	The Head Mistress should review the system of pastoral care in the boarding houses.	
7	BS36	The Head of Care should ensure that the House Mistress roster is regularly updated.	
8	BS5	The schools complaints procedure should be on display and contain information on how to contact the CSCI directly.	
9	BS37	All staff should ensure that boarders' privacy is respected.	

10	BS38	The school should ensure that all references are verified for new staff prior to commencing employment.	
11	BS12	The school should review the system of house meetings to ensure boarders have a full opportunity to contribute. Records of these meetings should be made as detailed in the staff handbook.	
12	BS47	Window restrictors should be checked regularly and fixed where required.	
13	BS44	The heating and water system should be reviewed to ensure it provides adequate and consistent hot water and heating for boarders.	
14	BS10	The Head of Boarding should implement a system for the formal supervision of staff.	

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