



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

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

Wennington Hall School

Lodge Lane
Wennington
Lancaster
Lancashire
LA2 8NS

4, 5 & 6th November 2003

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

Wennington Hall School

Address

Lodge Lane, Wennington, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA2 8NS

Tel No:

015242 21333

Fax No:

015242 22140

Email Address:

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

Lancashire County Council

Name of Head

Mr J Prendergast

NCSC Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Residential Special
School

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

17.09.03

Date of Inspection Visit	4, 5 & 6 November 2003		ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit	10:00 am		
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Mr Stephen Trainor	077468
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	Mrs Felicity Lacey (Part)	
Name of NCSC Inspector	3	Mrs Monica Farrimond	
Name of NCSC Inspector	4	Mr Ian Jeavons	
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):	Mr Simon Hill (Pharmacy)		
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.	N/A		
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)	N/A		
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection	Headmaster Mr Prendergast Head of Care Mr Carroll		

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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 Wennington Hall School

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

The report will show the following:

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

INSPECTION VISITS

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

THE REPORT REPRESENTS THE INSPECTOR'S FINDINGS FROM THE EVIDENCE FOUND AT THE SPECIFIED INSPECTION DATES. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

The Lancashire Education Authority administers Wennington Hall School. The School provides an environment that can support up to 70 boys of secondary school age on a residential or day basis. The young boys using the services provided at the School have experienced some difficulties associated with their academic, social, emotional and/or behaviour development which would make normal schooling inappropriate for them. At the time of the inspection information provided to the Inspection Team highlighted that there were 40 young boys who were experiencing a residential placement. The School provides a 38-week programme of education with residents in the main spending every weekend at home or with their carers.

The School's combined prospectus and parents handbook accurately describes the purpose and function of the School clearly outlining aims and objectives, philosophy of care and response to education, which is regarded as the foundation stone to each pupil's future. The Inspection Team's findings, as reported within this report, clearly indicate that a coordinated response continues to be taken when responding to the needs of pupils.

Staff are supported by well thought out policies and procedures that continue to be developed through ongoing review. The Policies and procedures are to a high standard when viewed against the specific requirements of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Schools. Staff and management demonstrated a comprehensive awareness of policy and procedures during interviews. Practice observed was to an exceptionally high standard enabling a high quality school and residential experience to be gained by each pupil. The School's practice is underpinned by terms of reference referring to 'accepting the challenge' and 'pride in performance'. This is clearly being achieved when relating to the positive feedback provided by pupils, staff and the parents of the pupils and staff. The contracts that pupils, parents and the staff sign are obviously working.

The School is located, internally designed and of a size and layout that is in keeping with its Statement of Purpose. The boarding provision comprises of 5 separate boarding houses that are organised in a way that successfully creates an environment that is most helpful to each child's development. Each boarding house provides accommodation for small groups of children, providing well-designed and pleasant premises with sufficient space and an excellent range of facilities to meet each pupil's needs. Pupils' boarding houses are sensibly separated by age to enable appropriate levels of staff support to be provided during the key times of the School "working day". Three boarding houses are located in the main School building whilst the other two are situated close by in the School grounds.

The inspection methodology used for this second inspection by the National Care Standards Commission builds on the previous inspections carried out by the same team of inspectors.

This enabled all aspects of the School's practice, management and organisation to be scrutinised. The School's Headmaster fully cooperated with the Inspection Team throughout the course of the inspection. The Headmaster, senior management and administrative staff were particularly instrumental during the pre-inspection fieldwork activity in gaining the views of as many people as possible to contribute to the inspection.

The findings of this inspection report are testimony to the hard work and the continuing efforts of staff, management and the pupils in making Wennington Hall a centre of excellence.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The School's management, organisation and responsive practice were found to be capable of providing an exceptionally high quality and level of service for each pupil at the School. The collective view of the inspection team was that the School was clearly fulfilling its statutory obligations in a constructive and positive manner.

In acknowledging the extremely positive findings that were reported on during the last inspection, the Inspection Team were pleased that further improvements had been made. Continuous improvements have meant that many of the Standards for Residential Special Schools have been exceeded. All Standards that are marked as being exceeded have been assessed using full inspection methodologies ahead of a 'commendable' score being awarded. The Inspection Team recognises that in part this has been achieved through the clear management philosophy captured in the School's detailed development plan. A very settled team of highly motivated staff have brought a great deal of continuity to the lives of the pupils. Management's response to recruitment, selection and retention of staff as well as the support being provided through induction, supervision, access to training and personal development were all found to be managed efficiently and contributed to the very positive findings of this inspection. The working relationships between all levels of staff were viewed to be extremely positive by the Inspection Team. Joint working arrangements between education and social welfare staff are complimented.

Many positive comments were received by the NCSC from a variety of individuals and departments that support the School. Requests for information made to Area Child Protection Team, Police, Fire and Rescue, General Practitioner and Lancashire Education, Education Welfare Officers, Connexions Team, and Youth Offending Teams all provided positive comments on the staff and management's ability to provide individualised support to the pupils. Each Department that responded stated that they had no significant concerns about the School or the manner in which the School operated. The comments provided by all respondents provides suitable evidence to indicate the School is being managed and organised efficiently

The Inspection Team received many positive comments from pupils' parents via questionnaires, which were distributed to parents by the School on the behalf of the National Care Standards Commission. The comments made by 18 parents provided positive comments on many areas to support inspection observations. It is evident that communication is effective between the School and parents with the vast majority of parents indicating that staff are good at letting them know about things that happen to their sons. Written information developed by the School for parents is particularly informative on matters such as care and control, sanctions, complaints.

The following comments were made by parents and are felt to be noteworthy of inclusion within this report:

- 'Excellent communication from the School regarding my son's Progress'.
- 'I am very grateful for the School for helping my son. He now loves going to School – before he hated to go. He is a much happier boy'.
- 'My son is extremely happy at Wennington Hall. His behavioural problems have shown great improvements since he started in September this year'.
- 'I have the utmost admiration for the teachers and the staff at Wennington. They deal with situations very professionally and always inform me of any problems'.

The residential pupils also returned 18 questionnaires to the Inspection Team. Comments were extremely positive with pupils stating views and opinions on matters such as bullying, complaints, punishments, and physical intervention. From the comments that were made the pupils clearly indicate that the School is operated fairly and that they are aware of School rules. Many forms of evidence are available to indicate that consultation with the pupils is taking place

From observations and from further discussions with the pupils it was evident that staff have the skills and ability to operate a safe whole School environment. This is not to say that problems do not occur relating to behaviour or care and control matters. Risk assessments support staff practice, which was found to be suitable in setting and maintaining appropriate professional and personal boundaries. School records are produced to a professional standard and were found to provide a factually accurate account of the events of any particular day. Recording systems are advanced and are maintained in both hard copies and within computerised records. Records produced can be accessed easily and are easy to cross-reference.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

This inspection report contains a small number of minor advisory recommendations that will ultimately lead to further improvements to the School's policies, procedures and practice. The advisory recommendations do not amount to any significant shortfalls within the School's operation.

The minor advisory comments that are made relate to the following Standards:

- **Statement of the School's Purpose:** Policy and procedural guidance is required on case recording and access to records. (Appendix 3 policy 5)
- **Health and Intimate Care:** A specialist Pharmacy Inspector joined the Inspection Team. Specific comments made by this Inspector should be viewed to develop established practices at the School further. This Standard was marked as being met.
- **General School Records:** Personnel files need to contain evidence of enhanced CRB clearance checks being obtained for all staff. This issue is being addressed by Lancashire Education Authority and is outside the control of the School.
- **Staffing Arrangements:** By 2005, a minimum ratio of care staff needs to have completed their level 3 NVQ, Caring for Children and Young People. (Or equivalent)
- **Monitoring on Behalf of the Person Carrying on the School:** Visits need to be at least once every half term.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

The inspection was conducted with the full co-operation of the Headmaster, staff and pupils throughout the course of the inspection. In total the Inspection Team interviewed 20 staff members and received completed questionnaires from 18 Parents, 18 Pupils & 11 Staff. 5 questionnaires were returned from visiting professionals. Comments provided were all positive relating to satisfaction with how the School operates.

The School's prospectus outlines the aims of Wennington Hall as being:

- To allow each individual to fulfil his own potential in an environment appropriate to his special education needs.
- To help each individual learn to live and work as a member of a multi-cultural society accepting its discipline and responsibilities, and respecting the rights and needs of others.
- To provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which encourages every pupil to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding relevant to adult life, the world of work and leisure.

From observations made by the Inspection Team during this particular visit it is evident that this is being achieved. The performance of the staff group and the management of the School in providing a "holistic" response to individuals needs should be commended.

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	
		“There are no actions required to be taken by the School’s Headmaster under this section”	

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

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

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	RS1	Statement of the School’s Purpose. NMS 1.6 The School has in place all but one of the policies and procedural guidance as outlined within Appendix 3. The School has requested a written response from Lancashire Education Authority relating to Appendix 3, policy number 5, case recordings and access to records.

2	RS14	<p>Health and Intimate Care. Further and ongoing developments are to take place to ensure that every pupil has a suitably detailed health plan or similar document containing all the relevant information that is outlined within this Standard.</p> <p>The following advisory recommendations are made by the specialist Pharmacy Inspector who accompanied the Inspection Team: All these issues were discussed at the time of the visit. Additional notes provided by the Pharmacy Inspector, attached to this report, provide the context for the following comments.</p> <p>Storing and administration of medicines. The storage conditions for Controlled Drugs need to be re-assessed to ensure that they are secure at all times.</p> <p>Record keeping for the administration of controlled drugs needs to be re-assessed to produce accurate records i.e. correct strength, dose and form. A new bound register would be ideal for this purpose.</p> <p>The secondary dispensing of medication into unlabelled containers should stop immediately.</p> <p>The School should try to negotiate with parents to only send correctly labelled medication into the School (RSS 14.17).</p> <p>Self-administration of medication. Pupils should be formally risk assessed to ascertain their ability to administer their own medication. This should be fully documented (RSS 14.19).</p>
3	RS19	<p>General School Records. NMS 19.2. The Headmaster is to apply for CRB enhanced clearance checks for all staff through Lancashire Education Authority.</p>
4	RS31	<p>Staffing Arrangements. NMS 31.4 The Headmaster is aware of the requirements of this Standard which states that by 2005, a minimum ratio of 80% of care staff have completed their level 3 in Caring for Children and Young people or have qualifications which demonstrate the same competencies as the NVQ. The training strategy for staff at the School is working towards achieving this.</p>
5	RS33	<p>Monitoring on Behalf of the Person Carrying on the School. The frequency of these visits needs to be increased to once every half term. The majority of these visits need to be carried out unannounced.</p>
		<p>“The Registered Person must provide an action plan dealing with how and when advisory recommendations numbered 1 – 5 will be met”</p>

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

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS**

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

Direct Observation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Accommodation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	YES

Checks with other Organisations

• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	NA
• 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	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	YES
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	04/11/03
Time of Inspection	09:30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	80
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) |

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

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

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

STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The School has a written combined Prospectus and Parent Handbook (Statement of Purpose), which accurately describes what the School sets out to do for those children that it accommodates, and the manner in which those services are to be provided. The document is regularly reviewed and is regularly ratified by the School's Governing body. From observations it is clear that the pupils assessed range of needs can be met by the School (NMS 1.5). The Heads self-assessment form recognises that further improvements and developments could be made to increase flexibility with some of the School's provision.

Throughout the course of the inspection there were many examples to illustrate that pupils' parents, staff and placing authorities were clear of the School's care principles and practice for boarding pupils. The combined Prospectus and Parent Handbook is provided for all parents/social workers/carers during pupil's initial introduction. The School has developed its range of policies to reflect practice considerations. The detailed information contained within both policy and procedures was found to be understood by staff members and was clearly being applied in practice. Staff perform consistently supported by these policies. The professional response taken by all staff members at the School in pursuance of their duties is complimented.

The School has completed a self-audit against the policies to be accessible to staff as outlined within Appendix 3 of the National Minimum Standards for Special Residential Schools. A policy is to be produced by Lancashire Education Authority relating to Case Recordings and access to records (Policy No. 5 pages 66 - 67)

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
<p>There was clear evidence of the value that the School places on effective communication with pupils, parents, placing officers and social workers. Children's opinions are being sought over the key decisions that are likely to affect their daily life and their future (NMS 2.1). The efforts made by the School's staff, in particular administrative staff, to support the Commission in the administration of survey questionnaires provided clear evidence of the effectiveness of consultation processes at the School.</p>		
<p>The Inspection Team is satisfied that the School staff seek to build routine working relationships with parents and other professionals involved in the lives of the pupils. Staff's practice is to consult with children and their parents on a regular basis (NMS 2.1). Reports are produced on the pupils' achievements on both an academic and social level. Reports are also produced for statutory reviews. A key worker system ensures that there are suitable levels of communication between pupils parents, staff and when appropriate social workers. Phone contact is routinely made to discuss progress and problems.</p>		
<p>The School operates a boy's council that has elected members from each school year. Weekly house meetings also take place, which provide additional opportunities for the pupils to contribute their views and opinions. There is good evidence recorded within the minutes of these meeting to indicate that effective consultation is taking place. Pupils are genuinely involved in the management of their respective boarding houses.</p>		
<p>The School has an 'open door' policy for parents who wish to visit. Parents stated that they were encouraged to visit and were made welcome at the School. Parents are invited to the School for sports days and for Christmas carol concerts. The Wennington Chronicle, a small newspaper produced by the pupils and staff also provides a useful source of information on relevant issues that affect the School and the pupils.</p>		

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)

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

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

The inspection highlighted issues of privacy and confidentiality that are acknowledged as important both in written procedures and in practice. The School's general philosophy would be similar to that of any good parent, i.e. respecting a child's wish for privacy. Staff supervision of pupils is managed well, balancing the need to ensure wellbeing and safety but without appearing intrusive (NMS 3.9). The excellent design and the layout of the boarding houses and in particular bathing and toilet facilities establish suitable levels of privacy for all pupils. Continuing refurbishment plans will provide improved lockable facilities within bedroom areas for pupils to keep their possessions.

The School adheres to the LEA policy on confidentiality. Staff deal with information about pupils in a professional and respectful manner. All records are kept safe and secure within lockable cabinets within lockable office areas. Only those that have a right to access children's case files will be shown their contents. Individual case file contents remain confidential (NMS 3.3). Staff guidance is available relating to the times when it may be necessary to search pupils' possessions. Recording systems established at the School will provide a suitably detailed record when searches are undertaken.

The Inspection Team was satisfied that staff know how to respond to child protection matters and in particular how to deal with and share information as part of the multidisciplinary/multi agency response to any such matters. No false promises of confidentiality are made. A safe system is operated at the School by the senior management team for storing information relating to child protection matters.

The pupils can make and receive telephone calls in private. They have access to a pay phone as well as access to house telephones and personal mobiles. There are some sensible restrictions on the times that these phones can be used. The pupils did not indicate any problems with calls being overheard. Staff demonstrated an awareness of the need for vigilance when restricted contact arrangements are in place for any pupils. The pupils also have access to 'E' mail with suitable 'net nanny' safeguards to prevent access to unsuitable sites.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The School is linked to the LEA complaints procedure, which should ensure that the policies operated at the School on considering and responding to complaints and representations are in accordance with legal requirements and relevant government guidance (NMS 4.3). Mr Carroll is the nominated complaints officer at the School.

Some additions have been made to the School's complaints procedures to ensure that it fully complies with this Standard. The pupils and their parents have been informed about the role of the NCSC with regard to making a direct complaint if they select to do so. Complaints procedures have been publicised more widely following previous advisory recommendations. Questionnaires returned to the Inspection Team confirmed that pupils' as well as their parents know how to form a complaint. It was encouraging to find that 16 out of 18 pupils who returned survey questionnaires felt that they knew how to complain. It was not possible to identify the reasons why 2 pupils indicated that they were unaware of the complaints procedure. Written information being provided and discussed is suitable to inform all on the actions to take relating to complaints. Pupils have an awareness of the role that is provided by Mr Carroll, the designated Complaints Officer. It is also encouraging to note that pupils are confident to approach 'house staff', teaching staff and the Headmaster with their complaints, grumbles or suggestions. The Boy's Council affords a suitable means of addressing some matters relating to complaints.

The School's management are aware of the need to notify the NCSC of any serious complaints.

The Inspection Team observed a small leaflet within the boarding houses that provides the pupils with an outline of who to contact if they wish to make a complaint. Staff need to ensure that contact telephone numbers are displayed within this leaflet. Notice boards around the School are also used to, amongst other things publicise complaints procedures.

The Inspection Team was informed that there were no outstanding or ongoing complaints at the time of the visit (NMS 4.9). The complaint referred to below was investigated as a child protection matter.

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

1

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

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?

4

The School follows Lancashire County Council's Child Protection Policy and Procedures. A copy of the Council's procedures was evident in the School. Additionally the School has a child protection policy which is consistent with the county guidance, offering staff, parents and professionals clear guidance on managing potential child protection issues appropriately. This guidance has been updated to include information to cover point 10 of Appendix 1 which outlines the need to inform both staff and pupils of the contact details of the National Care Standards Commission if they wish to raise any concerns they have about practices in the School which put children at risk. Appropriate inter-agency protocols have been developed by the School in dealing with and discussing issues of a child protection nature (NMS 5.9). The Commission's contact with the local Area Child Protection Team revealed that the School reports and responds to child protection matters appropriately.

Mike Carroll is the School's nominated child protection officer who retains overall responsibility for child protection. A School governor has some responsibility for the oversight of child protection matters by providing a monitoring role that supports Mr Carroll. Regular checks are undertaken by this governor of the School's records and response to matters that could be construed as a child protection matter. An important part of the governor's role is to monitor school records on physical intervention to ensure that a suitable outcome has been achieved. The checks ensure that recordings are to a professional standard and can be cross-referenced with other records that need to be maintained by the School. The School has introduced a 'sophisticated' yet highly practical and workable computerised system that is capable of producing statistical information on amongst other things child protection matters. The ability to cross-reference all records means that patterns or behaviours can be identified and responded to.

The child protection policy and procedures are an integrated part of each staff member's Induction programme. Staff at all levels were found to have a good understanding of child protection and demonstrated that they could take an appropriate response if the occasion arose. There is evidence that staff are being provided with ongoing training in respect of child protection. Training is also provided for domestic and catering staff.

The Inspection Team discussed and viewed records appertaining to incidents that had occurred during the past 12-month period. The School maintains detailed written accounts of the actions and investigation undertaken relating to 5 child protection issues. There were no outstanding matters or incidents being investigated at the time of the visit. The main consideration remains for the welfare of the pupils to be protected.

The figure presented below represents 4 issues related to the pupil's home environment and one stemming from a complaint made by a pupil whilst at the School. The incident has been investigated.

Number of recorded child protection enquiries initiated by the social services department during the past 12 months:	5
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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
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The School has and follows an appropriate policy on countering bullying. Anti bullying strategies are at the forefront of staff practice. Staff remain vigilant at all times to the possibility of pupils being bullied. There is good evidence to suggest that anti-bullying remains active and live at all times. Many pupils stated that they were confident that staff would respond quickly to any known bullying and in general felt that staff ensured that they are safe whilst at the School.

The School has recently introduced the notion of 'focus groups' to discuss amongst other things bullying. Senior staff with oversight from the Headmaster are providing additional direction for those that are perceived to or are know to bully. Support provided for the victims of the bullying is also provided. Pupil self-reflection during these focus group sessions should lead to changes in behaviour. The anti-bullying efforts were reported to have had a great deal of success by both staff and a small number of pupils.

The School was also found to be carrying out and recording risk assessments of the times, places and the circumstances in which the risk of bullying is the greatest. This is clearly evident in the manner in which the grounds of the School have been split into safe zones for the different ages of pupils. Suitable levels of staff supervision are afforded where there is a greater risk of bullying occurring. This system is known by the pupils and ensures that staff can monitor those groups of pupils requiring closer supervision.

Bullying is also being covered as part of citizenship, which forms a major part of PSHE run at the School.

The 'Welcome to Wennington Hall School' booklet provides guidance to the pupils on what action to take if they become bullied. The booklet read 'bullying does happen, but if staff know, they can do something about it. Don't be a bully, if you get bullied don't hit back, TELL. The Pupils are advised on the many forms of bullying and have information to support them on what action to take if they are being bullied.

Questionnaires returned by 18 pupils indicated the following response to the question 'are

you being bullied at the School at the Moment'? (The above score was mindful of these responses)

- Yes most of the time 3
- Yes often 4
- Sometimes 4
- Hardly ever 4
- Not at all 3

Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied

38 %

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?

4

The Headmaster and the Head of Care are aware of their responsibilities in making appropriate notifications to DFES, placing authorities and the LEA. Developments to existing systems in place now mean that the National Care Standards Commission is included within this reporting system. The Commission has received suitably detailed notifications on child protection matters and a 'serious' accident prior to this inspection. These issues were discussed in detail during this inspection. The School has dealt with all matters efficiently.

The Headmaster would record actions and contacts made in response to any given circumstance. A central log is presently used within the School to establish basic details of any incidents. This log would be supported with a separate incident report that would provide details of the action taken and the outcome of any action or investigation taken. The School also maintains computerised records.

The School has a standard letter to notify parents of any accidents or issues affecting their children. Case files observed and reports from parents would serve as a good indicator that the system is effective in practice (NMS 7.7). The present members of the School's administration support staff are capable and competent to ensure that parents of the pupils are promptly informed.

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?	4
<p>The School has a written policy available to staff on the action to take if a pupil's whereabouts cannot be identified. Staff are clear on the action to be taken when a child goes missing from the School. Staff members provided a consistent response to questions posed in interviews relating to searching, reporting, the collection and return of a missing pupil and the action to be taken on the child's return (NMS 8.3).</p> <p>Staff's practice is clear in that all efforts are made to reduce the opportunities for young people to go missing from the School without permission. This is primarily achieved through making the School an exciting and interesting place for the pupils to be. From discussions with staff it is also clear that the pupils are benefiting from general strategies to modify behaviour, which is resulting in good attendance. Contacts entered into between the pupil, parents and the School have had a good deal of success.</p> <p>Staff are aware that pupils new to the School can become homesick and afford additional support when they join. Discussions with some of the younger pupils confirmed that staff practice had been supportive when they initially arrived at the School in allowing them to settle quickly. Parents commented positively via questionnaires that the induction provided for their sons was good in allowing their sons to settle into Wennington School quickly. One parent commented that the induction process followed by staff allowed their sons to feel valued straight away.</p> <p>Support being provided through PSHE with Citizenship programmes also encourages pupils to take responsibility for themselves as well as encouraging open discussion. Programmes run by staff at the School relating to PSHE and Citizenship are highly developed and are being implemented effectively in practice. The above issues are highlighted as part of the 'whole School philosophy of care' that makes the School an interesting and exciting place where the pupils genuinely like to be.</p> <p>The School provided the following breakdown of the reported number of incidents of a child running away from the School over the past 12 months. This is felt to be a good achievement when considering the purpose and function of the School. There were no indications that staff exceeds the measures that they may properly take to prevent a child from leaving without permission under current legislation and government guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 incidents of pupils absconding involving 14 Pupils. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 incident involving 5 Pupils 1 incident involving 4 Pupils 2 incidents involving 2 Pupils 3 incidents involving 1 Pupil • 11 pupils have absconded once. • 2 pupils had absconded twice. <p>1 pupil had been reported as missing on 3 separate occasions.</p>		
Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:		14

CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect.

Children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff response to inappropriate behaviour.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

The enthusiasm and commitment of the staff at the School in wanting to provide a high quality service for pupils was noted as one of the main contributory factors in establishing positive relationships between all levels of staff and the pupils. Staff's efforts are complimented in going that 'extra mile' in supporting pupils.

Throughout the inspection, the observed contact and communication between staff and pupils was extremely positive (NMS 9.7). The different roles provided by both education and social welfare staff were indistinguishable with both groups of staff providing a coordinated response to the welfare and educational needs of the pupils. Mutually supportive relationships have been established across education and social welfare disciplines. The benefits of this for the pupils on a daily basis are manifold and were clearly evident to the Inspection Team during the time spent at the School. The behaviour of the young men throughout the course of the visit was exemplary. The pupils looked to be very relaxed within their surroundings.

Behaviour management including care and control are managed extremely well. Routines are known, expectations of behaviour are clear. There are frequent opportunities presented to the pupils to negotiate with staff in order to amend or adjust programmes. All reasonable requests appear to be considered by the staff group whilst retaining appropriate control of the groups of pupils at the school. The systems in place clearly demonstrate a commitment to protecting and promoting individuals welfare interests. Forms of consultation observed include, key worker discussions, staff informal discussions, group briefings, role calls, assemblies and frequent question and answer sessions between pupils and staff. Pupils have been provided with suitable written guidance, which is constantly being reinforced through staff practice and discussion. Induction of new pupils forms the first response to pupils becoming aware of the School's expectations.

The deployment of staff within the School facilitates continuity of staff providing care and education to individual children. A good balance has been achieved between the individual needs of pupils and the group needs of 40+ boarding pupils to ensure that the group as a whole remains manageable at all times.

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?

4

Staff are encouraged to work with pupils in a positive and calm way and are being supported through appropriate and ongoing training. All staff have received training in physical intervention (Team Teach) and are regularly provided with updates on training. Most aspects of Team Teach training extend to ancillary and catering staff. The appropriateness of physical intervention training is recognised and the permitted techniques to be used are known by staff. The School's staff induction procedures generates a record to show that all staff have read, show a good understanding of and have signed a copy of the School's policies on measures of control, discipline and physical intervention (Standard 10.19).

Staff were observed responding to unacceptable behaviour in a constructive manner by methods agreed by the Head of Care and the Headmaster as outlined within policy statements. The Headmaster demonstrated a clear oversight of current recording arrangements and of the management of significant events. Suitably detailed computerised and hard records are being maintained relating to sanctions, care and control and behaviour management being used at the School. Records observed were found to be factually accurate and to a professional standard that could easily be cross-referenced with other School records. A series of exercises undertaken by the Inspection Team confirmed that a conclusion or a satisfactory outcome statement was produced on all measures of control, discipline or physical intervention. The Inspection Team were left in no doubt that only permitted sanctions and methods of control are being used.

One quality assurance measure sees a School Governor regularly monitoring the School's records ensuring that staff's actions and interventions are appropriate. The scope of the Governor's role allows all aspects of practice to be questioned. The role provided by the School Governor can also be used to consider whether there are any child protection issues to be reported.

Part of the response to control, disciplinary and physical intervention measures involve the need to place positive emphasis on giving pupils praise and reward for achievement. Certificates for the fulfilment of objectives were observed around the School. Pupils are 'driven' by suitable goals and targets as part of their individual plan. Behaviour monitoring allows staff to focus in on those individuals that require additional help or support. The 'care soft' computerised software package allows all pupils' individual behaviour to be monitored and measured against acceptable behavioural standards. Any 'hot spots' (behaviour issues highlighted) can then be responded to. The system, as demonstrated, was not invasive in any way. The Inspection Team recognise the important role that behaviour monitoring will provide at the School in maintaining high behavioural standards.

The Inspection Team is satisfied that appropriate information is being provided for pupils regarding expectations of behaviour (NMS 10.20). Children are being encouraged to develop a proper awareness of their rights and responsibilities (NMS 10.21). Pupils are given opportunities to discuss incidents and express their views individually or within a house forum. One example is the inclusion of pupils when recently reviewing the sanctions policy.

From information received via pupil questionnaires 11 pupils stated that they had needed to

be restrained whilst 6 pupils indicated that they had never been restrained. From the multiple choice answers provided, 5 pupils indicated that interventions were necessary to break up fights, 4 pupils indicated to stop damage, 8 pupils indicated to prevent someone getting hurt. 9 pupils answered 'yes' to a question on whether proper ways of restraint were being used. Only 1 pupil felt that restraint was used as a punishment. 7 pupils stated that they had been hurt whilst being restrained. Suitably detailed records were made available to the Inspection Team of pupils who required first aid or needed to visit a doctor or accident and emergency if injuries were sustained. Significant incidents are reported to the relevant people and departments.

Following comments made at the last inspection the School's sanctions policy now defines the circumstances and manner in which a pupil may be excluded from the School. The Inspection Team are aware that 1 pupil had been excluded for a total of 34 days during the year preceding the inspection (Standard 10.26).

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?

4

The School has clear and effective systems in relation to pupils being admitted. Information sharing and working within a multi professional framework ensures that the School is able to offer effective care and educational support to pupils from the initial stages of placement. Suitable information is obtained prior to admission. The Headmaster or Head of Care is central to all introductions and has established suitable procedures for introducing individuals in a planned manner (Standard 11.2). The School does not accept emergency placements preferring to balance both the needs of the child concerned and the likely effect of his admission on the existing group of pupils. A decision to offer a placement will only be reached when the School is satisfied that a positive experience can be gained from a placement at Wennington Hall School (NMS 11.5).

A partnership contract is entered into between the School, parents or significant adults in the lives of the pupil and the pupils themselves. A commitment to the School's working philosophy is expected for the placement to go ahead. The effective management of referrals and introductions is complimented.

Where possible the school seeks to have multi agency planning meetings and pre-placement visits prior to an admission occurring. The School also makes home visits and enters into early dialogue with parents. Information is also sought from social workers. Appropriate parental consents are obtained in writing prior to placement. Information sharing and working within a multi professional framework ensures that the School is able to offer effective care to pupils from an initial stage. The process of reviewing individual's care, education and placement arrangements is coordinated very well. A very high percentage of parents stated that they were asked their opinion in relation to decisions affecting their child.

The School has equally effective procedures for the time that pupils leave the School. Connexions Advisors are visiting the School providing supportive guidance in managing the transition away from the School into the 'world of work'. Records show that most pupils are successfully completing their statutory secondary school education achieving good success with their academic achievements. PSHE and Citizen programmes run at the School are successfully preparing all its pupils for the time that they leave. The structure of boarding houses enables pupils to have increased responsibility for themselves subject to levels of understanding, pupil age and responsiveness. A suitable planning framework, including risk assessments, is evident for pupils who experience some independence training within Harrier House. Pupils' potentials are clearly being maximised at Wennington Hall School.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

The School has a framework and systems in place to encourage a consistent approach to the care, education and development of each pupil. Both education and residential components are considered within the 24-hour cycle. Each pupil has educational and residential targets to achieve linked to their education and social development. The Inspection Team compliments what would appear to be a 'seamless' response to individual's needs from both education and social welfare staff. Pupils' successes on an educational front continue year on year and are published within the School Prospectus and Parents Handbook.

All staff were observed as working together to identify means of encouraging personal, social and educational development (Standard 12.6). The staffing structure in operation at the School ensures that there are many occasions for education and care staff to meet and discuss their perspectives. Regular discussions enable information to be exchanged between all staff members. This two way process enables pupils to be actively supported, ensure good attendance, punctuality and the minimum amount of interruption during the School day. It is clear that care staff are familiar with education plans and are contributing to pupils' annual education reviews. The components of the overall curriculum are regularly reviewed.

The School provides good library facilities that pupils' have good access to. Controlled internet access is available within this area. The area provides a quiet place where pupils can read newspapers or magazines of things that are of an interest to them (NMS 12.4). The area is particularly popular with those pupils who do not want to join in 'boisterous' team games or individual pursuits available within the School.

The School has established a homework policy that is known to and accepted by the pupils. During Monday to Thursday evening pupils will undertake some homework within their boarding houses. The levels of homework that are set are tailored to individual's abilities. The arrangements in place are flexible enough to ensure that there is enough time during the evening to complete homework. Pupils have access to computers within their boarding houses to help with the set homework. The arrangements in place are complimented.

The positive response by pupils to their education programmes is a theme that comes through in parents questionnaires returned to the Commission prior to the inspection. Parents are positive about the improved attendance, small class groups and teaching staff's ability to engage the pupils in their lessons. One parent commented as having the 'utmost admiration for the teachers and staff at the School' her son had previously failed to attend his Secondary School. Another parent recognised that her son 'now loved going to school and was a lot happier and better behaved' since he joined Wennington Hall School.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

This is an area where the School excels. The planning, budgetary control and the investment in activities and individual pursuits within the School are complimented.

Children have many opportunities to participate in meaningful activities both within the School grounds and surrounding community. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of activities that can be provided by highly motivated and qualified staff members or from external instructors that can be brought into the School on a sessional basis. All staff hold suitable qualifications and experience. There is a clear emphasis on health and safety and risk assessments to ensure that activities do not pose any significant dangers to the pupils. Reducing the levels of risk is built into all the recreation and activity programmes operated at the School. The School is fully aware of recently reissued LEA Guidance relating to outdoor activities in particular the emphasis to be placed on water based sports and activities.

The School has appointed an Educations Visits Officer (EVO) Steve Mitchell to coordinate all activities. Written risk assessments are produced prior to any activity-taking place. A committee of suitably experienced senior staff members discuss all proposals before providing authorisation that the activity can go ahead.

The School's equipment is to a high specification and is well maintained. Safety equipment and protective clothing are a prerequisite before any participation by pupils. The Inspection Team observed appropriate levels of staff supervision during activities. All pupils are briefed prior to activities taking place to ensure the expectations of the instructor are known.

The pupils enthused about the range of opportunities that they had to undertake - activities or individual pursuits or interests. The positive use of activities is linked to the behaviour management of the pupils at the School. The Inspection Team agreed that an appropriate balance is being achieved between free time and organised activity during the weekday evenings. Some Inspection Team members tested out the range of recreational equipment and were suitably impressed.

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?**

3

The School's practice relating to this particular Standard was scrutinised by a Pharmacy Inspector. Specific comments made at the time of the inspection were separated out from the requirements of the Standards from those of the 1968 Medicines Act. Separate notes were presented to the School when specific to the requirements of this secondary legislation.

The systems in place and operated at the School were felt to be satisfactory to meet the requirements of this Standard. The Inspection Team noted that a coordinated response had been taken to advisory recommendations made during the last Inspection.

This report highlights specific information within the advisory section relating to the
Wennington Hall School

Pharmacy Inspector's Comments. In principle these comments were fully accepted by the School, however, it is also recognised by all, including the Inspection Team that it would be very difficult to respond fully to some of the issues highlighted. For example, the School's staff could not rely on parents of the pupils to send correctly labelled medication into the School. The practicalities of managing medication within the School to avoid secondary dispensing of medication would be difficult to manage. The Inspection Team in providing these comments allows the School to critically review existing practice. If it is not possible to change existing systems in place then the reasons for these will need to be fully documented.

The Inspection Team acknowledges comments that are made by the Bentham Surgery who provide medical support to the School they stated that the staff at the School have over the years demonstrated that they are capable of responding to different medical matters and should, in the event of a medical emergency be able to coordinate a response.

It was recognised that the School had tried to implement health plans. The plans available at the time of inspection were a good template but it was felt that more relevant information was needed within them to create a true picture of the individual child's health needs. Developing these health plans for all the young people is a School priority. The Inspection Team acknowledge that Health information is difficult to obtain based on the fact that most of the pupils are registered with general practitioners from their home towns whilst at the same time having temporary registration made available through the Bentham Surgery. The efforts to date in response to Standard 14.6 are satisfactory.

The Inspection Team acknowledge that the Healthy School campaign recently undertaken with support from PSHE and Citizen programmes would cover the following areas:
(The following information is repeated as a finding from previous inspections)

- **Nutrition and Diet.** Catering staff were found to be promoting healthy eating. Guidance is available to pupils to inform them of healthy eating. The School undertakes some work with pupils relating to weight issues. There is work being undertaken relating to a number of pupils who are recognised as being overweight. From discussions it is clear that the work is being undertaken in a sensitive manner.
- **Exercise and Rest.** A new fully equipped gymnasium forms part of a secondary care policy that will be built into pupils' programmes in the future. This forms part of the School's forward thinking in relation to creating a healthy work environment for both pupils and staff. Trained staff can provide personal fitness programmes. Access to physiotherapy is made available as part of the health planning arrangements or as part of any recuperation following a general or sporting accident.
- **Personal hygiene.** Routines observed ensure that all pupils have the skills or are taught how to look after themselves properly. The good levels of privacy afforded to pupils in bathrooms and toilet areas ensure that practically this can be achieved. The School works closely with the pupils to ensure that they can feel good about themselves in developing their self-esteem and social presentation. Additional support can be, and is provided for pupils who have particular health problems such as bedwetting.
- **Sexual education and health.** There is an age appropriate response implemented

via PSHE programmes. A feature of these programmes is the support that can be provided by both care staff and teaching staff.

- **The effects of alcohol, smoking, solvents and other substances.** As well as the School's in-house response to PSHE the local community police has visited the School to provide support, guidance and information to pupils.
- **HIV and aids and other blood borne diseases. Protecting oneself from prejudice, bullying and abuse** also form part of the School's response to PSHE.

From discussions and observations made on the School's records the following matters can be confirmed:

- Standard 14.9. A suitable number of staff hold first aid qualifications. There is a nominated first aider available during the 24-hour period of each School day. Staff are aware of the location of first aid boxes within the School and the boarding houses. Pupils with minor cuts and abrasions were observed receiving treatment from staff. Staff appeared to be competent in providing first aid (Standard 14.14).
- Standard 14.10. The School demonstrated that it could access specialist support for pupils such as psychiatric or psychological services if it needed to.
- Standard 14.15. Prescribed medication is only given to pupils to whom it was prescribed. Parental permission for administering this is gained by the School. There is a policy and written guidance, which is implemented in practice for administering and storing medication. (Standard 14.7) **Advisory recommendations made by the Pharmacy Inspector relating to the storage and recording of some of medication need to be acted upon.** Medicines were observed as being kept securely within a lockable cabinet at the time of the visit. A reassessment of storage facilities is an advisory recommendation made. Medication such as Ritalin is stored in a double locked cabinet located within two lockable office areas. The records kept relating to Ritalin need to show the correct strength, dose and form of the medicine. A hardbound and numbered register is an advisory recommendation. Senior staff administer medication in accordance with existing guidance. An issue relating to secondary dispensing of medication is highlighted in the advisory section.
- NMS 14.20. Records are being kept on all medication, treatment and first aid given to pupils. A senior nominated staff member, Andy Gillett, is responsible for monitoring the records to establish suitably detailed recordings are being made. Staff are aware of the need to record any refusal by pupils to take their medication.
- NMS 14.22. Records are being kept in the occurrence book and on individual pupil files of any significant illnesses, accidents or injuries during placement at the School.
- NMS 14.25. Letters observed on individual pupil files following accidents are used to keep parents informed of accidents or illnesses whilst at the School.

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?**

4

At the time of the inspection, the meals offered to pupils were to a high standard being adequate in quality and quantity. Pupils have a choice of a main dish at main meals and this includes a vegetarian choice. A salad bar has proved to be very popular with some of the pupils. Breakfast and supper are prepared within the individual houses. The exception to this is for Merlin House who uses the School kitchen. These arrangements are suitable. Pupils have access to drinks machines during mealtimes where they can help themselves to fruit juice or water.

The catering staff show their creativity by introducing new food to the pupils. The School's own recipe book has been produced showing some of the culinary delights that the pupils sample. Individual preferences are included with the menu. The School is actively promoting its healthy eating / healthy living programme. A positive feature of the School's catering arrangements is to provide themed meals for the pupils. All birthdays are celebrated. Systems have been set up to inform catering staff when pupils have special dietary needs. The outcome statement for this Standard is for children to be provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs. Meal times are promoted as social occasions. The relaxed atmosphere observed serves as a good indicator that this is being achieved in practice.

The Environmental Health Department's last report confirmed that there were no ongoing concerns linked to food preparation areas.

The School has developed its dining facilities to a high standard. This environment provides a safe place where the pupils can enjoy their meals. The general management of the dining area, and the pupils' behaviour was exemplary throughout the inspection. The Inspection Team enjoyed very orderly meals with pupils during the time spent at the School. The details provided by the pupils during conversations at meal times supported inspection findings in that pupils were satisfied with the way that they were being looked after. The Inspection Team was impressed with the positive attitude that was being displayed by the pupils.

Harrier House provides a semi-independent setting for two pupils to budget and prepare their own food as part of PSHE programmes. The Inspection Team observed the benefits of this experience for two young men who had responded well to the challenges of making toad in the hole. The pupils in Eagle and Condor house take responsibility for preparing their meal each Wednesday. An individual and innovative response is clearly being taken all around the School when looking at the provision and preparation of meals.

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?**

4

The appearance of the pupils is complimented. Staff and pupils work hard to ensure that pupils present themselves well and represent the School in a positive light. School uniforms are worn. The pupils accept the style of the uniform. Pupils have access to School blazers for special occasions.

Routines encourage pupils' personal hygiene and the care of their clothing. Pupils are encouraged to change into their personal clothing once class time has finished. Pupils take care of their own clothes, which can be stored within personal wardrobes. Toiletries are also managed by the pupils and are for pupils' own exclusive use. Some pupils also have the option to gain access to basic toiletry items supplied by the School if they run out or forget to bring things back from home leave.

The School has systems in place to ensure that pupils have adequate clothing requisites and pocket money. A system is operated at the School where pupils' money can be held in safe keeping for them. The staff member with responsibility for pupils' money has introduced to the pupils the concept of money management and budgetary control. Suitable records are maintained of pupil withdrawals and transactions.

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

The outcome statement for this Standard is clearly being met. The School was found to be coordinating a response to the individual placement requirements of each pupil. Effective care planning was observed to be of central importance to the high quality of service offered to pupils linked to their assessed needs. Placement and care planning occurs as part of a multi agency framework. The response being taken by some Local Authority Social Services Offices in supporting pupils whilst at the School was discussed during the course of the inspection. It is hoped that the future role of the Commission could be used to develop and improve the multi-agency responses needed to support the School's defined plans better. Staff at the School are also quick to acknowledge that there is some good work collaboration between some of the children's homes operated by the Local Authority Social Services and the homes operated by the private sector.

School systems are in place to monitor and review care planning arrangements. There is effective management oversight of care planning and there was evidence that the School contributes effectively to wider formal review processes. Plans are reviewed and amended as necessary to reflect significant changes in the pupil's needs. It was positive to note that plans were 'live' and reflected what occurred in practice.

Care planning (ICP's) consistently included components in relation to:-

- Education (IEP's) and attainment targets, including SEN for each pupil attending the School
- Routines, covering a 24 hour curriculum
- Health & health promotion. Including physiotherapy, PSHE and pupils being able to retain their home GP, dentist, etc.
- Activities and leisure
- Risk Assessment, behaviour management and agree intervention strategies

- Contact arrangements and links to parents/other agencies.

A key worker system is in place to support each pupil. Records of 'one to one' meetings taking place between key workers and pupils are recorded. The School identifies that occasionally relationships can break down which could lead to a change of key worker.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.5)

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

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

The contents of Individual case files held on each pupil were found to be maintained to a good standard.

Good records are maintained at the School on pupils' needs, development and progress. These records are stored safely and securely within lockable cabinets or within lockable office areas. Each pupil at the School has a permanent case file. As part of the inspection process case files in relation to 5 pupils were selected for inspection. The contents of case files were found to be consistently detailed and information was well organised. The specific requirement of Standard 18.2, which provides a comprehensive list of information that must be available, was viewed against the case files selected.

Case files viewed were to a good standard and consistently included:

- Personal information/ Pupil introduction details including religious persuasion, home address telephone number and emergency contact details
- Relevant family details
- Home contact and leave details
- Relevant placement details plus Individual Care Plans (ICP's)
- Details of the responsible authorities and contact arrangements
- Placement /care plan including health
- Educational Statement plus updates
- Reports on pupil educational development and attainment plus individual Education Plans (IEP's)
- Records of reviews attended whilst at the School
- Details of illnesses, accident, injuries and significant events
- Template health plans
- Measures of control including physical intervention
- Correspondence and letters to parents
- Relevant historical information
- Case files were observed to be kept up to date

Pupil access to files is an issue that is being looked into. The Local Education Authority is to provide guidance relating to access to records. Standards 18.4 and Policy 5 Appendix 3.

Standard 18.5 reminds the School of the need to keep pupil records for at least 21 years from the date of birth of the child or be passed to the next school with a receipt being obtained.

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?**

4

This Standard is marked as being exceeded based on the personnel information that was presented during this inspection. The efforts that were made by the School's Administration Staff to ensure that suitably detailed records are being maintained are acknowledged. In the absence of Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks being held on each staff member administration staff had established personnel records providing evidence of police clearance checks, DOH checks and list 99 checks, where applicable, being maintained. As the personnel files stand they will contain all the relevant information once CRB information is available. The School's personnel files mirror the Commissions staff vetting and recruitment matrix used to check that a wide range of suitably detailed personnel information is being held.

It is still the Headmaster's intention to apply for CRB enhanced clearance checks for all staff through Lancashire Education Authority. The timescales for this have not been set. The Headmaster is advised to liaise with the LEA in a bid to clear all his staff through this process introduced in April 2002. The Inspection Team recognise that this is largely outside of the control of the Headmaster. The Criminal Records Bureau is now fully operational and states that it is processing 90% of all 'properly' completed applications within a 4-week period.

Records or evidence is available in the following areas:

- Curriculum Vitae. A written explanation of CV gaps was evident within a staff file viewed.
- Evidence of Pre-employment checks
- Employment contract
- References including last employer reference
- Evidence of qualifications
- Interview / probation notes
- Details of disciplinary action
- Application forms, interview dates printed from the Intranet

(Standard 19.2) General School records observed and deemed to be satisfactory include:

- Accident reports, children and staff
- Significant incidents
- Menus. The catering staff were informed that menus (as served) for the past year must be maintained.
- Staff duty rotas covering a 24-hour period.
- Pupil register and details of onward movement
- A diary of events
- Visitors record

All records, other than the menus, need to be retained for at least 5 years from the date of entry (Standard 19.3).

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

The School provides a 38-week educational placement. The pupils spend the rest of the year at home with their parents or carers. A small percentage of the pupils are resident at local authority or private children's homes. The Inspection Team was presented with accurate records of the home contact details of each young pupil. The normal boarding arrangements adopted for each of the pupils is for them to spend 4 nights on a residential basis. Monday through to Thursday evening is spent at the school. After completing the education programme on Friday afternoon, School transport is used to take the pupils home. The pupils return to the School via school transport on Monday morning. Occasionally pupils will spend the weekend at the School as part of prearranged programme. Given the above boarding arrangements all the pupils at the School have opportunities to maintain contact with parents or carers. The Inspection Team was satisfied that contact arrangements are being considered as part of the general care planning arrangements in place for each pupil.

As part of the School's development policy it has worked hard to increase parental involvement, key workers communicate with parents, where practical, on a regular basis. The use of School diaries (communication books between parents and staff at the school) are used, when necessary, to facilitate better communication. Home visits are organised as part of the wider care planning arrangements when necessary. These visits can provide additional support to parents in managing the behaviour problems that their sons present when at home. All efforts endeavour to establish a degree of continuity in the lives of the pupils, which will hopefully lead to the fulfilment of individual's potential.

Parents are encouraged to visit the School. 88 % of the parents who returned a questionnaire indicated that they are encouraged to visit and staff make them feel welcome. 2 parents, (12%) of the returned questionnaire indicated that it had not been possible to visit the School because of their commitments. All the parents that had visited the School stated that suitable privacy was afforded to them to meet with their sons. The School holds a Christmas carol concert followed by an open day that all parents are invited to attend. On the evidence of observed correspondence between the School and parents, including periodical newsletters, the Inspection Team were fully satisfied that the School was promoting positive contact between everyone significant to the pupils.

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?**

4

The School's philosophy clearly reflects a commitment to supporting all the pupils for the time that they have completed their education. A commitment to education, PSHE and Citizenship allows pupils to gain personal skills that will ultimately lead to meaningful employment or further education opportunities when the pupils leave the School. The approach to PSHE at the School is well developed and is commended by the Inspection team. This type of support being provided to the pupils will remain the foundation stone to most pupils achieving a successful future.

The School recognises the role that is to be provided in preparing the pupils for the time that they leave the School. The collaborative arrangements that need to be organised are being planned for as part of the annual review of the education statement. Transition plans are being produced for pupils. Personal advisors and Connexions advisors support School programmes.

The daily life of the School provides pupils with many opportunities, appropriate to the age and needs of each pupil, for the development of knowledge and skills that will be needed for their likely future living arrangements (NMS 21.2). The arrangement of the living units can lead to semi-independent or independent living opportunities being created for the pupils. The introduction of pupils to individual PSHE programmes are suitable to ensure that pupils are prepared by the time that they leave the School and have the skills and qualities that any future employer would be looking for. Specific PSHE targets for pupils are established from 14+ years of age.

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**

Systems within the School ensure that each pupil is focused upon as an individual, with individual needs and requirements. It is evident that individual care programmes for pupils are appropriately agreed, monitored and reviewed. The same is evident for education plans, personal and social, leisure, transition, health promotion and sex education programmes that are produced to support all pupils. On a day-to-day basis, the pupils were observed being offered excellent levels of individualised support.

The School successfully balances the individual needs of pupils with the need for routine and structure. Pupils are actively supported and encouraged to become involved in decisions that are affecting them at the School. The School Council is one such means of achieving this. Pupil representations are from each year group. Care practice within the School supports the social inclusion of all pupils and actively works to counter any isolation for those pupils that do not readily fit in. The staff promotes an environment that is encouraging of all achievements in order for pupils to feel positive about themselves. This has led to good relationships being established where pupils could discuss personal or welfare concerns with any staff member they wish.

The staff team at the School individually and collectively possesses a great deal of knowledge skills and experience of working in a Residential Special School setting. The continuity of staffing and the School's ability to retain staff is acknowledged. From discussions and questionnaire returned by staff it is encouraging to find staff satisfied with their working environment and conditions of employment. The School Staff possess some insight, through training and experience to enable them to respond to pupils needs and concerns quickly.

The School seeks to consult appropriately with parents and other professionals to confirm the suitability of the care arrangements to best promote welfare. The School's ability to link up with other agencies and departments ensures that professional advice and guidance is immediately available and that consultation and planning to best meet individual needs is taking place. The School has recently developed a sensory room, which is seen as a place for the pupils to 'chill out'. This room is not seen as providing any specific therapeutic responses or techniques. The pupils commented that they liked the room and felt that it had prevented them from 'exploding' when anxious.

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?**

4

The School is located on the outskirts of a small rural village, in its own grounds, which serve to enrich the experience of pupils. Easy access is made possible to all the surrounding areas via the School's fleet of minibuses. The minibuses enable all the local community resources to be utilised by pupils. The School is an integral part of the local community and appears to be accepted as such. Positive links with local residents, shops and businesses have been established. Many of the staff employed at the School live in the surrounding villages. The city of Lancaster and its attractions are a short bus ride away from the School.

The School is made up of five houses, which are collectively providing 46 residential beds. Each house is organised to look after a certain age range of pupils who are provided with support from a team of residential social work staff. Three houses can be found within the main school building with the other two located within the School grounds. Appropriate security and staffing levels are in place to afford suitable protection for the pupils. The security system within the School has recently been upgraded. Risk assessments have been undertaken for all areas of the School premises and the grounds. Contact made prior to the inspection with the Fire and Rescue Service and Environmental Health revealed that there are no outstanding requirements relating to their inspections to the School. The future redesign of Merlin House will create additional space by using the adjoining conference room.

The general appearance of the School and its grounds has been developed to an exceptionally high standard over previous years. Innovative thinking at the School continues to come up with further enhancing improvements in the School's appearance and resources available to the pupils. The positive atmosphere that has been created at the school is reflective of the School's philosophy established within the Prospectus (Statement of Purpose) and the Headmaster and School Governors drive for excellence.

An extremely positive initial impression is gained when driving through the School grounds and when viewing the accommodation and premises. It is evident that much thought and imagination has gone into utilising all the available space within School grounds and premises. Pupils are consulted with regarding future plans, developments or improvements taking place at the School. The School is graffiti free and is respected by the pupils. It is evident that maintenance and building work are being coordinated efficiently. The School's budget is being managed wisely. The quality and the condition of furniture and fixtures within all the areas of the School are testimony to the commitment for excellence. Excellence in this context refers to all round excellence on both educational and social welfare fronts.

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?**

4

The Inspection Team in being provided with tours of buildings and premises were presented with the opportunity to observe the Schools excellent standards of accommodation.

Observations made by the Inspection Team can confirm the following:

- Standard 24.1. The School provides high quality accommodation for pupils, which is consistent with their assessed needs.
- Standard 24.2. A homely residential environment has been created for pupils outside of class times. The management and organisation of different houses is complimented.
- Standard 24.3. The interior and exterior of the School is maintained to a high standard. Grounds and play areas are well maintained and free from any obvious hazards. Repairs and maintenance are managed effectively and promptly. Gates to the 'courtyard' have been repaired and now provide additional security. There are no signs of vandalism or graffiti.
- Standard 24.4. The houses are reserved for the exclusive use of pupils
- Standard 24.5. The management and the organisation of bedroom areas are suitable. Pupils have lockable facilities within these areas. Those that share bedrooms have a reasonable choice with whom they share with. The general appearance of bedrooms is to a good standard and includes suitable beds, bedding, carpets, window dressings and lighting. Bedside rugs have recently been introduced.
- Standard 24.6. Children do not share with pupils of significantly different age. The School is for male pupils only.
- Standard 24.7. Pupils are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms. Personal notice boards allow pupils to display appropriate art or material of their choice.
- Standard 24.8 Bedrooms are not overcrowded.
- Standard 24.9. The number and locations of telephones is sufficient. Pupils can make and receive telephone calls in private. Pupils have access to mobile phones. Use of these phones is sensibly managed.
- Standard 24.10. Quiet facilities are available for pupils to study, if they select to do so, outside of class time. Computers are available within houses to encourage pupils to complete homework. Internet access is possible.
- Standard 24.11. All individuals are encouraged to pursue any hobbies or interest that they have at the School. Staff would consider all reasonable requests by pupils.
- Standard 24.12. Pupils contribute to the general décor, furnishing and upkeep at the School. The pupil council is actively engaged in discussing future spending within

budgetary allocations. Some useful ideas have led to the purchase of items and resources found throughout the School and houses.

- Standard 24.13. Suitable laundry provision is provided. Pupils are encouraged to look after their clothes and bedding. The arrangements for laundry are clearly outlined.
- Standard 24.14. Lighting, heating and ventilation was observed as being suitable. Modern bathroom ventilation is in place. The pupils who had been at the School for a number of years did not complain that the houses were cold.
- Standard 24.15. Privacy is assured for parents who visit the School. The same levels of privacy would be extended for all other visitors. A suitable room would be provided for meetings to take place. Visitors are managed so that they do not infringe or impact on other pupils' daily routines.
- Standard 24.17. Suitable levels of staff cover are maintained during the 24-hour period of the day. Waking Night Staff support staff that are rostered to sleep in.

Foot Note

Standard 24.5 The requirements of this Standard reads that there should be no more than 4 pupils in a bedroom and at no time should there be odd numbers of pupils sharing a bedroom. Guidance recently issued to the Inspection Team means that this is no longer applicable.

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?

4

Observations made during a tour of the premises assured the Inspection Team that the School had good standards of bathroom and toilet facilities. Facilities have been improved over the last few years throughout all the boarding houses. All bathrooms are well appointed with adjacent washing and drying facilities. There are sufficient number of baths, showers and toilets within each boarding house. The distribution of facilities both on a horizontal and vertical level within the School enables easy access for pupils. Facilities are close to bedroom areas and the main living areas within the different houses. Day pupils have access to separate facilities. Staff and visitors can gain access to separate facilities to the ones used by visitors (NMS 25.7). Some recent improvements have seen the introduction of jacuzzi baths to Eagle House and the further upgrading of bathrooms. Contemporary bathrooms referred to as 'pods' provide a relatively maintenance free and easy to clean area within the grade 2 listed building. The 'pods' reduce the chances of water damage to the building, which can lead to expensive repair work.

Hot and cold water supplies are suitable for normal levels of use by staff and pupils. All the bathroom and toilet facilities were observed to be clean throughout the time spent at the School. The general comments made by pupils are that there is enough privacy when using toilets, showers or bathrooms.

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?

3

The School has a designated Health and Safety Officer, Dave Tuohy, who liaises with other members of School staff to ensure that the School and the grounds remain free from observable hazards. Maintenance and grounds staff actively seek to reduce any observed hazards or risks to pupils health or welfare. Reports of any observations would be actioned accordingly. The Inspection Team is satisfied that staff at the School are placing a high priority in seeking to provide a safe environment for staff and pupils.

There was evidence that risk assessments are in place regarding individual pupils, the School environment, activities and tasks carried out by staff and pupils. Risk assessments are continuously being monitored and reviewed. Any accidents occurring to pupils at the School are recorded and are reported through the appropriate channels.

The School has a policy issued by the Lancashire Education authority entitled 'Model Health and Safety Policy for County and Controlled Schools'. The guidance contained within this policy if implemented in practice should be suitable to manage the School environment. Recently re-issued guidance relating to outdoor activities, coupled with the additional requirement to liaise with the LEA relating to 'most' activities undertaken at the School has been fully responded to. As has previously been mentioned an Educational Visits Coordinator, Steve Mitchell, was appointed to respond to these additional demands. Recordings, risk assessments and protocols have been strengthened when planning activities. The School is also liaising with LEA to inform them of the recreational programmes and the activities that are being planned at the School. Systems established, as discussed and observed follow recently issued LEA guidance.

There was evidence of electrical installation and equipment checks being carried out appropriately. Service records assured the Inspection Team that the School fire system was in good working order. Fire extinguishers were observed as being fully operational and are being tested in accordance with maintenance schedules. Fire drills occur on a frequent basis. Staff and pupils know fire evacuation procedures. Fire notices are available throughout the School to provide guidance for staff and pupils. Evacuation procedures are explained to pupils when they join the School and are then discussed on an ongoing basis to ensure that pupils do not forget or become complacent if a real emergency was to occur.

Liaison between the School and the Fire and Rescue Service has taken place to ensure that the emergency services are satisfied with the arrangements in place and are familiar with the structure and layout of the School and all the surrounding buildings if there is a need to visit. The Inspection Team would suggest that this exercise is repeated periodically to ensure that Fire and Rescue staff remain familiar with the School's layout. The suggestion recognises frequent staff changes within local Fire and Rescue Departments.

The deployment of staff in adequate numbers throughout the 24-hour period of the School day contributes to security arrangements and acts as a deterrent to members of the public who do not have rights of access to the School. Suitable locks are fitted to doors and the main drive has lockable gates. The School environment is kept safe at night by waking watch staff that patrol parts of the School and ensure that doors and windows are securely

locked. The security system at the School has been upgraded. Additional security measures including CCTV are being considered due to the real risk of theft from the School.

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?

3

The School is subject to LEA procedures in respect of the recruitment of staff and volunteers. The code of practice adopted by the LEA adheres to equal opportunities. The School liaises with the relevant LEA human resources personnel throughout this process.

Comments made against Standard 19, General School Records, has already identified that the School retains a good range of records indicating adherence to the requirements of this Standard. As part of the inspection, names of randomly selected staff were given to the school administration and secretarial staff requesting that identified personnel files be made available to the Inspection Team. Observations confirmed that satisfactory recruitment checks are taking place. The vetting of visitors is equally well managed.

The Inspection Team commented on the need to obtain Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks on each staff member. The Inspection Team recognise that this is largely outside of the control of the Headmaster who is reliant upon Lancashire Education Authority to process these checks. No timescale has been set yet. As the personnel files stand they contain all the relevant information apart from CRB information. In the absence of Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks being held on each staff member administration staff had established personnel records providing evidence of police clearance checks, DOH checks and list 99 checks being held. It is hoped that Enhanced CRB checks will be available for the next inspection.

Evidence is available to indicate that checks are being carried out or records are available in the following areas:

- Identity checks being undertaken.
- Police DOH and list 99 DFEE checks under the old system.
- Curriculum Vitae. Evidence of qualifications
- Evidence of Pre-employment checks
- Employment contract

- References including last employer reference
- Interview / probation notes
- Supervision, training and appraisal records (Performance management)
- Details of disciplinary action
- Application forms, interview dates printed from the Intranet
- Written record of the outcome of the interview

Staff that have left include 4 cleaners, 1 teacher and 3 residential social workers.

Total number of care staff:	16	Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:	3
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Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The staff team has an appropriate gender mix. There is at least one adult in charge of each identifiable group (NMS 28.7). A clear management structure is evident within the staff team. A designated senior staff member remains in charge at all times during the 24-hour period of the School day. Staff have a written record of which pupils and adults are sleeping in at the School each night. The relatively small number of residential pupils and the fact that the vast majority of staff have worked at the School for a considerable number of years mean that staff know pupils personally. There is often no need to refer to lists of the young people present. Experienced waking night staff are employed who are familiar with pupils names and their respective boarding houses. The arrangements for staff cover at night are satisfactory. Deployment of staff is clearly linked to meeting individuals' needs by providing a safe environment at all times. Effective communication is evident between all levels of staff.

The Inspection Team is satisfied that staffing levels are adequate for the School to fulfil its purpose and function. Management systems address the issue of staffing levels dependent upon which pupils are present. A large pool of staff is available for deployment. Staffing levels have been improved over recent years. The staff rota provides evidence that suitable and safe staffing levels are being maintained.

Staffing numbers are increased when pupils needs or other circumstances dictate (Standard 28.5). Senior staff were observed covering a gap in the rota after a staff member phoned in sick a few hours prior to the shift commencing. The gap in the rota created by the staff sickness was quickly covered. Sickness levels amongst staff members are very low. The positive School environment as well as the favourable working conditions is felt to have directly contributed to reduced staff absenteeism and sickness.

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

Staff training and development opportunities have been improved to reflect the requirements of this Standard. Advisory recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed.

The support and training opportunities that is provided to staff was found to be a positive feature of this inspection, which is being managed effectively by the School's management. Induction training for newly recruited staff members has been developed to a high standard. A comprehensive programme of induction has been established. Staff repeatedly reported that the induction support provided was to a good level allowing them to become knowledgeable and aware of School policy, procedures and guidance. Staff felt that the design of this programme allowed them to quickly establish themselves as valued members of the staffing structure.

Personal development plans are now in place for all staff members in accordance with the requirements of Standard 29.5. These plans are live identifying staff's training needs and providing a means of accessing suitable training in accordance with Appendix 2 of the Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards. Staff training is managed within a performance management system that has recently been introduced. Appraisal systems are operated within this performance management framework. Records are now available in both hard copies and within the School's computer database. A record is maintained relating to training courses attended by staff. The Inspection Team observed a general training folder which outlines the courses that are available to staff (NMS 29.3). All staff have access to continuing and where applicable, post qualifying training in childcare. The staff group possesses a wide range of qualifications, skills and competencies that are capable of providing a consistent response to meeting the needs of the pupils.

Training has been provided in first aid, care and control, physical intervention via the Team Teach approach, food hygiene, health and safety, fire safety and how to use fire equipment. (NMS 29.2). Child protection is viewed as of central importance, and is a key component of training for **all** staff. The School provides regular training opportunities to enable staff to respond appropriately to child protection.

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

A performance management framework and the continuous School improvement plan now provide a suitable response to staff supervision, support and appraisal. The School's management have taken time to consider the full expectations specified within this organisation and management Standard.

The staff appraisal system was introduced during September 2003. How effective the system is in practice will be viewed during future inspections to the School. The system appears to be suitable to meet with the requirements of Standard 30.6 in ensuring that staff will have their performance individually and formally appraised by line managers.

There was evidence within records and through discussion and observation that all staff have clear lines of accountability. Feedback from staff at all levels was that they felt they were very well supported in their work. Staff meetings take place regularly to provide an additional source of support for staff. The cumulative effect of the support being provided has led to a great deal of continuity with regard to staff responses and practice.

Systems of formal supervision are in place. The staffing structure allows all staff to receive regular support. A feature of the Schools management affords staff a degree of choice with which senior staff members provide formal supervision. The frequency of formal supervision is satisfactory. Newly recruited staff informed the Inspection Team that their experience of supervision, to date, had been extremely supportive. All staff have been provided with job descriptions and person specifications relating to the roles they provide. Senior staff demonstrated clear and recognisable links between supervision, appraisal and personal development plans.

Staff are provided with written policy and procedure that address the issues included in Appendix 3 of the Residential Special School National Minimum Standards (NMS 30.7). Staffing structures are established with all staff aware of who they are accountable to. There are also clear lines of accountability established between the Headmaster and the School Board of Governors (NMS 30.8).

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
<p>The Headmaster has determined the training strategy for the School relating to NVQ. He is aware of the requirements of Standard 31.4 which states that by 2005, a minimum ratio of 80% of care staff have completed their level 3 in Caring for Children and Young people or have qualifications which demonstrate the same competencies as the NVQ. The self-assessment questionnaire completed by the Head of Care alludes to the fact that staff members are being trained as NVQ Assessors. Upon completion of this training plans are in place for the required percentage of staff to complete a suitably accredited NVQ programme. Staff have already been involved in discussions and have agreed targets relating to the completion of NVQ studies. It is anticipated that 'all' staff should have training by September 2005. This Standard is marked as a minor shortfall according to Commission guidance.</p> <p>Clear management arrangements are in place within the School at all times. The Headmaster and Head of Care have extensive management experience working within a Residential Special School setting. Suitable qualifications are held by the above staff, which met with the requirements of standards 31.2. The School day is well planned with appropriate time being scheduled for formal communication meetings, record keeping, planning and support meetings. These are organised in a way, which does not compromise the care offered to pupils. A nominated senior staff member is always available within the School or on call.</p> <p>The School adjusted the information and guidance provided to parents to include contact telephone numbers and addresses of the local social services authority and the National Care Standards Commission should parents wish to make direct contact (Standard 31.10). The School is reminded that the National Care Standards Commission is to be replaced by a new organisation from April 2004 called the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). Unfortunately School records will have to be adjusted again to reflect this change.</p> <p>The School adheres to LEA procedures in dealing with any allegations about staff. Procedures seek to deal with allegations without prejudice, but with the immediate aim of protecting pupils (Standard 31.8). The School has planned responses to a range of potential crisis including fire, accident and sudden illness (Standard 31.9). There have been no major incidents since the last inspection. Major incidents in this context do not refer to child protection matters.</p>		
<p>Percentage of care staff with relevant NVQ or equivalent child care qualification:</p>		40 %

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?**

4

The School relies on the LEA for financial input. There is evidence that the School, at this time, is appropriately funded. The Headmaster of the School manages the allocated budget and is accountable for its expenditure. There are other forms of fundraising such as an annual School fete that take place during the year in order to provide additional finances. Records are being maintained. On the appearance of the School there is no visible evidence that the School's operation is not financially sound. The Headmaster keeps the Governing Body appropriately informed regarding development plans and financial expenditure.

The Headmaster produces a comprehensive School development plan that covers a wide range of issues relating to the management and organisation of the School and including financial projection covering the following issues:

- Pupils
- Parents Staffing
- Governors
- Communication
- School Education Curriculum
- General finance
- Transport
- Buildings and Grounds

The School's computerised software package provided the Inspection Team with up to date data relevant to all aspects of the pupils' behaviour. All records outlined within Standard 32.2 are being monitored extremely well by the School's senior staff members. The computer software developed for the School provides the best imaginable means of reviewing School records. Patterns, trends or high incidences of events or occurrences within these records can be quickly identified and responded to from the graphical information that is produced. It is clear that this system will further develop the School's operation. The Inspection Team looks forward to further 'briefings' as the capabilities of this software are developed further.

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

The frequency of these visits needs to be increased to once every half term. The majority of these visits need to be carried out unannounced. Reports are being produced when these visits have taken place. The Headmaster and School Governors would respond to report findings upon its receipt through an action-planning framework.

Mr Paul Wright, the person appointed to monitor the School's conduct (Standard 33.1) outlined proposals to develop his role and the scope of the 'inspection' that are being carried out. Plans to further scrutinize the School's practice and operation as part of the quality assurance measures are being discussed with the Headmaster. Visits (inspections) undertaken by Mr Wright provide an assessment of condition of the building, furniture and equipment at the School as well as making checks on a wide range of School records. During the course of these visits opportunities are provided for staff and pupils to discuss issues with him in private, if they select to do so. It is evident that existing work commitments have restricted the number of visits undertaken.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Empty box for the Lay Assessor's Summary.

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____

Date _____

PART D

HEAD'S RESPONSE

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

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted in November 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

Head's comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

Note:

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

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

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

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

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

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

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

Or

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

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

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

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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