



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Bramfield House School

**Walpole Road
Bramfield
Halesworth
Suffolk
IP19 9AB**

Lead Inspector
Joe Staines

Announced Inspection
19th September 2005 10:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

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

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

Those outcomes are:

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

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

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

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of school Bramfield House School

Address Walpole Road
Bramfield
Halesworth
Suffolk
IP19 9AB

Telephone number 01986 784235

Fax number 01986 784645

Email address bramfieldh@aol.com

Provider Web address

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

Name of Head

Name of Head of Care

**Age range of residential
pupils**

**Date of last welfare
inspection**

Brief Description of the School:

Bramfield House was established as a School in 1970. In 1986 it became approved as a school suitable for the admission of pupils for whom statements are maintained, and has kept this status and remains approved by the Secretary of State under Section 347(1) and (3) of the Education Act 1996.

The School is in the private ownership of Mr and Mrs Anstes, who have a flat on the first floor, and who spend some of their time living on site. Neither of them are involved in the routine running of the School, although more recently, their son Mr M Anstes, has become increasingly involved in the financial / business side of the School's operation. The School is run on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, Deirdre Jennings, supported by senior staff, teachers, and a team of pastoral and ancillary staff.

The School is situated in a rural setting, on the outskirts of Bramfield – a small village in the northern part of Suffolk. The actual location of the School is between the villages of Bramfield and Walpole. The nearest towns are Halesworth, Beccles, and Southwold.

The School premises comprise the main Hall, which includes the boarding accommodation, and a range of separate school buildings used for teaching and recreation. The School is set in 10 acres of grounds used for sports and recreation, and there is also an indoor swimming pool.

At the time of this inspection, a total of 38 boys were on the Roll, and being educated at the School. Of these, 33 were boarders, with a further 5 attending the School on a daytime basis only. The School is open weekdays Monday to Friday, during term times. All boarders returned to their own homes at the weekends, and some boarders also went home for overnight stays, during the school week.

SUMMARY

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

This inspection was undertaken by Joe Staines (Regulation Inspector) and Cecilia McKillop (Regulation Inspector), over 19th & 20th September 2005, and was the annual inspection of welfare arrangements at Bramfield School.

Following previous unsuccessful attempts to undertake a survey of boarders' views via the completion of questionnaires, the lead inspector decided to forego this exercise, and ascertain the views of boarders via individual and group discussion, using the questionnaires as the basis for discussion. The inspectors interviewed 95% of boarders during the inspection, with the remaining 5% choosing not to speak to the inspectors. Feedback was received from 13 parents, 6 placing social workers, the school doctor and 2 external professionals from local authority special needs and psychology departments who worked closely with the school. No adverse comments were made in any of the correspondence received, and a number of positive comments were made, which are referred to later in this report.

The inspection included early morning and evening visits, during which the inspectors observed group meetings, joined boarders in activities, undertook child-guided tours of the boarding accommodation, and the school grounds. Discussion groups were held with members of care staff, interviews with senior members of staff, including the head, and the proprietor's representative. The examination of school procedures and records held in respect of boarders and staff. The head of care was unfortunately unavailable, however, they had left a number of documents relating to the work undertaken since the last inspection.

What the school does well:

The school works well in collaboration with parents and professionals involved with boarders placed at the school, with positive feedback received from parents and professionals alike. Comments from placing authorities included "Bramfield School has a caring response to young people", "One of the greatest strengths of Bramfield School has been the way in which they work with Local Services" and, "I feel the school was able to respond appropriately to students individual needs". Comments from parents questionnaires received included a positive response to the question "please tell us whether you think they (Staff) do a good job"? The responses included descriptions of the quality of job the staff do as, "good", "great", "marvellous", "excellent" and "they

deserve a medal". A number of parents took the opportunity of the questionnaire to thank the staff for the job they do. The school has regular forums, both for staff and boarders to receive feedback about boarder's progress and needs, and to enable boarders to contribute and express their views about the school.

The school provided a warm and homely environment, where boarders have the opportunity to live and study together, in an environment that promoted a sense of belonging by boarders.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has responded to the majority of recommendations made following the last inspection, and has implemented a number of positive developments, including producing care plans and risk assessments for all boarders. The relationships between boarders and care staff were found to have improved since the last inspection, with evidence of staff development and training in responding to negative behaviour.

The school had also implemented some environmental improvements in the privacy provided to boarders when using the school's bathing and toileting facilities and fire safety.

What they could do better:

The school must ensure that risk assessments completed in relation to boarders are signed and dated, to ensure they remain up to date and can be monitored. There is also a need for staff vetting procedures to be applied consistently in relation to all staff. Although it was noted that the school has made some effort in this area, there is still a need to identify and appoint an independent person, who boarders could contact about personal problems or concerns at the school.

The school needs to produce a plan, detailing the measures it intends to take to ensure that at least 80% of care staff achieve the NVQ level 3 in caring for children & young people.

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

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

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted.(NMS 14)
- Children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs.(NMS 15)

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

14 & 15

Boarders and Parents can be confident that the school provides a healthy environment, and one in which the health and intimate care needs of any boarders are identified and promoted. The evidence obtained at this inspection confirmed that boarders, and their parents, could also be confident that the school provides healthy, nutritious meals, in line with the dietary needs and preferences of boarders.

EVIDENCE:

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed, *"Medication is kept in a locked cabinet in an allocated room. Medication is administered by nominated senior staff in the absence of the school Matron. Records are kept of any medication administered. Regular medication, for example Ritalin or Concerta X, is taken to the child while they are having their meal, either breakfast, lunch, or tea".*

The same document also confirmed *"Children have regular dental and optician appointments, although this is becoming problematic, as there is not a National Health Dentist at the practice at present. If a boy needs to see a doctor, an appointment will be made at the local surgery, by the School Matron".*

One of the Inspectors met with the School Matron and examined the storage and record keeping arrangements in respect of medications. These were found to be satisfactory, including appropriate record keeping in respect of the administration of controlled drugs. There was also a range of information leaflets / booklets regarding drugs, smoking, abuse, and sexual health for men.

The Lead Inspector also wrote to the local GP to seek his views on the School. In a letter, he confirmed that he had no reservations about the care and welfare provisions for the boarding pupils at the school, with the boys seeming happy and well looked after.

The Pre inspection Questionnaire confirmed *"Food is fresh and cooked on site. The menu is based around the children's favourite food"*. The School was commended for the catering arrangements, in terms of the variety of menu, and portion sizes, and the informal atmosphere in which meals were served and eaten.

During the inspection, the Inspectors sampled breakfast, lunch, and evening meal. The meals were well prepared, with ample portions, and there were choices including salads, vegetables, and cakes for dessert. Boarders sat together on tables for 5 or 6, with a member of staff supervising. Bearing in mind the needs of children placed at the school, it was impressive how orderly and well managed the meals were, with staff working hard to ensure all children were engaged with. Conversation was encouraged and good table manners were promoted.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 26 & 27

The evidence obtained at this inspection confirmed that boarders, and their parents, could be confident that boarders' privacy is respected at the school, that concerns (including child protection concerns) and complaints are enabled and responded to appropriately. The evidence also indicated that the school works hard to prevent bullying, and respond appropriately if/when bullying becomes an issue for any boarder. The evidence obtained at this inspection confirmed that boarders, and their parents, could also be confident that the school responds appropriately to significant events, such as children going missing, and tries to provide a physically safe environment, where behaviour, both positive and negative, is responded to appropriately.

The schools procedures for the vetting of staff need to be tightened before the relevant standard can be said to be fully met.

EVIDENCE:

The inspectors spoke with over 90 % of boarders, with no adverse comments made regarding privacy. The school had responded to the recommendations made following the last inspection, and changed the procedures for supervising showers. Shampoo and soap was now distributed in small bottles beforehand, rather than being distributed from communal bottles whilst showering was taking place. Locks had been upgraded on bathroom and toilet doors, to prevent tampering. The latest version of the school prospectus also contained detailed guidance for staff on privacy, both in relation to confidential information, and day-to-day issues, such as entering rooms and supervision of showering.

All of the boarders interviewed stated that they were aware of how to make a complaint, and would approach any member of staff if they had reason to complain. There were notices around the school giving information about how to contact external agencies, such as child line, if anyone wished to speak to someone from outside the school about concerns/complaints. The school had produced a leaflet entitled "worried and complaints, If something goes wrong- this leaflet explains what you can do".

The school has a clear child protection procedure, with information included about the procedure for investigating child protection matters, the procedure for selecting staff to work at the school. The head of the school, Mrs Jennings, was the named person responsible for coordinating child protection matters and liaising with other agencies. Child protection training was provided by the school via the local authorities training programme. The pre inspection questionnaire, and responses from placing authorities identified that no child protection enquiries had been instigated in the twelve months preceding this inspection.

The school has produced guidance for staff working in isolation from other staff, which included guidance about summoning assistance if required.

The feedback received from boarders about the levels of bullying at the school was considerably more positive than at the last inspection. Some boarders reported that bullying did sometimes occur, but elaborated by saying that it was less prevalent than previously, and that staff always responded. One boarder stated that verbal bullying did take place, but confirmed that staff challenge this if they are aware of it. Several of the care plans examined by the inspectors included reference to known concerns about bullying, either as perpetrator or victim, and included descriptions of plans to support the child in question. The school had also put a number of posters up about bullying, encouraging young people to report concerns, and giving advice about conflict and friendship. Issues such as bullying were discussed in boys meetings, and The fact that all of the children spoken to by the inspectors stated that they

felt safe in the school evidenced that the school was working well to create a safe environment, despite the fact that the young people placed at the school often had a history of being involved in bullying, either as perpetrator or victim. The head reported that Drama had been added to the curriculum since the last inspection, and plans included using this subject to explore issues around peer relationships.

The school's procedures for children missing without authority were described in the pre inspection questionnaire. They included initial contact with the family and placing authority in cases of a failure to return to school from a weekend break, and procedures in relation to cases of children going missing from the school, including liaising with the police via an agreed protocol.

The School continued to encourage mutually respectful relationships – between boarders, and between boarders and staff. The 4pm meeting, designed to reflect on the events of the day, helped to focus attention on positive points, as well as making mention of things that had not gone so well. Boundaries were in place, and supervision of boarders was such that there were, as far as was possible, staff on hand to anticipate and deflect what could otherwise become significant events or challenging situations. This was particularly noticeable at mealtimes, when each table of pupils included at least a member of staff, keeping a watching brief on table manners, and interactions between pupils sitting together.

Each of the house dormitories also had named pastoral staff who had responsibility for supervising these areas and supporting the boarders sleeping in those rooms. It was clear from the discussion groups that some staff working at Bramfield House are held in high esteem by the boarders, including staff who boarders they felt they could talk to, if they had a worry or concern.

The School operated a Points system, designed to encourage and reward pupils who are able to maintain a reasonable attitude during the day. Additional points could be earned for volunteering with extra chores. Points were deducted for significant misbehaviour and disruptive attitudes. Pocket money was given to pupils, based on a rising scale of points achieved, between 50 and 60 points. There was also a Bonus Pot, which was made up of monies not given to pupils who scored fewer points. The boarders understood the Points system, and they felt it was one way in which they could positively achieve. The whole school meetings, held in the morning before School, and in the afternoon, at the end of the School day, included discussion about points that had been achieved and deducted.

The discussion groups held with inspectors and boarders led to several positive comments about the relationships between boarders and staff. Examples of the comments made were "I like the staff here", "they care", "they are fair" and "you can talk to them (staff)". Previous inspections had highlighted concerns around a member of staff, and the inspectors ensured that this was discussed

with all of the young people who spoke to the inspectors. The feedback was unanimously positive, with young people who had previously identified the member of staff as having a poor relationship with children, stating that their relationship had improved over the last 12 months. The member of staff concerned was also identified as one of the people that a number of boarders would go to if they were upset, or needed support. The head reported that the staff member concerned had benefited from training, and the head reported that she had evidence of the member of staff concerned using new skills in working with young people. This was a positive development that evidenced the efforts made by the school, and the member of staff concerned, in addressing the perception of boarders, where these gave cause for concern.

The school had responded to recommendations made at the last inspection of the school from the fire safety officer, by placing out of date fire safety signs, updating the school's fire safety risk assessment, and purchasing automatic door closures in respect of doors previously wedged open.

The examination of staff files confirmed the statement, made by the head in the pre inspection material, that one member of care staff had started working at the school before their CRB certificate had been returned. This is not in line with the requirements set out in National Minimum Standards 27.2 and a recommendation has been made in respect of this.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

13 & 22

The evidence obtained at this inspection confirmed that boarders, and their parents, could be confident that the school provides good support to children in relation to their educational progress at the school.

The evidence, obtained at this inspection, confirmed that the school provides individualised support to boarders, however, the lack of an independent person whom boarders can contact means that the outcome for this standard was not fully met.

EVIDENCE:

The School had a good programme of activities and real choices could be made. These were decided on at the time of the 4pm meeting, when boys were asked to say what activities they would like to join in, and were given a choice of at least 3 / 4 activities, each night. Some of these activities were based in the School, and some involved trips away. Some offered quieter activity, whilst others offered exercise, noise, and fun. If a boy had received a sanction, his choice of activity might be restricted for a particular evening.

The School was set in extensive grounds with sports pitches, an indoor sports area, and swimming pool. There were areas where boys were allowed to play, unrestricted, and other areas that were designated out of bounds. This inspection took place during the late summer, and it was positive to see a number of boarders enjoying outdoor games, sometimes with staff and sometimes unsupervised. The evening activities were highlighted by a number of boarders as the most positive aspect of the school.

The examination of care plans identified that individualised packages of support were available, based on identified areas of need and support.

The Headteacher and senior team took particular interest in the pastoral care of boarders including those with complex and difficult family situations and backgrounds. This was borne out by the fact that they were prepared to visit these families during school holidays.

In terms of the development of an independent advocacy service for boarders, this remains to be addressed. Previous recommendations have been made for this area of the Schools provision to be developed, but, to date, the School has been unable to find anyone local, who would be willing or suited to take this on. To its credit, the school has identified a number of organisations, such as childline, who boarders can contact independently if they wish to discuss concerns, with numbers displayed around the school. However, the Inspectors felt that it was an important area that needed to be addressed – particularly for boarders who could benefit from the opportunity to talk to someone who was neither connected directly to the School (i.e. a member of staff), or was a member of their own family, or a friend. A repeat recommendation was therefore made, in this regard.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

2, 9, 11 & 17

The evidence obtained at this inspection confirmed that boarders, and their parents, could be confident that the school would encourage and support children in expressing their views about the way the school is run. Likewise, boarders, and their parents, could be confident that relationships between boarders and staff were mutually respectful, and that boarders would have suitable procedures for handling new admissions to the school. The care planning and risk assessment process was improved from the last inspection, but the evidence of this inspection confirmed that further work was needed before the outcome for the relevant standard could be said to be fully met.

EVIDENCE:

When the Inspectors spoke with groups of boys, they did confirm that their views were sought and listened to, and were able to give examples of where things had been changed as a result, including changes to the menu's and bedtimes.

The school continued to have regular boys meetings, and boarders confirmed that these forums gave them an opportunity to contribute to the day-to-day running of the school. These meetings were in addition to the daily meetings and mealtime opportunities to make choices about, for example, which activity they wished to partake in on a given day. In answer to the question 'Are staff

good at letting you know about things that happen with your child'? 12 of the 13 parents who completed a Parents' Questionnaire confirmed a satisfactory Yes.

The School continued to encourage mutually respectful relationships – between boarders, and between boarders and staff. The 4pm meeting, designed to reflect on the events of the day, helped to focus attention on positive points, as well as making mention of things that had not gone so well. Boundaries were in place, and supervision of boarders was such that there were, as far as was possible, staff were on hand to anticipate and deflect what could otherwise become significant events or challenging situations. This was particularly noticeable at mealtimes, when each table of pupils included at least a member of staff, keeping a watching brief on table manners, and interactions between pupils sitting together.

Each of the house dormitories also had named pastoral staff who had responsibility for supervising these areas and supporting the boarders sleeping in those rooms. It was clear from the discussion groups that some staff working at Bramfield House are held in high esteem by the boarders, including staff who boarders they felt they could talk to, if they had a worry or concern.

The School operated a Points system, designed to encourage and reward pupils who are able to maintain a reasonable attitude during the day. Additional points could be earned for volunteering with extra chores. Points were deducted for significant misbehaviour and disruptive attitudes. Pocket money was given to pupils, based on a rising scale of points achieved, between 50 and 60 points. There was also a Bonus Pot, which was made up of monies not given to pupils who scored fewer points. The boarders understood the Points system, and they felt it was one way in which they could positively achieve. The whole school meetings, held in the morning before School, and in the afternoon, at the end of the School day, included discussion about points that had been achieved and deducted.

As mentioned previously, the feedback from boarders regarding their relationships with staff was consistently positive, which was a welcome surprise to the inspectors, who noted concerns raised previously about this area, when inspecting the previous year. It is to the credit of the school that relationships between staff and boarders was so positive, particularly bearing in mind that it would not be unreasonable to expect a lack of trust in adults and carers to be prevalent in the group of boys placed at the school. All 13 of the parents questionnaires received included a positive response to the question "please tell us whether you think they (Staff) do a good job"? The responses included descriptions of the quality of job the staff do as, "good", "great", "marvellous", "excellent" and "they deserve a medal". A number of parents took the opportunity of the questionnaire to thank the staff for the job they do.

Boarders who spoke to the inspectors stated that they spent time with the head and their parents when they first moved to the school, although there was nothing in the way of a formal induction. A recent development was the production of a draft “children’s guide” to the school, which included information useful to new boarders about what they could expect at the school.

The school had responded positively to the recommendation made following the last inspection, by creating care plans in respect of all boarders, except three most recently admitted, which were due to be produced in the near future. The plans seen included information about the most significant aspects of the individual needs of each of the boarders concerned, highlighting areas of concern, and identifying the planned responses to these areas. The plans were related to risk assessments, however these were flawed in that they did not contain the control measures the school had identified to reduce risk to a manageable level. The assessments were also not signed or dated, and a recommendation has been made in respect of this.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children can wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money.(NMS 16)
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.(NMS 21)
- Children live in well designed and pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.(NMS 23)
- Children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.(NMS 24)
- Children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity.(NMS 25)

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

16, 21 & 25

The evidence obtained at this inspection confirmed that boarders, and their parents, could be confident that the boarders at Bramfield school were able to wear their own clothing outside of school time, and were provided with suitably private areas for carrying out their personal care. There was also evidence that the school had suitable provisions for supporting young people in preparing for adult living.

EVIDENCE:

The pupils at Bramfield House do not wear School uniform. A part-time domestic is responsible for washing children's clothes. There is no facility at the School for children to wash their own clothes. Most children prefer to take their clothes home to wash. Children are only resident for a maximum of four nights at any one time".

In practice, boys wore casual clothes, during the school day and during the evening, such as sweatshirts, tee shirts, jeans, and trainers.

The School made it clear in the pre inspection material that young people were not in care at the school, and all boarders either lived with their families, or in other placements, arranged by their placing authorities. However, the school did play an active part in helping young persons towards adulthood and moving on. There was evidence, in boarders' files, of the school helping boarders to secure work placements, and to think about what they might want to do, once they leave. The School had also helped older boarders to develop some independent living skills, by offering, in their last year at the School, the opportunity to live in a semi-independent flat, which consists of two dormitories, and also had a lounge, with facilities to make drinks and hot snacks. The flat was also equipped with it's own television, video and computer game console.

The school had responded to the recommendations, made following the last inspection, by implementing a new system for distributing shampoo, and replacing the locks on bathroom and toilet doors, to ensure they were all working, and could be opened from the outside in the case of emergency.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

1, 18, 19, 28, 31, 33

The evidence obtained at this inspection confirmed that boarders, and their parents, could be confident that the school provided a clear statement of boarding principles, and had appropriate systems in place for maintaining the records of boarders and staff alike.

Boarders and parents can be confident that staffing levels are adequate, however, further work needs to be undertaken by the school in relation to facilitating the attendance of staff on NVQ level 3 training, before the outcome for the relevant standard could be said to be met.

Boarders and parents can be confident that the school is monitored on behalf of the proprietors on a regular basis.

EVIDENCE:

The Inspectors were provided with, and examined, a copy of the School Prospectus 2005/2006, which had been updated since the last inspection. This was a comprehensive document, which described the aims and objectives of the School, and the way in which both the educational and boarding arrangements were carried out. The Prospectus also included key policy documentation, including child protection, control and restraint, bullying, complaints, sanctions and rewards.

The school had acted, following recommendations made in previous reports, by producing a draft boarder's guide, which had been produced following consultation with boarders. The inspectors received positive feedback from one boarder about the document, who informed them he thought it was a good idea. The school may wish to consider a format that enables the document to be regularly updated, without having to be reprinted, for example, when staff changed.

The draft boarders guide included useful information for boarders about accessing their own files. The School continued to maintain a Register of all children, which included the information outlined in the National Minimum Standards. All records requested by the Inspectors were made available during the course of the inspection.

Each full time member of staff was allocated a Dormitory to supervise, and there was a clear shift pattern for pastoral staff, which involved working during the early morning, over lunchtime, and then the longest shift at the end of the School day. Although shifts constructed in this way were quite tiring, the Inspectors acknowledged that the School was not open on Friday evenings or at the weekends, and that staff also benefited from longer breaks in the School holidays. However, there was evidence, obtained by observation of the inspectors on a day when a member of staff had called in sick, that on such occasions, staff were stretched and found it difficult to provide the levels of supervision required at busy times of day, such as the mornings, before classes began. During the inspection, several members of staff identified the influx of 9 new boarders at the beginning of term, several of whom had difficulties associating and integrating with the main group of boarders, as the cause of a significant increase in the workload placed on staff. The staffing complement at the School had increased by one since last year's inspection. This had a positive effect on the arrangements for the supervision of boarders at the School, and had resulted in some good work in areas such as care planning and risk assessing. The owners representative reported in writing that staffing levels had been reviewed, with one extra member of staff employed as a result, and a further review due to take place in a further 12 months.

The staff interviewed by the inspectors confirmed that training in the NVQ level 3 had been the subject of discussion at supervision. The head of care appointed in January 2005, is a qualified NVQ assessor, and the head reported that all staff will be offered the opportunity to take the NVQ, however, no evidence of how far the school has progressed on this was provided, and a recommendation has been made that the school produce an action plan as to how it intends to comply with the levels of NVQ trained staff identified in the National Minimum Standards.

The proprietor's representative produced a written report, following their monitoring visit made to the school in July/August 2005. The report included detailed information as to the areas covered, including the school premises, staffing levels, activities provided outside of class time.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

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

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

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

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

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

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	3
4	3
5	3
6	3
7	3
8	3
10	3
26	3
27	2

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	X
13	4
22	2

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

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

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	X
18	3
19	3
28	X
29	X
30	X
31	2
32	X
33	3

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1	RS17	The school should ensure that risk assessments completed in respect of boarders contain clear control measures the school has identified to reduce or eliminate risk.	31/03/06
2	RS22	The school should identify at least one person, independent of the school and/or the child's placing authority, whom they may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school.	31/03/06
3	RS273	The school should ensure that staff members do not begin work (or residence) until satisfactory completion of all checks and receipt of references.	31/03/06
4	RS31	The school should produce a written action plan, detailing the measures it intends to take, and the timescales involved, to ensure 80% of care staff have completed their level 3 in the caring for Children and Young People.	31/03/06

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