



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

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

Springfields School

Curzon Street

Calne

Wiltshire

SN11 0DS

21st – 23rd April 2004

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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

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

The role of CSCI is to:

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

Inspection Methods & Findings

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

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

Springfields School

Address

Curzon Street, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0DS

Tel No:

01249 814125

Fax No:

01249 811907

Email Address:

head@springfields.wilts.s
ch.uk

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

Wiltshire County Council

Name of Head

Mr Graham Templeman

CSCI Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Special Residential School

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

03/02/03

Date of Inspection Visit		21 st – 23 rd April 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:00 am	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Rosie Hodgson	097235
Name of CSCI Inspector	2	Malcolm Sykes	
Name of CSCI Inspector	3	Mary Collier (Pharmacist Inspector)	
Name of CSCI Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):		NA	
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.		NA	
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)		NA	
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Graham L. Templeman	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

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

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

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Springfields School

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

The report will show the following:

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

INSPECTION VISITS

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

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

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

Springfields is a Residential Special School for 64 pupils of mixed gender ranging in age from 10 to 16 years. The school is maintained by Wiltshire County Council and most of the pupils come from Wiltshire with some from other counties. All pupils have been statemented as a result of a combination of emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties. The school operates a predominantly cognitive behavioural model in working with children to ameliorate behaviour. Additional support is offered by using external agencies e.g. speech therapy, education psychologists and Youth Offending Teams. There is a Day Centre within the school for Key Stage 1 & 2 children in mainstream schools, with a focus of working with staff and parents. The residential provision consists of four progressive units that operate sequentially. As a child progresses up they receive more privileges and responsibilities. In the later units, young people assume a large measure of responsibility and independence and efforts are made to wean them off dependence on the institution. Some children are able to achieve 'day pupil' status and return to mainstream schooling. Children return home at weekends and holidays. In addition to the Residential pupils Springfields provide vocational tuition for over one hundred KS4 mainstream pupils.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

- The School has a well developed anti-bullying policy with procedures in place that are effective. Children report that bullying is dealt with appropriately. One child reported that he was hardly ever bullied, but that when he was 'you tell a member of staff or put it in the bully box and it gets taken to the team leaders and it gets sorted.' The systems for monitoring bullying have been developed since last inspection. These are in the inspector's opinion a particularly useful tool for tracking patterns.
- There are good links between education and care provision at the School. Inspectors found evidence of care staff actively supporting children's educational progress. Children report positively about the help they are given, indicating 'loads of help from care staff', 'they sit with you', 'they help with spelling.'
- Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community. Children report that they particularly value the wide range of activities available, indicating 'we go on trips/camps and ice skating', 'we get a chance to go to France', 'we do extra activities like swimming and bowling', 'there is lots of room to play at the school', 'its peaceful here.'
- The School has particularly well developed links with parents. These links are valued highly. A new parents group is in the inspector's opinion a very positive development.
- Staff have undertaken a number of developments since the last inspection to soften the atmosphere of the School. These developments are commented on by the children and have impacted positively in a number of areas.
- Answering the question 'Is there anything else you want to say about how children are looked after at this school?' one child replied 'the school is run well and the kids are looked after well. Very well!'

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

- The complaints policy is in need of amending to bring it in line with Standard 4.3. It is difficult to see if complaints are resolved or not as outcomes are not recorded. Monitoring of complaints should be more rigorous. Wider training for the staff is also recommended.
- Despite the recommendations made at the last inspection, Child protection procedures for the school are not in place. There is confusion about who the designated person for child protection is. It is important that this is clarified so that channels of reporting are clear and local links developed with other agencies, in particular Social Services. The inspector was concerned that the school should develop these links, become more open and transparent and not work in isolation. Advice was given and repeated recommendations are made.
- There are gaps in notification systems where there is a significant event relating to the protection of children.
- Despite the Heads attempts to improve access to specialist services from outside the school, it remains that there are a small group of children in the school who are in need of specialist services which are not forthcoming. This has a deleterious effect on the individual child concerned as well as other children and staff who are left to live with and manage very difficult behaviours. Specialist services should be made available to ameliorate this situation.
- The inspectors found that risk assessments across a range of areas were not of a required standard. Advice was given and a recommendation made.
- The Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral) does not hold the relevant qualifications required by the Standards. Neither does the Head. It is important that this is addressed by 2005.
- Despite a recommendation of the last inspection, a rigorous monitoring system of logs and records outlined under Standard 32.2 has not been put in place. This should be carried out by the Head or Senior Staff member and action taken where necessary.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

- The inspectors acknowledge the work done since the last inspection to improve the welfare of boarders at the School. The inspectors were pleased to see that money had been spent developing the residential units so that they provide a softer, more homelike environment for all the children.
- The inspectors found that 10 recommended actions from the 2003 inspection had not been implemented. Whilst the inspectors acknowledge that some of these recommendations fall outside the Schools direct ability to remedy, they remain in need of attention and repeat recommendations are made. It is particularly serious that recommended actions on Child Protection have not been implemented.
- Key senior staff must develop their liaison roles with outside agencies in particular Social Services as well as the Commission, so that the staff are seen as open and transparent in the way they work with the children in their care. Early developments both during and since the inspection have been observed in this area.
- The close working between education and care was observed again at this inspection. In this way, children's educational and behavioural progress is actively supported.
- Developments in the way the School works with parents has also built on positive findings from the last inspection.
- The inspectors recognise the difficulties faced when children do not respond to the programme at Springfield's. There remains a small group of children for whom the system does not work well. Work done to improve specialist provision for these children has not been taken forward as the School would have wished, despite their efforts. This remains a priority.
- A rigorous monitoring system of key logs and records must be implemented. In this way practice issues can be highlighted at an early stage and action taken to remedy.
- Key senior care staff must be qualified to the levels set out in Standard 31 by 2005.

5	RS5	The school's procedures for responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse to a child should include all the requirements set out at Appendix 1.	01:08:03
6	RS5	The school's policies and procedures and its induction process for staff should make it clear that failure by a member of staff to report actual or reasonably suspected physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of a child is a disciplinary offence.	01:08:03
7	RS7	The school should have a system in place to notify the authorities listed under Standard 7.2 of the events listed.	01:08:03
8	RS7	The school should have a system in place for notifying the National Care Standards Commission of any serious incident within the school, which has necessitated the police being called to the school.	01:07:03
9	RS10	The school should have procedures and guidance on police involvement in the school, which have been agreed with the local police and which staff are knowledgeable and clear about.	01:08:03
10	RS22	Children who require specialist external services should receive those services in practice.	01:07:03

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION
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Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended actions are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

RECOMMENDED ACTION			
Identified below are the actions recommended on issues addressed in the main body of the report in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders adequately in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.			
No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	RS3	The school should provide procedural guidelines to staff on privacy and confidentiality, covering all the elements under Standard 3.2.	14/08/04
2	RS4	The school's complaints procedure should encompass all matters under Standard 4.3	14/08/04
3	RS4	Staff should receive training in the complaints procedures covering the areas under Standard 4.4	14/08/04
4	RS4	The Head of the school should regularly review the records of complaints, to check satisfactory operation of the complaints procedure, and to identify both patterns of complaint and action taken on individual complaints.	23/04/04
5	RS4	Serious complaints against the school or the staff of the school should be notified to the Commission for Social Care Inspection	23/04/04
6	RS5	An up to date copy of the ACPC procedures should be kept in school. The designated person for child protection should read these, understand them and be knowledgeable about them.	14/08/04
7	RS5	The school's child protection procedures should be consistent with the local policies and procedures agreed by the Area Child Protection Committee. The school's child protection procedures should be submitted for consideration to the local ACPC.	14/08/04

8	RS5	The school's procedures for responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse to a child should include all the requirements set out at Appendix 1.	14/08/04
9	RS5	The school's policies and procedures and its induction process for staff should make it clear that failure by a member of staff to report actual or reasonably suspected physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of a child is a disciplinary offence.	14/08/04
10	RS5	The Head of the school should ensure that there is training for all staff covering those matters under Standard 5.8.	14/09/04
11	RS5	The school and staff should have routine links with agencies concerned with child protection.	23/04/04
12	RS7	The school should have a system in place to notify the authorities listed under Standard 7.2 of the events listed.	23/04/04
13	RS7	A written record must be kept which includes details of the action taken, and the outcome of any action or investigation, following any notifiable event.	23/04/04
14	RS7	The school should have a system in place for notifying the Commission for Social Care Inspection of any serious incident within the school, which has necessitated the police being called to the school.	23/04/04
15	RS10	The school should have procedures and guidance on police involvement in the school, which have been agreed with the local police and which staff are knowledgeable and clear about.	14/08/04
16	RS11	The school should make reasonable efforts to obtain all necessary information about a child prior to admission.	23/04/04
17	RS19	The school should keep a personnel file for each member of staff containing those matters detailed under Standard 19.2.	14/08/04
18	RS22	Children who require specialist external services should receive those services in practice.	14/09/04
19	RS23	The school should complete the outstanding requirements of the Fire Officer report dated 21/11/03	14/08/04
20	RS26	Risk assessments should be carried out, recorded in writing and regularly reviewed. These should cover all the areas under Standard 26.3	14/08/04

21	RS26	The Head or senior member of staff should regularly review the implementation and effectiveness of action identified as a result of risk assessments carried out.	23/04/04
22	RS27	The school's system for recruiting staff should include all of the elements in Standard 27.2, which should be verifiable in recruitment records held at the school.	14/08/04
23	RS28	The school's staffing levels should be appropriate to fulfil the school's Statement of Purpose, to meet the needs of children, and to provide levels of supervision for children that are safe.	14/08/04
24	RS29	Programmes of training for staff should address the issues detailed in Appendix 2. In particular Child Protection should be given priority.	14/08/04
25	RS31	By 2005 the Head of Care should have qualifications set out in Standard 31.2	01/01/05
26	RS32	The Head or senior members of staff, delegated by the Head to do so, should monitor and sign the records as noted under Standard 32.2, to identify any patterns or issues requiring action.	23/04/04

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

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

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	RS3	Helpline numbers should be displayed by the telephones.
2	RS9	The Head should respond with an action plan to the recommendations of the 'Safer Care & Child Protection Evaluation' completed by Wiltshire's Head of Safer Care and the LEA School Advisor.
3	RS14	The quantities of medication received from the pharmacy or young person's home and returned to them or sent for disposal should be recorded.
4	RS19	The school should keep a diary of events occurring at the school, including the names of visitors to the school and the reasons for their visits.
5	RS30	Supervision contracts should in future recognise that supervision notes may need to be seen by external agents, in particular inspectors.

Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. RS10 refers to standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS**

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

Direct Observation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Accommodation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	YES
Checks with other Organisations	
• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	NO
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person	NO
• Chair of Governors	YES
Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	YES
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	21/04/04
Time of Inspection	9:00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	42
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	5

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

BOYS

GIRLS

TOTAL

Number of separate Boarding Houses

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

The scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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There is an updated Statement of Purpose for the school. This has been revised to encompass the advisory recommendation from the last inspection. This should be read in conjunction with the school prospectus and both parent and pupil guides. These guides describe the behaviourist model to children and parents.

Policies and procedures do not create conflicts between 'teaching' and 'care functions' of the school. The inspectors noted that there were some gaps in policies outlined under Appendix 3. These gaps are highlighted in the body of the report.

Governors approve the Statement, which is reviewed and updated annually.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Inspectors were able to witness children's opinions, and those of their families being sought over key decisions. Reviews, Tutor sessions, School Council and the use of home school books are all ways of enabling children, their families and significant others to make their wishes and feelings known regarding care and treatment in the school.</p> <p>The School Council for pupils meets with senior staff to convey the views of pupils on general aspects of the running of the School. There was evidence that its views were acted on. The School Council meetings are mainly attended by those young people in the upper units, however there is a system in place for feeding back to and seeking views from the other units. The very philosophy of the school does limit pupil's independence and opportunity to make everyday choices in the lower units. Pupils in the upper units are able to have more choice, more opportunity and more responsibility. This is in line with the Statement of Purpose.</p> <p>6 out of 7 parents who replied to questionnaires reported that the school were good at keeping them informed and consulted. 12 out of 22 children who completed questionnaires said that they felt that staff asked them their opinions about the school. 8 replied 'sometimes' to this question.</p>		

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)

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

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

Inspectors were informed that case records are no longer edited for sensitive information of a child protection nature. This was also evidenced in children's files. These files are kept safely and are available to staff on a need to know basis.

Wider procedural guidelines to staff covering privacy and confidentiality were not seen. These should be in place and cover all the elements in Standard 3.2. This also links to Standard 3.9 in relation to staff supervision during showering. 16 out of 22 children who replied to questionnaires reported that there was enough privacy when using bathrooms, showers and toilets. The inspectors were assured by the Head that new procedures and guidelines are in place for staff covering this area. It is important that these are documented. The inspector also discussed the bedtime routine which on some units requires an early shower. This means that children are dressed for bed during evening activities on their unit. Children did not report any concern about privacy here. However, it is the inspector's opinion that later bath time routines would afford greater privacy. The Head agreed to implement these changes.

The school keeps a check on the letters received for children. Children can write and read letters in private. The inspectors noted that helpline numbers were not displayed next to the main phone line used by children.

The inspectors noted that a new policy document was now in place covering when it may be necessary to search a child's possessions. These searches are now documented in a log.

There are many more boys than girls in the school. Some units only have one girl. Girls spoken to report that they feel able to get appropriate support and help when needed. Staff show that they are sensitive to their needs. Some girls who replied to the questionnaires indicated that they would like a dedicated girls room in the school.

The inspector noted that the new behaviour/bullying charts were displayed on the units and outside the dining room. The inspector felt that children could see these as shameful. It is recommended that these be kept for staff use with individual children and not displayed publicly.

The inspectors noted that frequent night checks are made on children by the night staff. This involves the staff checking with torches on an hourly basis. In the inspectors view this is overly intrusive and disturbing to children. This issue was discussed with the Head with a suggestion that only those children showing a high assessed risk be checked in this way. The Head is in disagreement with this, feeling that child safety would be compromised.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

1

The inspector noted that a new complaints log is now in place. The Head and Governors monitor this. In the inspectors opinion this monitoring should be more rigorous and should be brought in line with Standard 4.6.

There is a complaints policy. This should be amended to include the name and address of the Commission for Social Care Inspection. This policy does not encompass all the matters under Standard 4.3. It is also difficult to see if complaints have been resolved satisfactorily.

Although the inspectors were informed that some staff have been able to access training in complaints under their NVQ, this training has not been made available to other staff.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection has not been notified of any serious complaints during this year. In the inspector opinion one of the complaints in the log was of a serious nature and should have been reported.

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

7

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

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

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

CHILD PROTECTION

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.12)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

1

Despite the recommendations made at the last inspection, Child protection procedures for the school are not in place. These should be consistent with the local policies and procedures agreed by the Area Child Protection Committee. The school's procedures for responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse to a child should include all the requirements set out at Appendix 1. Advice was given and repeated recommendations are made. Up to date ACPC procedures are not in the school. There is confusion about who the designated person for child protection is. It is important that this is clarified so that channels of reporting are clear and local links developed with other agencies, in particular Social Services. Reports from the County Head of Safer Care suggest that there may be a lack of working together. The inspector was concerned that the school should develop these links, become more open and transparent and not work in isolation.

Policies and procedures should make it clear that failure by a member of staff to report abuse or neglect of a child is a disciplinary offence. The school should have written guidance to staff that are subject to allegations against them. Such guidance will make clear the ways in which staff may have access to information and support whilst an investigation ensues.

The Head told inspectors that due to staff shortages, he was unable to send staff on Child Protection training. This was further confirmed by the County Training Department, who indicated that places were available for staff at Springfields but were not taken up. (*This links to Standard 29*).

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

3

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

There is a comprehensive anti-bullying policy in place. This is known by children and staff and is effective in practice. There is a bully box system, which children confirm is well used. One child reported that he was hardly ever bullied, but that when he was 'you tell a member of staff or put it in the bully box and it gets taken to the team leaders and it gets sorted.' The bullying log shows a record of 9 incidents between October 2003 and March 2004. In questionnaires completed as part of this inspection children report a variety of types of bullying covering physical, verbal and racial name-calling. Questionnaires within the school are also used to get regular feedback about bullying and this is an effective system both for individual cases and as a way of risk assessing the times, places and circumstances where the risk of bullying is greatest.

The Head reported that they are aware of breaks as a time when bullying takes place and that the toilets are often a venue for bullying. Children report that more supervision at these times would help. Asked in questionnaires 'If you could change one thing about the school what would it be?' one child replied 'more staff to see all the incidents.' (*Links to Standard 28*). A new system of recording bullying was shown to the inspectors. This is particularly helpful in identifying patterns and the links between bullies and the bullied as well as for monitoring. Bullying is also addressed as part of the curriculum and that the inspectors witnessed some impressive work in this area in a year 9 English lesson.

Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied

40 %

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)
All significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified by the Head of the school or designated person to the appropriate authorities.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	1
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Despite a recommendation from the last inspection, the school is not meeting this Standard. This is with particular reference to notification to the Commission. The inspectors also found evidence where a child protection issue was not reported to the local social services authority. The Head questioned the definition of 'serious harm' and 'serious illness, accident or incident' in relation to this Standard. The inspector gave advice about this. It is important that a written record is kept following any of the notifiable events under Standard 7.2

Parents report that they are kept informed about incidents with their children.

During this inspection and subsequently the inspectors were reassured by witnessing staff reporting appropriately under the Standard. Repeated recommendations are made to ensure that this continues.

NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO CSCI DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:

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

0
0
0
0

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)
The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The inspectors read the procedures that identify action to be taken when a child is absent without authority.

The new absconding log put in place since the last inspection indicates 5 incidents of absconding since October 2003. The Head reported that these absconding figures are much reduced from previous years. He expressed the opinion that this might be a reflection of the softening of the whole approach of the school.

Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:	5
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CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
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Inspectors witnessed children and staff demonstrating sound relationships based on honesty and mutual respect. Expectations of behaviour both for staff and children are clearly understood. Individual children's wishes and preferences are balanced with the needs of the group.

Parents feedback many positive comments about relationships in questionnaires

- 'everyone cares about my daughter.'
- 'excellent care staff.'
- 'they go that extra mile.'

The inspectors were informed during this inspection of a recent complaint by a member of the care staff who has now left. This staff member reported concerns about care practices on School House in particular. These concerns have also been highlighted in a recent report completed jointly by Wiltshire's Head of Safer Care and the LEA School Advisor. Whilst the inspectors found evidence that contradicted some of these conclusions, the complaint by the ex-member of staff emphasises some of the expressed concerns in the above report. In discussions with the Head during this inspection, the inspectors heard that he was aware of and was addressing this issue of care practices on School House. (*Links also to Standard 24*). An advisory recommendation is made to ensure this is followed through.

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)

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

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

Inspectors read the schools Restraint Policy and the Behaviour Management Procedures. These form the basis for the measures of control, discipline and physical intervention in the school. Inspectors heard that staff receive a one day training on restraint which is subsequently updated by in house training as a way of refreshing. De-escalation techniques are emphasised in both initial and subsequent training.

In questionnaires completed as part of this inspection, 12 out of the 22 children who replied reported that they had been restrained. 15 out of 22 children who replied indicated that they felt staff used proper ways of restraining. Children reported that restraint was used to

- Prevent someone getting hurt (6 children)
- To break up fights (11 children)
- To stop damage (6 children)

9 children reported that they had not been hurt when being restrained at the school. 4 report that they had been hurt.

The restraint log has 5 restraints recorded in 2004. A recent restraint that became the basis of a complaint in the school has emphasised the importance of appropriate use of restraint techniques with these troubled children. NSPCC who were involved in investigating the complaint are advising the school about good practice developments in this area.

The sanctions log has 208 sanctions recorded between January 2004 and 22nd April 2004. These sanctions cross reference with the daily log and are signed off regularly by the Head. The inspector questioned both care staff and the head about sanctions. They clarified that this log is the record of the behaviour management strategy, where agreed sanctions are used in the points system. They confirmed that no other sanctions are used as a punishment.

Inspectors witnessed staff praising children to reinforce good behaviour. Staff also spoke to inspectors about their use of de-escalation techniques. Children demonstrated that they knew how the behavioural programme worked. In the inspector's opinion the programme is clear, well understood and appears to work well for many children, helping them learn acceptable behaviours and develop social skills.

Parents report positively in their questionnaire responses about the behaviour programme

- 'The structure is crucial.'
- 'They are sensitive to the individual when decisions on punishment is enforced.'

Children also have many positive comments about the school, relating to behaviour

- 'I have started to be polite and exceptionally good'
- 'I moved to Springfields and changed my behaviour.'
- 'I have achieved goals that I had never thought of achieving.'

Other children gave a more reticent response. In individual discussions with children during the inspection. Some reported how frustrated they were with the behaviour programme; feeling that staff were always on their case, following their every move, feeling they had little independence. Others told inspectors in a variety of ways how difficult they found it in school. The inspectors spoke to staff and heard that they are aware of this and seek to find

ways of improving the situation for these children. This is not always successful. What this highlights is that there is a small group of children for whom the behaviour modification system is not working. (*Links to Standard 22*).

The school has good relationships with the local police and have agreed procedures on their involvement. This agreement should be documented. A repeat recommendation is made.

QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

There is a newly revised admissions policy, a summary of which is included in the Statement of Purpose. This emphasises the importance of well-matched placements both for individual children and other children in the school.

The Special Needs teacher completes an assessment before an admission is considered and a synopsis of this is provided on each child. The inspectors saw that this synopsis covers both educational issues and the care needs of these children. The inspectors noted that for some children there was little detailed background on file. Whilst the inspectors understand that for some children there may be little background history known, the inspectors read files where Social Services had been involved for some time, but where there was scant information about the child's background. In the inspectors opinion detailed information that should be available on Social Worker files must be requested and sought out before placement so that care staff can care safely for the children. It would also be important in the inspector's opinion for information on any known difficult behaviours and ways of managing to be sought out at an early stage so that planning and agreement about levels and types of intervention can be discussed. NSPCC are currently advising the school about developments in this area.

A senior member of the residential staff makes a home visit and prospective pupils are encouraged to visit the school before making a decision about application. The inspectors heard about well handled admissions, with a high degree of sensitivity. They also heard that the Head is able to say 'No' to possible admissions where there are reservations. The inspectors heard that a risk assessment becomes part of the review meeting at 6-8 weeks when the child is known better. This is the time when Behaviour Management Plans are drawn up

The inspectors heard from children and staff about well planned departures, with guidance and assistance in the process of transition.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

There is a 24-hour Curriculum in place for children at Springfields. Residential and teaching staff work together to encourage children's personal, social and educational development and achievement. Bearing in mind that many of these children have been out of mainstream education, some for lengthy periods prior to admission, the school makes great progress with many of the children in its care. The behaviourist methods used at the school work for many children so that they feel able to attend school, develop relationships and progress in their education.

A number of parents report positively that the school is able to develop their children both socially and educationally. This is a great achievement for these formerly disaffected children. One parent who replied to the questionnaire, stated 'I only wish that my son had this opportunity sooner.' Children report in their questionnaires about help with homework

- 'loads of help from care staff'
- 'they sit with you'
- 'they help with spelling.'

The recent OFSTED report indicates that absence levels in school have dropped in the last years. Exclusions from class have also dropped.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

The programme of activities is a strength of the School. These involve other schools (eg football competitions), local employers acting as mentors, and events welcoming the wider community into the School. There are activities that are particularly appropriate for the less sporty children, such as art group, gardening, aromatherapy and hair care. During the inspection boarders were seen using off-site leisure facilities, reflecting the privileges conferred by having moved through the rewards system operated by the School. Other pupils had opted to renovate the garden of their house. Pupils in School House had a more structured range of activities, but this still offered a variety of outdoor and indoor pastimes in which the children were positively engaged.

There are many positive comments from children on the questionnaires completed as part of this inspection

- 'we go on trips/camps and ice skating.'
- 'we get a chance to go to France.'
- 'we do extra activities like swimming and bowling.'
- 'there is lots of room to play at the school'
- 'its peaceful here.'

The inspectors heard that a new computerised system is currently being implemented by County to record risk assessments on trips. (*This is addressed under Standard 26*).

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.25)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

The school employs a nurse who works during the daytime. First aid trained staff provide night cover for medical needs.

All new boarders are registered with a local GP. Matron meets with the children and their parents or carers to obtain relevant medical information and consents which are kept in medical files in the sick bay. Matron provides a list of young people with medical needs or allergies and information about any medication required to the care and teaching staff as needed. This is updated regularly. All medication is controlled by matron and is kept securely. Older pupils may self-medicate some external preparations when they have been assessed as responsible to do so. The administration of each dose is recorded but not the quantities received from or returned to the pharmacy.

The school has no separate facility to house ill children, they are returned home either by parents or staff.

The school is a no smoking area and help is available to those young people who may have smoked heavily in the past. Sex education and support is provided confidentially.

Children with particular health problems are provided with appropriate support and help to

avoid embarrassment and negative reactions by others. For example, staff dealt with bedwetting in a sensitive way that did not draw attention.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The School operates a menu on a seven-weekly cycle, which is adapted to reflect the preferences of pupils. The inspectors participated in mealtimes, which were well-organised and social occasions. Plentiful supplies of food were available and a vegetarian option is supplied. The cook is informed by the matron of any children needing particular diets on health grounds. The menus indicate that the food served is mainly traditional English fare, but occasional recipes from other ethnic backgrounds are popular. Boarders are able to express their views on the meals provided through the School Council.

The kitchen has been inspected recently by the Environmental Health Officer. Food handling and hygiene qualifications were renewed in October 2003. Annual refresher training is arranged.

One house, The Paddocks, has its meals 'in house'. Food is transported from the central kitchen in suitable containers and temperatures checked. Snacks were available at other times of the day eg when children return to the School on Monday morning. Fruit is generally available in the boarding houses and residents of The Paddocks are assisted to prepare snacks in the house kitchen.

No major eating problems were reported, but the cook indicated that new boarders sometimes need to be encouraged by staff to eat.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Children are able to bring their own clothing to school and to wear their own reasonable choice of clothing outside class time.

The school shop opens every other day. Children are able to purchase personal requisites, toiletries and stationary as well as sweets.

Children's money is held in safe keeping for them and there are systems in place to sign these in and out.

CARE PLANNING AND PLACEMENT PLAN

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Parents and pupils are expected to attend annual reviews of statements of special educational needs and statutory reviews for looked after children where relevant. Care and behaviour plans are expected to be formulated with parental and child involvement within six to eight weeks of placements commencing. There is a policy of half yearly reviews of progress in line with educational statements. Replies to the questionnaires completed by both children and parents as part of this inspection confirm that the above planning and practice is in place.

Key workers reported that they had written and verbal input into educational reviews and also contributed to the formulation of care plans. Supervisors reported that key workers did not have direct input into the reviews of looked after children. Key workers saw part of their role at other reviews as preparing children for them and supporting them in the review. There were indications in files that pupils were able to express their views in formulating care and behaviour plans.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The inspectors noted that each child has a number of files, red, blue, green and yellow. These contain the required information under Standard 18.2. The inspectors found it difficult to access information from the structure of these files. It is suggested that an amalgamated and more user-friendly system be implemented to afford easy access to all the information on a child.

The inspector noted that when a particularly difficult child left the school recently there was no record on the file as to where he went, how the decision was made for him to move on and what information was shared by or with the School. In the inspector's opinion, it would be important for such information to be documented and passed on to provide some continuity of care for children who leave.

The inspector noted that the Head had acted on the recommendation from that last inspection about the storage of pupil records that are not passed on. Pickfords now store these securely.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

Inspectors examined records on both children and staff as well as other general school records required under this Standard and found them adequate.

Personnel files were inspected and gaps found in their contents as required under Standard 19.2. (*This is addressed under Standard 27*).

The school should keep a diary of events occurring at the school, including the names of visitors to the school and reasons for visits. (The latter may be kept in a separate visitors book if wished).

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

There continues to be plenty of evidence of children being positively encouraged and enabled by the school to maintain contact with their parents. Inspectors heard about good school home liaison through the home transport system. Staff transporting children home are able to have face-to-face contact with parents on a regular basis so that feedback and communication about the child's progress and any difficulties are addressed. Parents who completed questionnaires as part of this inspection comment favourably on the new home to school book. Children are able to meet their parents in comfortable and private surroundings. The school welcomes parental visits and this is also commented on and valued by many of the parents whose views were sought as part of this inspection.

Inspectors were informed about a new Parents Group in Trowbridge, which is recently underway. This is seen as a way of building parents understanding about behaviour management of their children. It is hoped that other groups could start up if this is a success.

The school is aware that it may have to risk assess parental visiting.

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Inspectors observed that the daily life of the school continues to provide opportunities for those children who move through the lower units and into the upper unit to develop knowledge and skills needed for their likely future living arrangements. This is something the school does well. For those children who do not move through the units their opportunities for learning independence skills are more limited.

Inspectors were able to witness plans being made to prepare children for leaving the school. One young man spoke to the inspectors about the Connexions service. He told the inspectors that they were involved in planning meetings in his final year. The inspectors saw in this pupil's file both a career action plan and progress reviews. No pathway plans were seen for children in the care system.

The school is continuing to look at developing an initiative for children deemed in need of additional support in learning skills for independent living.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

Physical, emotional and mental health needs are identified as far as possible prior to admission. The school continue to be aware that they are not always able to provide enough appropriate advice and support to address the mental health needs of some of the children in their care. There are some children in the school with very complex needs and the care and education staff do not have the time or experience to address these.

The Head reiterated that because children in the school are covered by a number of Primary Healthcare Trusts it is often difficult to secure coherent packages of care for children needing mental health services. As in the last inspection, inspectors found evidence of children waiting for long periods of time before appropriate help was forthcoming. Inspectors heard that the bid to secure funding for a post of Mental Health Social Worker for the school to address this issue had been unsuccessful. The Head had just completed a positive meeting with the local CAMHS team leader and was hopeful that the school might develop links here in this way improving services. Whilst the inspectors acknowledge the work done by the School to try and improve external specialist services, a repeat recommendation is made here to emphasise the continuing importance of this gap.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
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The Head emphasises in his self-assessment of the school that 'The large rural and tranquil site on the edge of the town is a superb setting for EBD children.' The inspectors would echo this, seeing many examples of children benefiting from this environment. Children also comment on the positive aspects of the premises in their questionnaires

- 'Lots of room to play'
- 'There is new paintwork which looks great.'
- 'You can do gardening.'
- 'There is a football pitch and a gym so if it is raining we can go in there to play.'

Parents continue to comment on the dilapidated state of the school 'The school is old and there are areas which because of this are very tired looking.' The Head also makes the point that 'The residential units are outdated and need to be replaced.' A new school is planned, with a brand new build. With this in the pipeline although the school would like to improve the quality of accommodation, the Head told the inspectors that it is difficult to justify spending large sums of money when they are due to leave. Having said this in the last year, money has been spent on improvements and both children and staff have welcomed these changes. Other improvements and refurbishments are planned and detailed in the School Improvement Plan.

The Fire Officer reports that 'The premises comply with the regulations. All records are up to date and training and procedures are exemplary'. There are outstanding requirements from the Fire Officer report of 21/11/03.

The school maintains appropriate links with the local community and promotes positive links.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)

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

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

Inspectors were informed that money had been set-aside for each unit so that the recommendations of the last inspection could be acted on. The inspectors saw and heard from both children and staff about the way this money had been spent.

In particular the inspectors acknowledge developments on School House. Improvements have been made to the showers so that they are now separate units affording more privacy. Partitioning of the larger bedrooms has also increased privacy. The old sick bay has been moved and changed to provide an extra 'chill' room for the children. Children report in their questionnaires how much they value the changes through the school, with new furniture, cushions, curtains and paintwork. In the inspectors opinion these changes have created a changed atmosphere with an overall softening to the units, particularly School House.

Some children are now given the option of a single bedroom in the early units. The inspectors were informed that children in School House have been told that they can now put up posters and pictures. There was some evidence of this seen during the inspection. The inspector expressed the view that because this has been a culture change, it may be important for this to be reemphasised. As children move through the units, they can have their own rooms and are encouraged to and do personalise their bedrooms.

Developments are still needed on Serenne. Some redecoration is outstanding and the showers continue to need upgrading. (*Links to Standard 26*)

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)

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

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

Inspectors found that there are an adequate numbers of baths, showers and toilets for the number of children accommodated.

There are new shower cubicles in School House. The showers on Serenne are not in individual cubicles and are only screened by shower curtains. However, double curtains have now been provided on this unit and inspectors were told that new supervision arrangements have been implemented since the last inspection to increase privacy.

In a questionnaire completed as part of this inspection, in answer to the question 'If you could change one thing about the school what would it be?' A child replied 'The toilets in west corridor.' These toilets are in the inspector's opinion in a particularly poor state. The school are aware of this and a complete upgrade of these toilets had been planned. However, with the school relocation planned, this upgrade has now been replaced with a refurbishment programme.

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.10)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

1

The inspectors found that risk assessments across a range of areas were not of a required standard. The inspector emphasised to the Head that under Standard 26.3 it is clear what areas should be risk assessed. Advice was given.

- Risk assessments of the School premises and grounds were found to be lacking in detail. Particularly the inspectors were not shown evidence of actions being carried out to remedy a problem when the risk was identified.
- Risk assessments of activities and outings have lapsed. The new computerised system developed by County is not on stream yet and in the meantime risk assessments are not being completed.
- Fire risk assessments for the buildings are in the inspector's opinion covering too broad an area and they lack detail.
- Risk assessments of new admissions and their potential impact on the group should be based on a detailed background history of the child, where available.

The Head or other senior member of staff should regularly review all risk assessments.

The inspector noted that fire drills are not carried out at night. The Head explained that drills were planned on early dark winter mornings to cover the need for night evacuations.

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

1

The School has a Staffing Policy which is endorsed by the Governors. The Policy has clear divisions between the responsibilities of the Governors and paid employees. The School generally adopts the procedures recommended by Wiltshire County Council on staffing issues. Staff are appointed in association with the Personnel Department at County Hall. This can lead to delays in the appointment of staff when information is not passed between the respective offices, and it is recommended that the effectiveness of these procedures is reviewed, with particular reference to Criminal Records Bureau clearances. The inspectors were informed that CRB checks are carried out at enhanced level on teaching, care and ancillary staff, as well as volunteers such as independent listeners and 'aunties' helping with the reading scheme.

Three staff files were reviewed regarding appointment procedures. A checklist is now stamped onto the front of application forms to indicate the receipt of requisite checks. CRB checks on staff were not generally available for inspection, except where a copy had been supplied by the applicant. The inspectors were informed that Personnel keep these checks at County Hall. No confirmation of medical references was seen on staff files inspected. One new staff member had no reference on file from the previous employer. A recently appointed member of care staff had begun her induction with a reference from her previous employer and confirmation of her medical reference still awaited. The medical clearance for a previously appointed member of staff was not on file. The file of a member of staff who had transferred from another establishment did not contain all the information relating to their initial clearance. The absence of such documents may reflect the division of recruitment responsibilities between Personnel and the School. The inspectors will address this direct with Personnel.

Total number of care staff:

15

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

3

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

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

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

Care staff work 42 or 43 hour weeks. Shift patterns were fixed for a year. These are from 7 am to 3 or 4 pm for two days, and from 2 or 3 pm to 10 or 10.30 pm. In addition to the fifteen care workers over the four houses, there was an establishment for six waking night care workers, one of whom would be covering a house at any one time. When fully staffed, care staff reported that the establishment is sufficient to meet the needs of the children. A senior manager is always on call.

Comments from both children and parents and staff who completed questionnaires as part of this inspection indicate that there are times when staffing is not at the required level. This would seem to be at peak times like breaks and when there is staff sickness or vacancies.

At the time of the inspection, teaching assistants were covering care staff vacancies. One new care worker was being inducted and would shortly take up duty and another post had been advertised. There were vacancies for night care workers. This meant that sleeping-in duties were occasionally being covered by care staff. These vacancies, including one for an occasional bank worker, had been advertised.

Staff emphasised their willingness to be flexible and cover for vacancies. Staff rotas indicated that there was generally a minimum of two staff in each house at any time, with four in School House. Occasionally, when a worker was absent at short notice, lone working might be necessary, with access to a 'floating' colleague during that session. The Head has been exploring the possibility of employing agency staff to cover emergencies, but had so far been unsuccessful. Care staff were all full-time, which they felt gave added continuity of care for the children.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)

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

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

The School had a thorough induction process for new care staff. Once confirmed in post, care staff were expected to undertake NVQ3 and all but one were doing so. Two care team leaders were hoping to complete NVQ4 Care of Children and Adolescents shortly and both held an NVQ3 management qualification. The School supports such training financially although no additional time is available for staff.

There was a staff training programme for 2003-04. A range of relevant care topics were included, some of which were addressed within team meetings, some in INSET days with other schools and some by attending external courses. The poor take up of Child Protection training for staff is of concern. Staff stated that they had personal development plans in place.

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Head reports formally to the School's Governors. There is a clear hierarchy of responsibility within the School for professional and ancillary workers, although responsibility for supervision is sometimes shared between two or more managers. Consideration could be given to simplifying the structure of supervision arrangements.

The inspectors did not have access to supervision records but were told that supervision covered the issues referred to in NMS 30.4 and were held at the required frequency. Supervision contracts should in future recognise that supervision notes may need to be seen by external agents.

Policies and procedures are available for guidance. Senior staff meetings are held weekly and decisions are passed on to handover meetings of care staff.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.17)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral) has substantial experience at a senior level in childcare and professional qualifications relevant to working with children. However he does not hold the relevant qualifications for this Standard. Neither does the Head. It is important that this is addressed by 2005.

All but one of the care staff are undertaking the NVQ3. By 2005, a minimum ratio of 80% of care staff should have completed their NVQ3.

Staff working hours can be high when there is staff sickness. Staff rotas do not allow for the proper implementation of those elements under standard 31.5.

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

60 %

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

1

The inspectors found evidence of the Head or delegated senior staff monitoring and signing records as noted under standard 32.2. This area of monitoring has improved since last year. However, there continue to be important gaps here in relation to allegations or suspicions of abuse and their outcomes, complaints and their outcomes, risk assessments and notifications of incidents to the inspecting body. Monitoring of these matters should be in place to identify any patterns or issues requiring action. A repeat recommendation is made.

The School improvement plan demonstrates a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for pupils.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

A Governor was nominated to be responsible for the welfare of pupils. He visits the School half-termly and writes a report for the Governors.. The Head is informed in advance of these visits but house staff are not aware of them until he arrives. The Governor inspects a number of relevant records. Individual children are spoken with and the premises inspected.

The Governors are involved in consideration of any major sanctions, such as lengthy suspensions or exclusions.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

NA

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____

Date _____

PART D

HEAD'S RESPONSE

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

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 21 April 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

YES

Head's comments are available on file at the Area Office. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

YES

Note:

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

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 16 June 2004, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

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

NO

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

NO

Other: <enter details here>

ANNOUNCED INSPECTION – SPRINGFIELDS SCHOOL – 21 APRIL 2004

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

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

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Or

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

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

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