



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Cuckmere House School

**Eastbourne Road
Seaford
East Sussex
BN25 4BA**

Lead Inspector
Angela Gunning

Unannounced Inspection
9th November 2006 11:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

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

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

Those outcomes are:

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

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

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

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of school	Cuckmere House School
Address	Eastbourne Road Seaford East Sussex BN25 4BA
Telephone number	01323 893319
Fax number	01323 897719
Email address	office@cuckmerehouse.e-sussex.sch.uk
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Cuckmere House School
Name of Head	Mr F. Stanford
Name of Head of Care	Mr J. Galvin
Age range of residential pupils	11-16 years
Date of last welfare inspection	5/12/05

Brief Description of the School:

Cuckmere House School is a specialist SEN (Special Educational Needs) school run by East Sussex County Council Education Department. The school offers places to 64 male pupils, aged between 5 and 16 with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. Boarding accommodation is provided at Tower House, which is in a residential area of Seaford, approximately half a mile from the main school site. Tower House is divided into two interconnected units, with segregation by age into Juniors and Seniors. There are places for a maximum of twelve boarders. Pupils either stay overnight, for between one and three nights during the school week, or they have an extended day with evening activities and tea at Tower House. Junior pupils are then usually returned home around 7pm and Seniors at around 8pm, with some making their own way home as agreed. Tower House and the care team are an integral and valued part of the school. A Pupil Referral Unit is also provided within the school for junior pupils and there is an outreach programme to support pupils in other special education or mainstream schools. At the time of this inspection 7 pupils were having overnight stays at Tower House for one or two nights per week and 6 pupils were participating in the extended day programme.

SUMMARY

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

The following summary has been written in way that children and young people may find easier to understand. A copy of this summary will be sent to the young people at Cuckmere House School.

If you don't understand this information please ask an adult to help you with it. If you want to read the full inspection report, please ask the person in charge of the place where you are living or staying.

An Inspector from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) phoned the school a few days before and told them that an inspection visit would happen on the 9th November 2006. This visit took nine hours over one day and evening.

The Inspector looked around Tower House. She ate a lunchtime with the Pastoral Liaison Manager and a suppertime meal with the young people and care staff. She looked at some written information, such as:

- young people's Individual Support Plans
- medication
- health and safety rules of Tower House
- how young people are helped to improve their behaviour

She spoke with many different people during the inspection, including:

- Headteacher
- Pastoral Liasion Manager
- care staff
- cook

- she spoke to some young people during evening at Tower House

She also got information from:

- parent surveys
- Headteacher's survey
- Last years CSCI inspection report

What the school does well:

- Young people are helped to be healthy.
- The school ask for young people's thoughts and ideas to make decisions about their education and well-being.
- Young people and staff are listened to and are helped to feel confident.
- Young people are helped to do well at school and get some qualifications.
- Young people are helped to improve their behaviour and social and communication skills and to be confident.
- The staff know the young people well and there is respect shown for each other.
- Tower House is comfortable and homely.

What has improved since the last inspection?

- There has been some improvement in the storage and recording of medication in Tower House.
- The dangers around Tower House have been looked at to prevent accidents and injuries.
- A new IT system has been installed to help staff know how the young people are doing in school and at Tower House.

What they could do better:

- Staff at Tower House need to make sure that all medication that comes from a young person's home is clearly labelled with all the needed information.
- If staff have to hold a young person for any reason, such as to stop them hurting themselves or others, the member of staff need to write it in a special book, that will be checked by the Head Teacher.

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

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

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)

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

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

14 & 15

Quality in this outcome area is good. The boy's health needs are clearly identified and there are good systems in place to ensure their health needs are met, although medication procedures are not fully robust. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

Each young person has his individual health needs clearly identified and recorded, with guidance for how staff will promote, monitor and meet these needs. There is good liaison with various healthcare professionals, such as a school nurse, an Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) nurse, a clinical psychologist and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). The clinical psychologist is based at the school on a weekly basis to support the staff and young people. He considers that Cuckmere House school "promotes the young peoples' mental well being very well". Medication storage and recording procedures have improved, following consultation with a CSCI Pharmacist Inspector. Tower House now has a pharmaceutically approved medicine cabinet attached to the wall, recording forms have been amended and staff double sign on distribution of medication. However, it was noted that there was unsatisfactory recording of receiving medication and at times parents send medication in an envelope. This means medicine bottles do not display all the pharmaceutical information. The head of care assured the Inspector that this issue was being dealt with.

The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Silver Award and is working towards accreditation of the Gold Award. The Inspector ate a lunch meal at the

school and an evening meal with the young people and staff at Tower House. The boys and staff spoke highly of the school's cook and said "she is very dedicated and knows the boys likes and dislikes well". There is a rotating menu in operation and these were seen to provide a variety of dishes and fresh vegetables, salad and fruit. Fresh vegetables were provided at both meals during the inspection visit. It was noted that healthy eating is promoted both in the school and in the residential setting. The school use an outside catering company and the cook said "a dietician advises them and they work at achieving National Nutritional Standards". During the day the school provides a healthy tuck shop. Meal times are also part of the school's reward system.

Both junior and senior boys are able to prepare and cook meals in the evening at Tower House. During the inspection visit all the boys staying at Tower House were observed preparing the evening meal. They were all involved in food preparation and laying and clearing away the table. The boys spoke enthusiastically about having the opportunity to prepare and cook the evening meals. One boy said "I love coming here, I really like cooking for myself and others".

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

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

Quality in this outcome area is good. The behaviour managements systems are excellent, with clear boundary setting and consistent and positive use of rewards and sanctions. There are good child protection procedures and health and safety checks to ensure the safety of the young people is maintained. The complaints procedure is clear and accessible to the young people, their relatives or representatives, so they feel any issues will be listened to and addressed. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

During the inspection visit staff were seen to respect the boys' privacy and confidentiality. Confidential information is kept locked away in a cabinet. The young people are given a copy of the complaints procedure. The young people confirmed they knew who to speak to if they wanted to make a complaint and said "they can voice their concerns or complaints in the House meetings". One boy spoken with said "I can talk to any staff when I'm unhappy about things". Staff were seen to be open and willing to listen to the young people. Any formal complaints are dealt with under the schools complaints procedure and all parents who returned CSCI surveys, confirmed they have been given written information about how to make a complaint if they need to. The CSCI have not received any complaints and none had made any to the school.

Pre-inspection information from the Head teacher indicates that the school has a 'good underlying Child Protection format'. At present the 2 Assistant Head teachers are responsible for Child Protection. However, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is in the process of taking on this responsibility. A new Child Protection alert form has been developed in line with Government legislation. There has been whole school training on Child Protection and all staff attend this training on a 2 year rolling programme.

The school has a clear anti-bullying policy and the staff and young people are proactive in addressing this issue. During the inspection visit the school counsel were in the process of producing their own anti-bullying policy in preparation for national anti-bullying week. The school liaison police officer was also being used in the classroom to look at bullying issues with the boys. During a game of pool in the evening the boys were seen to interact respectfully and positively towards each other, giving praise and encouragement when deserved. They said "they are encouraged to report bullying" and that "it is discussed in Personal Social and Health Education classes and in Tower House".

Pre-inspection information from the Head teacher indicates 'the school has an excellent behaviour management system and there is a strong emphasis on positive reinforcement through a emphasised reward system'. Each young person has behaviour management strategies and targets in their social care plan. Care staff were seen to be aware of the boys' behaviour targets and helped them to achieve these targets. A weekly behaviour record is shared with the young people, their parents or carers. There are clear systems for non-attendance at school or leaving the premises.

Parents/carers confirmed they know about the rules and the sanctions used. One parent considers the system is 'very good, it gives our son structure and routine that he needs'. Another said 'a full explanation is given as to why the

punishments are used and why'. The young people said that "the rules were ok".

All staff are trained in de-escalation techniques and physical restraint is used as a last resort. Although all incidents are recorded and any involving restraints are recorded on an approved 'Restraint Form', it is recommended that a record of any use of physical intervention is kept in a bound and numbered book.

There is a health and safety policy and procedure document, that identifies the member of staff responsible for what aspect of health and safety. The Pastoral Liaison Manager now has overall responsibility for fire safety of the school and Tower House premises and has recently attended a training course to keep up to date with new fire policy and procedures. There are good fire safety checks. Staff and young people know what to do in the event of a fire. Risk assessments are carried out for various trips and outings. Since the last inspection a building and ground risk assessment has been produced. Recruitment records were not examined as there has been no new care staff join Cuckmere House School since the previous inspection.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

12, 22

Quality in this outcome area is excellent. The promotion and support for the educational achievement of the boys is a strength of the school.

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

Staff and parents consulted with during the inspection process commented very positively about the contribution that the residential provision makes to the educational and social achievement of the young people. The clinical psychologist considers that "the school has got very good systems that help the young people reach their potential". In a parent survey one parent wrote: 'when my son first attended this school he was very frightened of working with people he didn't know, but they dealt with this problem very calmly and he learned to relax. He now loves this school, he has learned so much in the time he has been there'. Another parent spoken with said they have done an amazing job with my son. The majority of young people will leave Cuckmere House with 4 or 5 GCSE's.

It was noted that there is good liaison between education staff and care staff. The care staff support the young people in the school during the day and the Pastoral Liaison Manager is based in the school to support the young people to access education. Care staff take part in annual reviews, formal reporting and setting Individual Educational Performance (IEP) targets. A new IT system has

been installed to assist with effective communication about the young people in the care and educational setting. Staff spoke positively about this provision and said "it aids for effective communication". Every week a progress report is sent home to each parent/carer. This information is also stored electronically each day in the school, so that any member of staff can be kept informed and up to date on how well targets are being met.

Pre-inspection information from the Head teacher indicates that the school is developing an accreditation system which recognises social as well as academic achievements. One parent wrote we feel that Cuckmere House meets all our son's educational needs and social skills he will require later in life'. Another parent considers that 'all staff do an excellent job with our son. He enjoys school even when he has a bad day and this we feel is because of the effort and encouragement he is given'. Another parent wrote: 'they couldn't do a better job, the whole school are brilliant'.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

2, 17, 20

Quality in this outcome area is good. There are good channels of communication between parents and school and the young people are consulted with and involved in decision making. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

The young people are consulted with through various ways, such as weekly tutor group meetings, regular school council meetings, informal meetings at Tower House and through their link worker. The young people spoken with confirmed they are involved in making decisions about what trips to go on, what meals to have and other aspects of running the home.

Each young person has an Individual Social Plan (ISP) and the Head teacher confirmed that the young people 'are part of the process of writing and implementing these plans'. Two ISPs were examined during the inspection

visit and contained information about each boys' needs and targets and guidelines for staff to assist the boys in achieving these targets. These ISPs are reviewed regularly. During the inspection visit the boarding staff were aware of the boys targets and were working with them on meeting their targets.

Parents confirmed there is good liaison between themselves and care staff. Each week the young person's keyworker will phone them. Parents surveys indicated that staff ask for their opinion before they make any big decisions about the young person. One parent commented that they telephone us or ask us to come in so we can have a fuller discussion and get decisions sorted out quickly'. Another parent wrote: 'they usually ring to give us a decision so we have an answer straight away and then put it in writing'. The young people can make phone calls to their parents/carers when they stay at Tower House.

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):

24

Quality in this outcome area is good. Tower House provides a spacious and homely environment to meet the needs of young people. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

Tower House provides a homely environment for the young people. One member of staff said "Tower House does a wonderful job, it provides such a calm and caring environment". During the inspection visit the premises were found to be clean, tidy and well maintained. It was noted that there is a need for some redecoration in parts of the building. The Head Teacher considers that there could be 'further decoration and enhancement of the premises on a rolling programme of refurbishment'. He confirmed that "the redecoration of Tower House is within the schools Improvement Plan and there will be some redecoration carried out in the new year".

There has been a redesignation of some of the rooms in Tower House as the school is now running a vulnerable learners project during the day. New computer facilities have been installed, which the residential pupils have the opportunity to use.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

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

1, 28, 31, 32

Quality in this outcome area is excellent. There is an effective management system and a competent staff team in place to ensure the school is run in the best interests of the young people. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

The school's Statement of Purpose is reviewed annually by a Governing Body sub committee. All parents who returned the CSCI survey confirming they had been given written information about the school. Pre-inspection information from the Head Teacher indicates 'all pupils who attend Tower House are given

a Tower House guide and this is amended and updated annually'. The young people also confirmed they had been given some written information before they joined the school.

There is a well established care team at Tower House, who receive a variety of training to ensure they can meet the young peoples needs. One member of staff said "most staff have been here a long time, but they are not stuck, they have been proactive in moving forward with improving standards in education and care". Feedback about the staff at Cuckmere House School was very positive. One parent wrote: 'we cannot praise Cuckmere House staff enough, we can not put into words how proud we are of our son and how he has come along'. Another parent consider the staff are very dedicated. They deal with some very difficult situations in a professional manner'.

Pre-inspection information from the Head Teacher indicates that there is a rolling programme of staff training Child Protection, Physical Restraint, First Aid and Food Handling. Staff spoken with confirmed that they receive any necessary training and all have achieved a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. One staff member spoken with said "staff feel valued, supported and listened to and so do the young people".

There is a clear and established Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Inspector received good feed back from staff about the approachability and leadership coming from the SMT. One member of staff said the Head Teacher is very approachable, fair but with clear boundaries and expectations of both staff and young people". The school had an OFSTED inspection in 2004, which stated that the Head Teacher sets exacting standards for the quality of care, guidance and education'. One member of staff said "this is an extremely good school- remarkable. It's well run and everyone is empowered."

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

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

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

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

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

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
14	3
15	4

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

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

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

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

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
18	X
19	X
28	4
29	X
30	X
31	4
32	4
33	X

NO

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1.	RS14	That all medicines received at Tower House are signed and dated.	
2.	RS14	That all prescribed medication accepted into Tower House is clearly labelled with all the required information and with the pharmacist label preferably.	
3.	RS10	That a record of any use of physical intervention is kept in a bound and numbered book.	

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