



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

## RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

### **Furness School**

**Roxhill Road  
Hextable  
Swanley  
Kent  
BR8 7RP**

*Lead Inspector*  
Alison Spreadbridge

*Announced Inspection*  
9th February 2006      09:30

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

<b>Reader Information</b>	
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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](http://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](http://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** Furness School

**Address** Roxhill Road  
Hextable  
Swanley  
Kent  
BR8 7RP

**Telephone number** 01322 662937

**Fax number**

**Email address**

**Provider Web address**

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

**Name of Head** Mr Dawson

**Name of Head of Care**

**Age range of residential  
pupils**

**Date of last welfare  
inspection**

## **Brief Description of the School:**

Furness School is a residential /day special school for 72 secondary aged boys experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties maintained by Kent Education Authority. The school is situated in semi-rural surroundings on the outskirts of Swanley, Kent. The buildings are Victorian and were built as a 'Home for little boys' for the children of deprived London families in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1955 Furness school was established to take children with learning disabilities and since 1986 has been a school for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The School is about to undergo some major refurbishment which has necessitated the temporary closure of one of the houses. Its closure will enable the school to move the children more easily around the site while the building works are in progress. Part of the refurbishment program will take place during the summer holidays when the school is closed.

The two boarding houses in use are situated in separate buildings each accommodating up to 14 boys. There is one other house which is used as a base for the day pupils. Each house is equipped with its own lounges dining rooms and kitchen areas, with no more than four boys sharing a room, and the majority of the children in single rooms. The proposed refurbishment will include single rooms with en-suite facilities.

The children have access to large playing fields and a swimming pool in the grounds.

# SUMMARY

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

This was the announced inspection, for the year running from April 1st 2005 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2006. The visit lasted for two days, including evening and early morning visits to the residential units.

The visit was spent talking directly with the pupils privately and collectively, care staff, ancillary staff, Head of Care, The Head teacher and administration staff.

Additional information was obtained through receipt of the children's and relatives' questionnaires, a tour of the premises, and inspecting documentation.

Overall the pupils and families are very satisfied with the services and care the school provides.

It was the view of the inspectors that one of the great strengths of the school was the quality of the relationship between staff and pupils. The relationship between the staff and children is based on mutual respect offering the children clear professional and personal boundaries, which were effective for both the individual and the group.

The management of the pupils behaviour by staff was also regarded as a particular strength. Staff were seen to respond positively to acceptable behaviour, and where the behaviour of the children was regarded as unacceptable by staff, it was responded to by constructive disciplinary measures. The children felt they were treated fairly by staff and valued all the staff were trying to achieve for them.

## **What the school does well:**

Furness school provides a safe, secure and stable environment where pupils are supported and guided on an individual basis from a committed motivated team of teaching and residential staff, who know the children well and can meet their needs.

There are some very comprehensive monitoring systems in place for recording and evaluating behaviour. The behaviour management is particularly well handled by staff. The children responded positively to the behaviour charts and reward systems in place. They have very strong feelings about being placed on level E on the chart, which means some special activity or use of a room in the house is withdrawn until their behaviour improves and they can move onto the next level.

Effective communication between the home and the school ensures that a consistent approach to behaviour management is followed.

Students are supported to achieve their academic potential, whilst also focusing upon the acquisition of the skills needed to prepare them to move on into either the associated college, other external educational establishments or independent living provision.

## **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The schools complaints procedure has been reviewed and improved upon. There have been improvements made to the menus and choice of food offered. The policies and procedures around the administration of medication have improved, as have the risk assessments used in the school.

## **What they could do better:**

The children spoken to were unhappy with the mid day meal provided by the kitchen. They prefer the meals prepared in the home, However on the day of the inspection the meal was sampled by the inspectors and found to be well presented, and was hot on arrival in the houses.

The training matrix needs to be developed to ensure detailed information on what training has been conducted; when training is due; and identifying ongoing training in line with staff development.

There are good systems in place for health and safety including an appointed health and safety officer and the maintenance manager. There was some question as to the level of communication between the health and safety officer, the maintenance manager and the managers of the houses as some of the regular testing of the fire equipment was being overlooked.

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](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk) or by contacting your local CSCI office.



# **DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS**

## **CONTENTS**

Being Healthy

Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

Scoring of Outcomes

Recommended Actions identified during the inspection

# 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

The children are well cared for and supported with their health and welfare needs.

### EVIDENCE:

The school houses are comfortable and warm providing separate dining rooms and sitting areas with a television and video. The children have access to computers, games, and the snooker tables within the house. They also have access to outside activities and the use of the school playing fields.

One of the houses has a slight damp problem which the home's manager said would be rectified as part of the refurbishment program.

The school offers a person centred approach to care planning and education. It involves the children with individual support to ensure they achieve their goals and targets in the house and in the school. A contact book is used to ensure both home and school are aware of any significant changes.

All medication was kept securely and the outcomes from the pharmaceutical inspection have been implemented, care needs to be taken that consent forms from parents are fully completed and dated.

The children said they liked the evening meals cooked for them by the domestic staff in the houses. One of the boarding houses has chosen to follow a set two week evening menu while the other house likes to choose the meals on a more ad hoc basis. The children were not so happy with the lunchtime menu which is cooked in the main kitchens and brought to the houses by heated trolley. No records were seen showing the food was being probed on its arrival in the houses. It was noted during the inspection that the trolley doors quite often came open as they were being transported across the

courtyard to the houses from the kitchen. The children are well managed before and throughout the meal times.

# 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 school's robust policies and procedures ensure that the safety of pupils is maintained. The sound recruitment practices ensure that all adults entering the school are properly vetted.

## EVIDENCE:

The children's privacy is respected and all information about them is kept securely. The children and their parent or responsible person are encouraged to take an active role in their care planning.

The children spoken to were aware of the schools complaints procedures, and said they were happy to discuss any problems with the homes care staff. It was noted that the majority of children who responded to the questionnaire

identified bullying as an issue. This issue was discussed with the head of care and care staff who said they had recently had a focused week on bullying and therefore the children were more aware of the issue. On speaking with the children again it became clear that their main concerns were centred on a particular pupil and this information was shared with the head of care.

The school has sound policies and procedures in place to ensure the children are protected from abuse and any concerns are investigated thoroughly. Staff files have been reorganised, all staff have now been CRB checked, and a more robust recruitment system is in place.

The school operates an effective support team who will pick up any children who leave the classroom during lessons or try to absent themselves from the school grounds.

All significant events occurring in the home and in school are notified to the Head-teacher and fully recorded.

It was noted during the inspection that the water in the bathroom was excessively hot and needed to be regulated to ensure a child was not scalded.

The home's maintenance manager and the health and safety officer have divided their work and some duties have also been assigned to the home's manager. Upon inspection it was noted that the fire system checks did not include the call points in the houses. Staff said there had been an issue with the children setting off the alarm, and when testing the call points it was difficult to isolate them on the main panel. These issues were discussed with the maintenance manager and it was suggested the system could be checked on a Friday after the children have left the school for the weekend.

# 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):

12, 13, 22

The children are given ample opportunities to enjoy activities both within the school and the local community.

### EVIDENCE:

The children are encouraged to make progress in both their education in school and to enjoy leisure activities both in the house and the local community. Contact books are used to ensure staff are aware of any issues either at home or in school.

The children are encouraged to do their homework each evening, using the dining room.

On the evening of the inspection a group of young people had attended an after school club doing a pottery session, which they had all enjoyed. Following the evening meal, one house was going off to the local leisure centre to swim. The other house had a diverse evening planned, some of the boys were going to the local Army cadets, while others planned to have a video evening at home.

# 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, 20

The school encourages the children and their families to make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

## EVIDENCE:

The children have the opportunity to make decisions about their lives and influence the way the school is run. Regular house meetings and participating in the school forum enable the children to make their views known. Parents also have the opportunity through questionnaires to share their views with the school.

The interaction between children and staff throughout the inspection confirmed the positive relationship they have, which is a particular strength of the school.

The school has a dedicated member of staff who assists the children to access further education when they are ready to leave the school. He also assists the children to find work experience where appropriate. During the inspection one of the children we spoke to was waiting to be taken to an interview at a college near his home. Staff were heard to be very supportive with him and reassuring him that they would be there in support.

Each child in the school was subject to a Statement of Special educational need. They are assessed prior to moving into the school and participate in the writing of their action plan. Each child is provided with a link worker who acts as their liaison between their families, school and for any formal reviews. The link worker will ensure the child's action plan is reviewed quarterly.

The responses to the questionnaire to parents indicate they are very satisfied with the care their children receive while in school and said how welcoming the staff were when they visited the school for any reason.



# 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, 23, 24, 25

The children are supported by the staff to enjoy as much home life as possible.

## EVIDENCE:

There are areas in the houses and in the school which are need of improvement however, the school is just about to embark of a major refurbishment which will improve both the accommodation in the houses and the school facilities.

The children are resident in the school from Monday to Friday and bring their own clothes to wear after school. Each child has their own storage facilities in their rooms.

Each house has a block of communal showers and toilets which are close to the bedrooms. The staff ensure the children access the facilities one at a time to promote privacy.

The children are provided with pocket money from home. It was noted during the inspection that a number of children have very little money to spend and some have small sums for specific activities or to pay for items made in school. The house budget provide for outside activities such as visits

To the cinema and local leisure centres is quite small and should be reviewed.

The houses are in need of some refurbishment and this work will be undertaken as part of the major refurbishment planned for the site this year.

# 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, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33

The school is managed in a very professional and caring way offering the children a secure and caring environment in which to learn.

## EVIDENCE:

The head teacher and his staff ensure the school is managed in a very professional and caring way ensuring the children's experience of the school and care is a positive one. The school's statement of purpose has been amended in the last year to clear state the school's care principles and practices. The young person's guide has still to be reviewed allowing those children with less reading skills access to information.

An open day including a history enactment is planned for July. The refurbishment plans for the site will include a garden and orchard which will

have older species of plants, shrubs and trees following on from the long history of the school.

The children's files are reviewed on a regular basis however they would benefit from an indexing system which would aid their use.

Staff said they are offered regular training and a training matrix would assist the school in evidencing the training they have provided and highlight individual training needs. Staff supervision is being reviewed and beginning to take place in a more formalised way.

The LEA 's Children's Officer visits the school half-termly. The inspectors were able to speak with one of the Governors who involves herself in regular visits to the residential part of the school. The inspectors recommended that perhaps the LEA's Children's Officer might be invited to a Governor's meeting perhaps on a termly basis.

# 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

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

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

<b>ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>12</b>	3
<b>13</b>	3
<b>22</b>	3

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

<b>ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>16</b>	3
<b>21</b>	3
<b>23</b>	3
<b>24</b>	2
<b>25</b>	3

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

No

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

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

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

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