



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

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

Linden Bridge School

Grafton Road
Worcester Park
Surrey
KT4 7JW

11th October 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

Linden Bridge School

Address

Grafton Road, Worcester Park, Surrey, KT4 7JW

Tel No:

020 8330 3009

Fax No:

Email Address:

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

Surrey Children`s Services

Name of Head

Mrs. R Smith

CSCI Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

4&5/3/04

Date of Inspection Visit	11th October 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit	10:00 am	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Mr. J A Chivers
Name of CSCI Inspector	2	Ms S Delliston
Name of CSCI Inspector	3	
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	Mrs. R Smith (Head Teacher) Mr. R Smith (Head of Care)	

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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 Linden Bridge 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

Linden Bridge is administered by Surrey County Council Education Department. The School was originally part of a Hospital and has been functioning as a School for 28 years.

Linden Bridge has the overall purpose of offering a structured, broad and modified curriculum. The residential / boarding opportunities are offered to develop the boarders specific communication skills and build on their personal and social development. The School has a committed and competent staff team that is lead in a sound and professional manner and affords a very good standard of pastoral care to the boarders accommodated.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The School provides a very good service in all of the areas that were inspected. In particular the relationships between staff and boarders were very positive and staff demonstrated enthusiasm, commitment and competence in their dealings with the children.

Behaviour management, control and discipline were sound and boarders responded positively to staff requests and instructions.

The School provided a wide range of activities and boarders are motivated by staff.

The School had a range of policies and procedures, which were detailed and clear.

Records were well kept and evidenced consistency.

The Schools vetting procedures are basically sound; however shortfalls did exist. Most of the staff files contained an abundance of information.

The boarding staff have a good mix of skill and experience that enables the School to meet its aims and objectives.

The boarding sector is managed in a sound and professional manner and this affords a very good standard of care to the boarders accommodated.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

It must be emphasised that the School provides a very good service in all areas inspected and any improvements needed are mostly of a minor or routine nature.
Some of the policies and procedures need to be expanded.
Whilst the Schools recruitment and vetting procedures were basically sound it is important that all details required by Standard 27. 2 of the National Minimum Standards for Special Schools are followed and obtained in all cases.
It is important that any faults in the new boiler are identified and addressed.
It is also important that additional lighting is provided in the School grounds.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

The inspection was positive and the School demonstrated its competence and professionalism in many areas.
Of the 33 Standards inspected, 3 standards exceeded the National Minimum Standard, 24 of the standards were fully met and 7 of the standards were mostly met.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

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	8. 3	That the School expand its policy and procedure regarding children who are absent without authority to include what action would be taken upon a child's return to School	31/1/05
2	14	That the boarders files held in the 'sick bay' are stored in a secure facility.	31/1/05
3	23	That the lighting within the School grounds is improved	31/2/05
4	24	That the fault in the new boiler is identified and addressed.	1/12/04
5	24	That the malodour of urine in the unoccupied bedroom is investigated and eliminated.	10/12/04
6	27	That the School evidence on staff files the details required by Standard 27. 2 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. (This particularly applies to staff appointed after the introduction of the above Standards.	10/12/04

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

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	YES
• Chair of Governors	YES

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

Date of Inspection	11/10/04
Time of Inspection	09.00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	19
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	4.8

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
The School has an attractive and informative prospectus. The prospectus accurately describes the service provided by the School.		

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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From discussions with Governors, Staff and Professionals the inspectors found evidence of the school's commitment towards children and their families. The school values the opinions of the children within the school and their families. Their approach is one of inclusion and participation and this is evident in the number of communicative systems that are in place for children and parents views, wishes and feelings to be expressed. The inspectors found evidence that the school listening, consults, and provide representatives.

The School Council is now active and allows children a channel by which to express their views and opinions. Parents and significant others are consulted by two way conversations in the children's home book, telephone calls to and from parents, emails and letters.

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)

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

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

The school has a comprehensive confidentiality policy that addresses the fundamental aspects of care, children's rights and protection. From discussions with staff and observations made during the two days inspection the inspectors saw examples of respect being shown to pupils by staff at every level. This was by basic politeness and courtesy, their polite manner and tone when speaking to pupils and their interaction in day-to-day situations as part of school life. Staff interviewed was clear about the circumstances when pupils information should be confidential and situations when a pupil's confidence would need to be broken.

The school has sought written permission from parents for pupils requiring 'hand on' assistance in relation to personal care while at school. Completed permission forms were on pupil's files.

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?****3**

The school has a complaints policy and procedure in place dated July 2004 that included the contact details of the Commission for Social Care Inspection. Complaints forms have also been produced by the Head Of Care and these are available to parents and staff. The school has a positive approach to pupil's welfare and encourages pupils to raise concerns or to complain if they wish to. The inspectors were encouraged to learn that matters raised by pupils are acted upon.

In 1992 the Charter for people with autism within Europe was declared "The right of children and young people with autism to live independent and full lives to the limit of their potential. The inspectors saw evidence that Linden Bridge School had taken this right on board and the boarding pupils are supported in living their lives to the limit of their potential.

The school has a Children Rights Officer in post and works very much in partnership with her by listening to matters that are raised through her and responding to issues or concerns of pupils. Parents also have access to the school complaints procedure and can use this channel on behalf their children or for issues they wish to raise themselves.

Since the last inspection on the 4/3/03 the school has received no complaints
Complaints.

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

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

Number of complaints received by 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?

3

The School has an internal policy and procedure regarding Child Protection. The policy is detailed and was updated in January 2004.

In addition the School holds the Surrey County Council Multi-Agency Child Protection procedures. Both policies are centrally held and are available to all staff.

Training in Child Protection is on going. Two staff have attended the Surrey County Council Multi-Agency Child Protection Course in July 04, one is due to attend in October 04, one in November 04 and one in December 04.

Staff that were interviewed were clear regarding the Child Protection procedures and stated that they would be prepared to 'whistle-blow' on colleagues should this be necessary.

The head teacher stated that there are no Child Protection issues at the School.

During the inspection staff were observed to treat the children with dignity and respect and no issues arose regarding the treatment of the children.

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

0

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
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The School has an anti-bullying policy. The policy is dated 2002 and was updated in July 04. The policy is detailed; however it needs to be expanded commensurate to Standard 6.3 of the National Minimum Standards for Special Schools to include what support / guidance would be available to those who bully others.
 Staff were clear about the anti-bullying policy and would immediately challenge such behaviour.
 During the inspection no bullying or intimidating behaviour was evident among the children.

Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied	X	%
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Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)
 All significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified by the Head of the school or designated person to the appropriate authorities.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The School has a policy and procedure regarding the notification of significant events. The policy is dated 2002 and lists all relevant areas to be notified and to whom notification should be made.
 The Schools management was clear regarding its responsibilities under Standard 7. 2 of the National Minimum Standards for Special Schools.

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

- | | |
|--|---|
| • conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children | 0 |
| • serious harm to a child | 0 |
| • serious illness or accident of a child | 0 |
| • serious incident requiring police to be called | 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?	2
<p>The School has a comprehensive policy and procedure regarding the unauthorised absence of a child; however the procedure needs to be expanded consistent with Standard 8. 3 of the National Minimum Standards for Special Schools to include what action would be taken upon a child's return.</p> <p>The head teacher and head of care stated that absconding is not a problem at the School and that no child has absconded. There was however an occasion in March 04 when a child 'wandered' out of the School grounds. Staff immediately noticed the child's absence and he was returned by them within a few minutes.</p>		
Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:		0

CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
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Relationships between staff and children were observed to be very positive. This is commendable in view of the children's communication difficulties and level of disability. Staff were pro-active in engaging children and motivating them in activities. Children responded favourably to staff interaction.

There were clear personal and professional boundaries evident; however this did not inhibit the bond and relationship between staff and children.

Staff were observed to conduct themselves in a calm, caring and sensitive manner.

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?

3

The School has an internal behaviour management policy. In addition the Surrey County Council Education Departments policy is held. The internal policy includes a list of non-permitted sanctions.

The School has a basic token economy system in place. The system is known as the 'bean' tree and children are rewarded with beans as reinforcement for positive behaviour and achievement.

There is also a behaviour response strategy, which may include other agencies if necessary. Sanctions are recorded in the sanctions log and in the child's file. The log evidenced that a total of ten sanctions had been administered between 13th March 04 and 27th September 04. Only sanctions permitted by legislation are used. Staff also confirmed this during interview. The School also has a policy and procedure regarding the use of physical restraint. It is important that all staff sign the policy consistent with Standard 10. 19 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.

Restraint training is on going via 'positive options'. Some staff have already attended the course and others are scheduled to attend in the near future.

The Schools old restraint records were available. The record evidenced that restraint had been used on six occasions from 23rd March 04 to 11th October 04. All restraint used was consistent with guidelines and in the inspectors view was necessary and appropriate in the circumstances described on the record.

A new restraint book has been recently commenced.

QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The school has an Admissions and Reception of Boarders policy dated 2004 that covers all the relevant information needed about the school. For example, staffing, grouping of pupils by gender, age and social compatibility, communication, visits, overnight provision, medication, illness and supervision. Within this is information about how concerns or complaints can be raised and the process and procedure.</p>		
<p>The school has a Multi- Disciplinary Panel that considers all application for admission into the school and throughout the admissions process. The process includes a visit to the pupil at home and discussions with staff. The school's Admission and Reception Of Boarders policy outlines the factors for consideration in deciding whether to admit. Once the decision is made there is a further planned admission process that takes into account the child's and his/her parents needs and those of borders already in the school. The school does not accommodate emergency or unplanned admissions for boarding places.</p>		
<p>The criteria for admission allow consideration to be given to the likely risk to other boarders in relation to challenging behaviour or sexually abusive behaviour.</p>		

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

From the pre-inspection questionnaires provided by the parents and discussions with care staff, the inspectors found that the school provide a range of educational and social activities to meet boarder's needs. These include cinema, games, music, colouring and television programmes and films that are age appropriate. The care staff talked about their close working relationship with teaching staff. This is evident in the way after school time is planned. Together, they in-co-operate educational and social learning into activities with the emphasis on learning and fun. Boarder's annual reviews and Individual Education Plans also provided information on areas for development.

The inspectors had the opportunity to observe care staff with boarders during the day and after school. The inspectors found that care staff is responsible for a small group of boarding pupils for the evening programme. The evening routine is structured with planned activities that include short periods of quiet time, interactive play and games and energetic activities.

Annual reviews and Individual Education Plans inform care and teaching staff as to a boarder's educational progress. Care staff supports boarders in maintaining a good attendance and punctuality record in school.

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

Boarders were observed by inspectors to be engaged in enjoyable and purposeful activities after the school day. The school has in place a structured programme that includes on-site and community based activities. The range includes cooking, arts and crafts, swimming, bowling, cinema, laser quest and horse riding. The school has a number of mini buses available for off-site activities. Within the evening programme was provision for students to have free time when they enjoy their choice of activity in the boarding hostel.

Students were observed to respond well to the evening structured programme. They interacted positively with other pupils and care staff and generally enjoy themselves throughout the evening.

The inspectors were impressed with the way the evening programme was organised for the maximum enjoyment of the pupils and pupils were not bored or unsupervised. The atmosphere throughout the evening was happy, relaxed and fun.

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 has a number of health care policies and procedures that collectively covers the needs of boarders. The Health Promotion Policy includes health care plans, dealing with sexuality and relationships, personal, social and health education (PSHE), anti-smoking and substance abuse. Pupil's health care plans included their medical history, preventative measures, allergies, specific treatments, hearing, dental, optical and developmental checks.

The schools medication units were inspected and a sample of five boarders files seen. The inspector found that pupil's medication was kept in individual clear bags with their names. Files had a photograph of the pupil and information relating to that child medical needs. The medication cupboard was securely locked and the records viewed were clearly written and up to date. The children's information included completed 'MAR' sheets that had the information returned to parents. The control drugs book was viewed and had clear up to date records that included the name of the control drug, name of the child, date, time medication given, balance of stock and were signed and witnessed by two staff members.

Pupil's files contained completed health plans, intimate care forms that were signed, and parents permission for medication. The school had a copy of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society guidance in relation to the administration and control of medicines. The school had a policy in place for the administration of First Aid. Staff with First Aid training had the St. John's Certificate.

The school had a list of all home remedies for 2004-2005 that included out of date remedies and the date these were disposed. The cabinet was in the sick- bay room and was locked. The records were viewed and were all up to date.

It was noted that pupil's files were kept on shelves in the sick- bay room and not securely locked in a cabinet. This was raised as a matter for further discussion in relation to confidentiality and the Data Protection Act.

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

A sample of the school's menus was viewed during the inspection and meal times were observed by inspectors. One menu covered breakfast and tea and another covered lunch. The menus were found to offer a good variety of wholesome, nutritious meals that the pupils appeared to enjoy.

From discussions with care staff, menus were based on children's likes, dislikes preferences and specific needs. Care staff spoke to the cook who created the menus based on this information. The inspectors saw evidence during the inspection that special dietary needs were catered for as well as vegetarian options. The cook informed the inspectors that meals for specific children were cooked separately and these averaged about three or four per day.

Feedback from care staff was that meals most days were good and in addition to they input to the chef the school also receives advice from parents about their children's dietary needs.

There are facilities in the boarding accommodation for students to prepare snacks and are encouraged to do so with supervision from care staff.

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

The inspectors were informed that all boarders now stay for two nights as a way of the school providing boarding accommodation to a greater number of pupils. Pupil's parents provide they clothing, pocket money and toiletries. Clothing is marked for identification with the pupil's name and their valuable items and pocket money is kept safe by staff on request through the school 'booking in' system.

Older students are responsible for their own money. Each student has a lockable space to keep their personal items if they choose to remain responsible themselves.

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
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The School has a care plan assessment form for appropriate individual children. The plan is sectioned and covers areas such as: self care skills, identity, family and social relationships, emotional and behavioural development, relationships with others, social presentation, work and recreation, anxieties and worries and working with parents. There is also a term 'target' sheet, which describes the current situation, the targets set, the strategy to meet the target, target met or not and any further action. Care plans and target sheets were available in the sample of children's files inspected.

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?	4
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A sample of children's individual files were inspected. The files contained an abundant amount of information on each child and included details such as: Information sheet, introduction to boarding details, hoe remedies and medical consent form, health care plan, medication request, medication administered sheets, Key worker target sheet, progress reports, Statement of special educational needs, care plan assessment and update, behaviour management plan, 'bean tree' achievements, intimate care sheets, home contact sheets, incident and accident information. The staff are to be commended for maintaining the children's files to such a standard. The children's files are kept in the locked duty office.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)
 The school maintains clear and accurate records on the staff and child groups of the school, and major events affecting the school and children resident there.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The School holds the range of records required and policies require by Schedule 3 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.
 The content of children’s individual files has been described above and a more descriptive account of staff file content will be detailed under Standard 27 of this report.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)
 Subject to their wishes, children are positively encouraged and enabled by the school to maintain contact with their parents and other family members (unless there are welfare concerns) while living at school.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The home has a policy and procedure regarding ‘contact’
 Children have a contact sheet on their individual files. There was evidence of contact recorded on the contact sheets. The records are consistently maintained.

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
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The School has a policy and procedure regarding preparation for leaving the School. The policy is dated July 2004.
 Leaving details and planned programmes are entered on children’s individual care plans and progress reports.
 The School also uses the ‘Pathway to Independence’ programme, which includes a checklist of self-help and personal and social skills.
 The programmes are monitored by staff and progress or areas for further development are recorded and acted upon.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

All children are allocated a 'key' worker.

Key workers were knowledgeable about their allocated children and their future plans.

Key workers have daily contact with the children and prepare the key worker target sheets on a half term basis.

The School has access to specialist support and professional services.

Key workers and staff at the School were observed to be providing close support and a very good standard of care to the children.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
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The School was purpose built about twenty eight years ago and was initially part of a Hospital.

The School is situated in a residential area and is close to a range of facilities and amenities. The exterior of the building is maintained in good order.

The grounds are spacious, well maintained and secured by fencing and a lockable gate.

Whilst new lights have been fitted in the grounds the output of light is somewhat 'dim'. Staff are concerned about this and the inspectors concur with their views. It is important that the lighting is improved in order to provide safer mobility at night and improve security.

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?

2

The School has two separate boarding areas, one for the junior age range and one for the senior group.

The senior's house (feds) is a new purpose built building and was only opened in August / September 04. The house provides a very good standard of communal and private space areas for the children. Communal areas are tastefully furnished, homely and comfortable. The communal areas afford adequate space for the children.

Children's bedrooms are of an equal standard and are individually personalised. One of the bedrooms has en suite and disabled access toilet facilities.

The main School boarding house comprises of five living areas. The lounge area in living area five is Scheduled for redecoration in the near future. As this has already been actioned a recommendation will not be made.

The remaining four living areas provide adequate communal space. The lounge areas are decorated and furnished to a very good standard and are also homely and comfortable. The lounge areas are well equipped and have a range of games and play material. Children have lockable cabinets to keep valuables or other possessions.

The children's bedrooms are decorated and furnished to a very good standard and are personalised.

Bedroom number 5 had a malodour of urine present. It is likely that the odour originates from the floorboards in the room. It is important that this is investigated and the odour eliminated.

There is a well-equipped 'sensory' room and a small gymnasium.

Staff are to be commended for creating and maintaining a warm and 'cosy' atmosphere in the Schools boarding areas.

No safety hazards were identified in any of the above areas.

The Schools laundry was well equipped and organised. It was noted however that the fire extinguisher in the laundry was empty when tested by the inspector. This was reported to the head of care. He immediately contacted the engineer and arranged to have the extinguisher refilled.

New central heating boilers have recently been fitted. The head teacher and head of care stated that there have been ongoing problems with the new boilers since they were installed. On the first day of the inspection the boilers broke down again. The head teacher was concerned at the low temperature around and was considering closing the School until the fault could be rectified. An engineer repaired the fault and stated that the problem may stem from low gas pressure. It is important that any fault in the boiler system is addressed and a recommendation that will be made regarding this.

Ventilation and lighting was satisfactory throughout the boarding areas.

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

Toilet and bathing facilities were of a very good standard and afforded adequate privacy. The facilities were adequate in number to meet the needs of the children.

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?**

2

The School has a 'health & safety' policy and procedure. The policy is dated September 2004 and covers eighteen headings including transport. The health & safety 'law' poster was prominently displayed.

The School has a fire evacuation plan and a written fire risk assessment dated June 03 was available.

A full fire system maintenance was undertaken on 8th June 04.

The School has a fire policy and procedure. This is also in pictorial form for the children. Regular fire evacuation drills occur, the most recent being on 21st September 04. The fire drill records are clear; however an advisory recommendation to record the number of children and staff evacuated will be made.

Fire alarm tests occur; however these need to be undertaken on a weekly basis.

An electrical systems test was undertaken in May 04 and portable electrical appliances were tested in July 04. A gas test occurred on the day of the inspection, which identified a fault in the gas pressure to the main boilers. The engineers will explore the boiler arrangements further and repair any faults. Nevertheless a recommendation will be made in view of the nature of matter.

A food / hygiene inspection occurred in July 02 and a Legionella test was undertaken on 6th August 04.

The Schools accident book was available. It was noted that a number of accidents / incidents occurring to staff were a result of assaults on them by children.

The School has a wide range of risk assessments including an assessment for the swimming pool. The swimming pool is currently not in use and the construction of a new pool is planned.

The School has a clear regard for health and safety matters and with the exception of current boiler situation and the empty fire extinguisher in the laundry no further hazards were identified.

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The School has a written recruitment policy and procedure. The policy is dated July 04 and includes samples of person specifications and interview note formats.

A total of fifteen staff files were inspected.

Information contained in the files evidenced that the Schools recruitment and vetting procedures are basically sound; however some shortfalls did exist.

Information held on most files included: Criminal Record Bureau checks, two references, application forms and curriculum vitas, health questionnaires, appraisals, contracts, check lists and general correspondence.

It was noted that two staff did not have Criminal Record Bureau checks evident and a further three only had 'CRB' clearance letters and not the actual CRB form containing a reference number. Three staff did not have any written references and five had only one reference. There was no photographic or certificated evidence such as copies of birth certificate etc held on any of the files.

It is acknowledged that most of the shortfalls were regarding staff that have been employed at the School for many years and at the time of their recruitment vetting procedures were not as sound as under current legislation and requirements.

It is important that the School obtain any outstanding CRB checks and references, particularly for staff appointed after the introduction of The National Minimum Standards for Special Schools March 2002 and to audit its staff files against Standard 27. 2 of the National Minimum Standards for Special Schools.

Total number of care staff:

14

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

1

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The School was adequately staffed at the time of the inspection.

Staff currently work 'split shifts' in order to provide optimum care to the children. Some staff voiced their concern that administrative duties are often performed in their off duty periods as most of their working hours involve direct 'child contact' work. This was brought to the attention of the head teacher and head of care who explained that about two hours per shift are allocated as administrative time and that this allocation is perhaps the most generous within the Special School's system in the County. Nevertheless in view of the staff's opinion an advisory recommendation that this matter is discussed openly at a staff team meeting will be made.

Staff were observed to be appropriately deployed and were carrying out their duties in a caring, committed and efficient manner.

In addition to the Compliment of day boarding staff there is also a team of six 'waking' night staff.

Photographs of staff on duty are displayed for the children's information.

Twelve of the staff are female and two are male.

The staff duty roster was available. The roster is clear; however an advisory recommendation will be made to include the full names of staff and their actual duty hours.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The area of training is detailed in the Schools staffing policy.

There was evidence of staff attending a range of training courses and staff further confirmed their attendance during interviews. Staff were also of the opinion that the School is supportive in the provision of training.

The School also has an induction programme and this was confirmed by staff.

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The School has a supervision policy and contract.

A sample of eleven staff supervision notes were inspected.

There was documented evidence of 'formal' supervision occurring on a more regular basis than in the past.

Staff confirmed the frequency of supervision and were satisfied with the content of the supervision sessions. Staff also confirmed that written notes of supervision are taken.

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

Staff felt that the school was managed well and issues were taken seriously. They felt that pupils were listened to and valued. From discussion with staff and the management team there were clear lines of accountability and regular meetings took place to share information and planning in relation to the care, education and welfare of the pupils. Staff demonstrated commitment to the pupils and enjoyment in their work. It was noted in the last inspection report the Head Of Care in conjunction with the Board Of Governors achieved Beacon Status for the school. Although the scheme has since been discontinued, the school continues to strive for excellence. Pupil's commented that staff were "calm and kind".

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

X

%

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?

3

A new Head Of Care is in post and has demonstrated his commitment to the quality of care pupils receive and working to maintain the school's reputation. Members of the Board Of Governors produce an annual report to parents. The Governors has a general responsibility to see that the school is managed effectively to meet the needs of the students.

To the best of the information provided throughout the inspection, the school has not been the subject of a receiver, liquidator or bankruptcy since the last inspection in March 2003.

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

The inspectors saw evidence that Standard Thirty-Three visits are taking place as required and the reports were available for inspection. From discussions during the inspection there was evidence that issues arising from these visits are acted upon by the school and any recommendations are carried out.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Empty box for Lay Assessor's Summary.

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 are working on the best way to include Provider responses in the published report. In the meantime responses received are available on request.

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 11th & 12th October 04 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 but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

Note:

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

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by _____, 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>

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.

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