



Champions for
Social Care
Improvement

inspection report

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

Mary Hare Grammar School For The Deaf

Arlington Manor
Snelsmore Common
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 3BQ

19th – 23rd January 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

Mary Hare Grammar School For The Deaf

Address

Arlington Manor, Snelsmore Common, Newbury, Berkshire,
RG14 3BQ

Tel No:

01635 244200

Fax No:

Email Address:

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

Dr I Tucker

Name of Head

Dr I Tucker

NCSC Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

School for deaf children

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

07/02/03

Date of Inspection Visit		19th January 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		10:00 am	
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Lucy Martin	098269
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	Steve Webb	
Name of NCSC Inspector	3		
Name of NCSC Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):			
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Peter Gale – Assistant Principal	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) 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 NCSC in respect of Mary Hare Grammar School For The Deaf

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

Mary Hare Schools provide education and care to pupils who have statements of special educational need arising from severe or profound hearing loss. The schools teach communication through auditory oral philosophy, aiming to enable deaf children to talk and lip read and hence an ability to communicate in a hearing world.

The Mary Hare Schools comprise Mary Hare Grammar School, a selective secondary school and Mary Hare Primary School, a non-selective primary school. The primary school is located on a separate site a few miles away from the Mary Hare campus.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The school has further strengthened the strong senior management team with the appointment of an Assistant Principal responsible for the welfare of pupils. There has been work undertaken in looking at ways to prevent bullying and the pupils feel listened to.

Boarders have a wide range of activities available out of school time and there is good liaison with parents. Parents felt that the school looked after their children well.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

No major shortfalls were found. 24 of the 33 standards were met and 4 standards were exceeded. Some recommendations have been made, and some advice given in the text of the report, to build on the good standards of care seen.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This was a positive inspection. A substantial amount of work had been undertaken in meeting the recommendations and advice from the last inspection. In addition, it was found that further developments were in progress to improve the welfare of boarders. All staff spoken with were enthusiastic about their role and wanting to continue to develop and improve care practice. Overall, there was a strong commitment to the welfare of pupils and much evidence to indicate that Mary Hare is safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in its care.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

NO

No	Standard	Recommended actions	
1	RS26	The school reviews the use of door wedges.	7/6/2003

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended action and any advisory recommendations 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	RS26	The school has a fire risk assessment which includes the use of door wedges.	23/6/04
2	RS7	The school has effective systems in place to notify the NCSC and other agencies of the significant events identified in standard 7.	23/6/04
3	A14	Where care staff carry out nursing procedures, there is documentary evidence to show that appropriate authorization and delegation has been obtained.	23/6/04
4	RS14	A medication cabinet is purchased for the sixth form centre.	23/6/04
5	RS24	There are systems in place to ensure that routine maintenance issues are picked up in the boarding houses.	23/6/04
6	RS26	The surface temperatures of the radiators in the Primary School are monitored to ensure that they do not exceed 43 degrees C.	23/6/04
7	RS26	The temperatures of the fridges in the sixth form centre are monitored to ensure that they remain within safe levels.	23/6/04
8	RS27	CRB checks are carried out on the two people undertaking monitoring visits at the school.	23/6/04
9	RS28	The use of the care staff at teatime in the Primary School is reviewed.	23/6/04

10	RS31	The school reviews the role of nighttime care staff to enable NVQ's to be undertaken.	23/6/04
11	RS26	Further investigations are carried out to ascertain whether the fire alarm system between Manor and the sixth form centre can be separated.	23/6/04

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	NO

Checks with other Organisations

• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	YES
• Independent Person	YES
• 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	NO
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)	NO
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	19/02/04
Time of Inspection	09.30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	86
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	10

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 NCSC 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) |

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"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 a detailed prospectus which describes what the school sets out to do for those children it accommodates and the manner in which care is provided. There is a separate prospectus for the sixth form and the primary school.

The pupil handbook is reviewed annually and there are plans to make it more child friendly. The name of the designated member of staff for child protection matters has been added to the prospectus.

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?

4

The school has excellent arrangements in place to enable pupils to influence the way the school is run. The school council continues to meet regularly and has representatives from each year group. The inspectors were present for one of the meetings and were impressed at the range of issues covered and the fact that changes are made as a result of the meetings. A recent example was the fact that boarders can now wear their own clothes to breakfast.

House meetings take place and there was evidence of good working relationships with parents. In particular, staff working at the Primary School and at Howard House placed a high emphasis on the liaison with parents. Parents who were spoken with and who responded in the questionnaire generally felt that their views were sought.

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 written policy regarding privacy and confidentiality and the staff recognise that more care is needed entering bedrooms due to the deafness of the boarders. Time was spent with members of staff waking young people up in the morning and it was evident that sensitivity is used. The sixth form house has a flashing doorbell system which alerts the boarders that someone is at the door.

Work has been undertaken in Mansell House to fill in gaps above the doors and walls in the shower and toilet areas. Boarders spoken with were appreciative of the work undertaken.

The boarders have access to minicom and most pupils have mobile phones with texting facilities. There are also e-mail facilities on the computer system. Boarders are allowed to use mobile phones after school and this arrangement works well. Pupils spoken with were satisfied that there were adequate facilities and a reasonable amount of privacy regarding communication with others.

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

There is a good amount of written information given to boarders about how to complain. There was evidence in the pupil questionnaires that most pupils are aware of their right to complain and they identified a wide range of staff that they would feel able to approach if they had a problem. There has been information given to parents formally clarifying the complaints procedure.

The Head maintains a record of serious complaints which was seen during the inspection. The number of complaints received by the school in the past year was 5 and there was evidence that they had all been responded to appropriately.

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

5

Number of above complaints substantiated:

X

Number of complaints received by NCSC 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?

2

The Principal is the designated person in matters of child protection and the school has up to date procedures in child protection. All full time care staff have received a half day training from the local Child Protection Co-ordinator in July 2003. One of the Heads of Houses takes the lead in providing briefings on child protection matters to new care and ancillary staff. The two independent listeners have received a briefing in child protection matters since the last inspection. There was evidence that the school acts robustly and appropriately regarding matters concerning members of staff.

There were discussions with the Principal regarding the reporting of child protection issues to the local Child Protection Co-ordinator and this had not taken place regarding one issue. Notification took place after the inspection.

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

1

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?**

4

Since last year, the school has undertaken its own confidential questionnaire regarding bullying and is currently exploring the possibility of a pupil mediation scheme. This is a commendable piece of work. Staff spoken with were aware of the potential for bullying by the pupils and pupils generally did not identify bullying as a problem within the school.

In the confidential questionnaire administered to boarders prior to the inspection, 80% reported that they were never, or hardly ever bullied. This is a 8% increase from last year when 72% reported that they were never, or hardly ever bullied.

Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied

80 %

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?**

2

Parents are notified promptly regarding incidents involving their child. There has been one incident which has been notified to the NCSC during the last 12 months.

As mentioned in Standard 5, there had been a child protection incident, which had not been reported to the local child protection co-ordinator, and an incident involving a member of staff. Neither had been reported to the NCSC.

NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO NCSC 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

1

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
<p>The school has written procedures regarding the action to be taken when a child goes missing. The school grounds are large and each house has a system whereby pupils have to sign out to indicate where they are going.</p> <p>There have been no recorded incidents of a child going missing in the past 12 months.</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?	3
Evidence from the pupil questionnaires and discussions with groups of pupils showed that most pupils feel that the staff treat them fairly and that relationships are generally good between care staff and boarders.		
Expectations regarding behaviour are made clear and there is a House points system which rewards positive behaviour as well as penalising negative behaviour.		

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
Since the last inspection one of the Heads of Houses has attended a course which enables them to train other staff in the use of physical intervention. All care staff received training from the Head of House in July 2003. Physical intervention is rarely used in the main school and in the last year, there have only been three incidents requiring restraint. In the Primary School, there is a more regular need for physical intervention and a book is now used to record incidents.		
The sanctions books were seen in the boarding houses and contained all the required information. More details have now been added to the entries made and there was evidence that sanctions are monitored by Heads of Houses and by the Head of Care.		

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

Prospective pupils and their parents are given an extensive tour of the school prior to admission. The Primary School and the junior house, Howard House, in the main school are homely and provide a good introduction to boarding life.

Pupils preparing to leave the school are given more responsibility and there are opportunities for them to cook for themselves as well as having to do their own washing. Nearly all pupils go on to higher education.

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

There appeared to be good relationships between the care staff and the teaching staff. Twice a week there are meetings with the care and teaching staff and a handover book is written. In Howard House, teaching staff spend prep time in the house helping pupils.

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 school provides an excellent range of activities available both at the school and outside. At the school there are clubs and activities such as swimming and football, and outside pupils attend judo and football clubs. At weekends there are a wide variety of outings arranged to cinemas and sports centres. The sixth form felt that there was less organised for them to do.

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**

There are good arrangements in place regarding the health care of boarders and these have been strengthened since last year. The full time school nurse has left and been replaced by the part time nurse who has increased her hours to full time. In addition, a new part time nurse has been appointed. One of the nurses is on site from 7.45 am until 3.45 pm. During the evenings one of the nurses is on call. At weekends there is no school cover and reliance on the emergency doctor and the local hospital. There is a rolling programme to ensure that the care staff are up to date in first aid training and this is provided by the school nurses, supplemented by local first aid trainers. The relationship between the school nurse and the care staff was said to be positive.

The school doctor continues to visit once a week and appointments can be made at the surgery at other times if needed. Pupils are able to see doctors of either gender if they wish and alone if wanted.

It was found that one of the boarders needs a nursing task undertaken on a regular basis and this has been delegated to one of the care staff. This has been taking place for some time and it is recommended that appropriate documentation is completed to show that the task has been appropriately delegated (see standard 14.23).

The surgery records kept detailing each pupil who attends were clear and comprehensive. Advice was given to record the conversation with the care staff regarding older boarders who are considered responsible enough to self-medicate. In the sixth form house, medication is being stored in a locked drawer. It is recommended that a medicine cabinet is purchased.

It was a recommendation at the last inspection that the system whereby the school nurse and the care staff can administer medication is reviewed to ensure double doses cannot be given. This has been done and the school nurse lets the care staff know when any medication has been issued after 12pm.

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**

All meals are taken in the dining hall and were pleasant social occasions. Since the last inspection the school has appointed a new catering Manager and boarders commented that the range and standard of the food had improved. There has been the introduction of a pasta bar twice a week as well as an extensive salad bar and a hot choice with a vegetarian option.

The meal times at the primary school continue to be particularly supportive to the children. The cook at the primary staff knows the children well and was accommodating individual choices for a packed lunch. There are now no catering staff at the primary school to serve the evening meal. This is prepared in advance ready for the care staff to heat up. Further comment about this is made in standard 28.

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 boarders are able to bring their own clothing to school and the rooms have adequate facilities for storage. Boarders own clothing can be worn for breakfast, after school and at weekends.

Toiletries are supplied by the school and there are opportunities for boarders to go out to shops to purchase their own supplies.

The primary school keeps a small amount of pocket money for pupils. Advice was given to review the arrangements and ensure that staff sign when money is taken out. The main school operates a school bank which keeps money on pupils behalf. No concerns were raised by the pupils about its operation. A book to record confiscated items was seen in the boys house and advice was given that the young people sign the record book.

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

All the pupils at the school have a statement of special educational need and one boarder is 'looked after' by the placing authority and has a written placement plan. At the last inspection the school had recently introduced a care plan for each boarder. This system has developed well and received positive feedback from the residential staff. It enables the key worker to sit down individually with boarders at least once a term and discuss how things are going. Simple goals are written and the boarders are actively involved.

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

It was a recommendation at the last inspection that the individual case files of pupils contain all the information as detailed in Standard 18.2. This has been met and there was evidence that work had been undertaken in ensuring that the House files now contain details of sanctions and restraints. Discussions were held with one Head of House regarding the recording of medication and it was agreed that the medication sheets could be added to files on a yearly basis.

Advice is given to ensure that there is uniformity in the content of the House files and that Houses are consistent in the way that all the required information is recorded in files.

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

The school records seen on this inspection were accurate and clear. The Records seen included details of staff working at the school, accident records, menus, duty rotas and the visitors book. A sample of personnel records were seen and are commented on in Standard 27 of this report.

A school register providing information about pupils was not seen on this inspection, but all the necessary information was seen in pupil files.

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

There was evidence that staff are extremely proactive in contacting parents particularly those working with younger boarders. Parents spoken with at the Primary School and those who responded to the confidential questionnaire were positive about the contact with staff.

Boarders are encouraged to maintain contact with their families whilst at the school. Most pupils have mobile phones with texting facilities as well as access to minicom and e-mail facilities.

Parents and family members frequently visit the school and are welcomed by the staff. The school has accommodation which it provides to families on a first come, first served basis.

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

The school only has one boarder who is 'looked after' by Social Services. There are statutory reviews held every 6 months and arrangements will be made at the appropriate time regarding their future.

The school has a separate sixth form complex which is able to provide greater amounts of freedom and responsibility for older pupils. All of the four six form houses have kitchens and there are laundry facilities.

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?**

4

This was a strong area for the school as noted in the inspection report last year, and it has been further strengthened since then. The school has raised the profile of pupil welfare, as there is a new position of Assistant Principal with the brief of pupil support. There has also been a quiet room added to the main school, where pupils can go if they need a break from lessons.

It was evident from the pupil questionnaire and from talking to boarders that the school has a wide range of people that they would feel able to talk to if they had concerns or worries. Individual boarders are given high levels of support if needed and there is a committee which meets half termly to discuss welfare issues.

Both Mary Hare and the Primary School have outside listeners who are independent of the school and who are available to pupils. Since the last inspection, both have received a briefing concerning child protection and one outstanding CRB has been completed.

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?

3

The school has an imposing manor house which contains the administrative offices as well as the girls boarding house. Mansell House is a separate boarding house for boys built in the early 1960's. Howard House has been recently refurbished and provides high quality mixed sex accommodation for first year pupils. There is a modern sixth form centre with 4 separate houses. This again provides high quality accommodation and boarders either share a study bedroom and en-suite bathroom with one other, or are in separate single rooms sharing a separate bathroom with one other. At the primary school, all the accommodation is in the main house.

All the accommodation has the necessary equipment such as induction loops or text facilities on televisions to benefit the pupils.

Security measures are in place and CCTV cameras have been installed externally at the sixth form centre to monitor the area at night.

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**

At the Primary school, all the bedrooms are large and highly individual, with murals on the walls and beds shaped as trains and animals.

In the main school, there are mixed quality levels of accommodation. The newest house, Howard, for the youngest boarders, and the sixth form centre, have the highest quality accommodation, whereas Manor and Mansell House, the lowest. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory and repairs are promptly undertaken. It was noted that some bedrooms were much more homely than others and boarders were uncertain if they had a say in the general décor and furnishings in the boarding houses. Advice is given that all boarders are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms and that they are given opportunities to have a say in the décor and furnishings if they wish.

In Manor House, some of the bedrooms accommodate over 4 pupils to a maximum of 6. This does not meet the standard but the rooms are extremely large and the numbers do not present a problem at present. All rooms were warm and all have desks in them. In the sixth form houses, some of the stair carpets were worn and in need of replacement

Overall, it is recommended that Heads of Houses or a delegated member of staff, walk round the houses once every half term, noting those maintenance issues which are in need of attention.

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**

The school has sufficient baths, showers and toilets to meet boarders needs. There are some en-suite facilities in a number of the houses and all the bedrooms at the primary school have their own bathrooms.

At the last inspection, some boarders expressed concerns about privacy in the showers and action has been taken to address them. It was noted that several of the baths in Manor House were badly stained and these will need to be replaced. There was also a tap in one of the Manor bathrooms which was constantly dripping hot water. All these issues could be picked up at the half termly house inspection mentioned in standard 24.

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 and safety officer and there was evidence that health and safety issues are taken seriously. Fire records seen indicated that there is routine servicing of the fire safety equipment including the fire alarm system and fire extinguishers. There are regular whole school fire drills as well as in individual boarding houses. There are flashing lights as well as alarms when the fire alarm is activated. The fire alarm is connected between the sixth form house and the girls house, Manor. This has long been an issue and it is a recommendation that further work is undertaken as to whether the systems can be separated.

It was noted at the last inspection that door wedges were routinely being used at the Primary School as well as in Manor House. It was a recommendation that the school reviews the use of door wedges. This had been undertaken in Manor house but no written risk assessment was seen at the Primary School. The school needs a fire risk assessment which includes the use of door wedges.

The use of risk assessments has developed regarding activities and are discussed and written at the weekly Heads of House meeting.

The Primary School are now recording the hot water temperatures and advice was given that all the bath outlets are numbered and recorded weekly. It was noted that the surface temperatures of some of the radiators in the Primary School were excessively hot to the touch. The surface temperature should not exceed 43 degrees C or a risk assessment should be undertaken.

The temperature of the fridges in the sixth form houses need to be recorded to ensure that they remain within safe levels.

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

It was a recommendation at the last inspection that there was evidence on personnel files to indicate that all the necessary recruitment checks on staff had been carried out. Improvements were seen in the introduction of a recruitment checklist, which is placed at the front of the file, and records that all the necessary checks have been carried out. The school uses the 5-day check which is satisfactory for a member of staff to start work until a full CRB disclosure is received.

The standard is not fully met as it was found that the two people undertaking monitoring visits at the school had not had CRB checks undertaken. It is important that anyone who is likely to have unsupervised access to pupils have police checks carried out.

It is also necessary to ensure that there is direct contact by the school with each referee to verify a reference. This could be added to the recruitment checklist in place.

Total number of care staff:

27

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

X

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

Staffing levels remain minimal in the main school but are adequate as long as there are no significant behavioural issues within the pupil group. Advice was given in the last inspection report that staffing levels are regularly reviewed, and it was positive to hear that this had happened and that staffing levels have been increased in the sixth form house as a result.

All the Heads of Houses are the same as last year and there is a good stability and consistency within the staff group in the boarding houses. There have been some staffing vacancies in Mansell House over the last year but it is positive that three appointments could be made in quick succession. In the main school there is a good gender balance among the care staff and no use of agency staff. In the Primary School all the care staff are female and it would be positive to have a male member of staff.

At night there are waking night staff and sleeping in staff in all the boarding houses except for Howard House which only has one waking night staff on duty. A risk assessment regarding this has now been carried out.

At the Primary School staffing levels are minimal given the challenging behaviour of some of the children. Since the last inspection, the care staff now have to heat up and serve the evening meal. This occupies one member of care staff at a busy time of day when all staff are needed to be with the children. It is also the case that none of the care staff have had training in food hygiene. It is a recommendation that the use of care staff in this role is reviewed.

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

All staff have an induction programme and there was good evidence of training taking place, both in house and external to the school. Two training days take place at the end of each summer term and last summer included training in child protection, first aid and physical intervention. A number of care staff are undertaking external training courses supported by the school. One Head of House takes the lead in the training of other staff in physical intervention and another in the training of child protection.

At the yearly appraisal, care staff have an opportunity to discuss future training needs.

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**

It was reported at the last inspection that a programme of more formal supervision had just been introduced in the main school and it was a recommendation that there was evidence to show that all care staff receive regular supervision and have an annual appraisal. This has been done and all care staff are now receiving regular formal supervision. The primary school continue to have a well established system in place and it was positive to hear that new care staff receive supervision every two weeks. Advice was given in one house that the night staff should also have formal supervision and to store the supervision minutes in a locked cabinet.

Appraisals have been undertaken on all full time care staff in the last year.

Heads of Houses meet together with the Senior Care Manager on a weekly basis.

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?

2

The senior management team includes an Assistant Principal who is responsible for overseeing the boarding houses and supervising the Heads of House. All the Heads of Houses are part way through the NVQ level 4 award and it is anticipated that all will be completed by 2005.

The school has a well-established system for ensuring care staff are undertaking National Vocational Qualifications. There are only 3 care staff who work days who are not registered on NVQ and they are part time staff who work in Howard House. There continues to be difficulty for the school in night staff completing NVQ's because of the lack of contact time with staff. It is recommended that the school reviews the role of night time care staff to enable NVQ's to be undertaken.

Percentage of care staff (excluding night staff) with Level 3 NVQ – 50%

Percentage of care staff (including night staff) with Level 3 NVQ – 33%

Percentage of care staff (excluding night staff) working towards or have achieved NVQ 3 – 88%

Percentage of care staff (including night staff) working towards or have achieved NVQ 3 – 57%

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

X

%

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

The National Care Standards Commission 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

The Assistant Principal who oversees the boarding houses has been monitoring and signing the required records. It is positive that this now includes the records at the Primary School.

The Principal has carried out a yearly review of the operation of the school's welfare provision for boarding pupils. This has been incorporated into the Annual Report.

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?**

2

Monitoring visits have been undertaken half termly since June 2003 and are still being developed. One of the two monitoring visitors was seen and advice was given regarding the content of the reports and to ensure that they meet this standard. The monitoring person should have access to a copy of the latest NCSC report for reference.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

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 19-23 January 2003 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

Action taken by the NCSC 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

NO

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, 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, Dr. I. Tucker of Mary Hare School 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, Dr. I. Tucker of Mary Hare School 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.