



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

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

Radlett Lodge Schools

Harper Lane

Radlett

Hertfordshire

WD7 9HW

23rd February 2005

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

Radlett Lodge Schools

Address

Harper Lane, Radlett, Hertfordshire, WD7 9HW

Tel No:

01923 854922

Fax No:

91923 859922

Email Address:

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

National Autistic Society

Name of Head

CSCI Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Residential special school

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

14/01/04

Date of Inspection Visit		23rd February 2005	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		12.00 noon	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Julia Bradshaw	075411
Name of CSCI Inspector	2		
Name of CSCI Inspector	3		
Name of CSCI Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):			
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Mrs Lynda Tucker and Frances Power	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to determine whether the welfare of children (i.e. those aged under 18) is adequately safeguarded and promoted while they are accommodated by the school.

Inspections assess the extent to which the school is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools, published by the Secretary of State under Section 87C of the Children Act 1989, and other relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 as amended. Residential Special Schools are not registered as children's homes unless they accommodate, or arrange accommodation for, one or more children for more than 295 days a year.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Radlett Lodge Schools

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

Radlett Lodge is a purpose built school and residential facility for children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and is owned by the National Autistic Society. The home is located just outside the village of Radlett and approximately 2 miles from the city of St Albans. Both facilities are located on the same site and are integral to each other. The School and Lodge provide a service for 38 weeks of the year.

The Lodge is a two-storey house, which accommodates up to a maximum of 14 pupils at any time. The lounge and dining areas of the home are light and airy. There are televisions, videos and play stations available for all pupils to use, as well as a large selection of outdoor equipment for use in the garden area. There are also computers that can be used for homework or leisure.

The Principal is Mrs Lynda Tucker, who has overall responsibility for both the school and the Lodge. The Head of social work manages the residential care provision. The staff group are contracted to work in both the school and the Lodge.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The whole School has an ethos of integrity rather than expediency. It both empowers and listens to the children and recognises that each has a valuable contribution to make. Radlett Lodge offers a safe environment that, paradoxically also offers each boarder challenges that promote his or her confidence and skills. Staff were observed to be interacting with the pupils in a caring and professional manner. One of the greatest achievements at Radlett Lodge is the care it provides for the pupils, which is excellent. Each pupil is seen as a whole person and is given the experiences, within their abilities that other youngsters would have. While health and personal care needs are met, these do not dominate, and the atmosphere in this residential school is both happy and relaxed. Mutual affection and concern is very evident. The home achieves the goal of its mission statement by integrating education, care and therapy, thereby promoting the self-esteem and personal autonomy of the pupils. Everyone living at Radlett Lodge is treated with dignity, courtesy and respect. The environment that has been created by the staff team within the home, has helped develop an atmosphere where children and students live in a calm, controlled and where possible, relaxed environment. Care starts from the needs of the individual. All are given the opportunity to make a wide range of choices. Each person is encouraged to do as much as he or she can to facilitate independence. The admissions procedure and care planning process is excellent. This excellent care setting has been created by using the philosophy of " low arousal", to ensure pupils live in a calm, controlled and where possible, relaxed environment. Care starts from the needs of the individual.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

There is little that Radlett Lodge staff need to do in terms of improving the current standard of residential care as there is wealth of evidence that demonstrates the high standards that staff and pupils continue to achieve during the past year and since the last inspection took place. There were no recommendations made as a result of this inspection.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This was the third inspection carried out under the National Care Standards Act 2000 and the head teacher, head of care and the staff should be congratulated on their achievements in meeting the minimum standards. The care of the children continues to be of a high quality and the organisation of Radlett Lodge is both clear and comprehensive with staff commenting on how professional and supportive the senior staff team are within the home. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging children to reach their full potential, within the framework of the risk assessment process. The children communicated positively through various forms of communication about the service they receive at the home and appeared to be comfortable and proud to show the inspectors around their home. Everyone working with the pupils at Radlett Lodge appeared to treat the children with dignity, respect and ensure they have the best quality of life despite the severity of their special needs. Once again the inspector would like to thank the children and staff for their hospitality during this inspection, with special thanks to the pupil who took the trouble to show the inspector around his home.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended actions are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Identified below are the actions recommended on issues addressed in the main body of the report in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders adequately in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.

No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
		There were none	

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	
		There were none.	

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	NO
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	NO
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person	YES
• Chair of Governors	NA

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	NO
Parent Survey	NO
Placing authority survey	NO
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	23/02/05
Time of Inspection	12.00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	9.5
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	1

Pre-inspection information and the Head's Self evaluation Form, provided by the school, have also been taken into account in preparing this report.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Age Range of Boarding Pupils **From** **To**

NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

BOYS

GIRLS

TOTAL

Number of separate Boarding Houses

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the CSCI assessment of the extent to which standards have been met. The following scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The scale ranges from:

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

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

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

STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

The school has produced a written Statement of Purpose, which accurately describes the purpose and function of both the school and its residential unit and contains all of the information required by this standard. The principal, head of care and staff should be congratulated on producing an excellent “user friendly” document which has been devised in a manner that is easy to understand and describes the speech/oral approach to education and care provided. There is a good working link between the School and the Residential Unit that creates a continuum of care for weekly and respite boarders. Read in conjunction with the school prospectus, the Statement of Purpose provides a full picture of the range of services on offer. The Lodge can only accommodate children who meet the stated criteria and provision of service and are within the autistic spectrum, and only then if there is a peer group for the new child to join. Information in relation to the “pilot” scheme currently in operation within the Lodge for respite care children should be included in the Lodge/schools Statement of Purpose.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The staff should be congratulated on the systems that have been created to encourage and support pupil involvement. The opinions of children are sought in a variety of ways through various systems of communication. The home provides a range of pictorial aids to assist with communicating their request, issues and concerns about the service they receive. This appears to be an effective system of communication. There is a system of contact books between home and school. Boarders are, as far as possible, at the centre of decision-making and 'house rules'. Boarders follow a variety of religions and although staff are sensitive to their needs, religious beliefs appear to be kept private and followed at home. Consultation uses the child's preferred means of communication, which is well documented in care plans. During the inspection, there were many examples of pupils being offered choices, whether in terms of drinks, meals or activities.</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 Head of Care has been assigned as the Child Protection Officer and residential staff have a range of policies available for guidance that include guidance on the subjects of privacy, confidentiality and gender-related issues. Pupil's records are secured within the main office. Staff spoken to stated that they had received training in child protection and were aware that on occasions information which they are given in confidence by a child may have to be shared with a third party. Most pupils need assistance with the making and receiving of telephone calls. The Statement of Purpose provides information on contact and in relation to the telephone it states that 'a comfortable and private place should be provided, staff should be present if requested by the pupil, or if they need support to make and maintain the call'. Arrangements are made for pupils to meet their parents in private. Where possible, personal care is provided by staff of the same gender as the pupil. All pupils require some degree of assistance with their personal care, which is undertaken either in the privacy of the bathroom or in their bedrooms. Each pupil has his/her individual plan for personal care. New staff work along side established members of staff to learn the best way to meet each child's needs.

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
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There is a formal complaints procedure outlined in the school’s prospectus, and Statement of Purpose. The National Autistic Society provides the procedure and it encourages parents and others to address complaints to the Head Teacher or any member of the governing body. The school has also introduced a pupil’s version of the complaints procedure in pictorial format and all children are offered the support of their key worker or their preferred person to help them clarify and make their complaint. The Lodge also receives the support of an outside support/advocate on a regular basis. The complaints procedure is also included in the staff induction programme and annual training programme. Staff who completed a questionnaire as part of this inspection were asked how they would handle complaints made by the children. Their responses confirmed that they were aware of the complaints procedure.

Number of complaints about care at the school recorded over last 12 months:	<input type="text" value="0"/>
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Number of above complaints substantiated:	<input type="text" value="0"/>
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Number of complaints received by CSCI about the school over last 12 months:	<input type="text" value="0"/>
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Number of above complaints substantiated:	<input type="text" value="0"/>
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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 Deputy Principal (Head of Care) is the designated person for Child Protection issues in the school. Staff have access to a policy encouraging them to challenge poor practice and they are encouraged to report any concerns to a manager under the staff Code of Conduct. The current Child Protection policy is both comprehensive and detailed and used in conjunction with the Hertfordshire County Council Child protection procedure and policy. Training on child protection issues is included in induction and in foundation training. The Lodge has appropriate links with other agencies, such as placing authorities, GPs, hospitals, and the local Social Services Department. The designated child protection officer completes an induction programme with all new members of staff, in relation to all the policies and practice guidelines relating to child protection and anti-bullying policies. There is also a key worker system in place that also acts as an advocate for each pupil. The Lodge has some excellent risk assessments, which are used in conjunction with the behaviour support plans.

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

0

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5) The school has, and follows, an anti-bullying policy, with which children and staff are familiar and which is effective in practice. Where possible children in the school contribute to the development of the policy.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Policies and procedures regarding bullying are both comprehensive and detailed. Pictorial aids to assist pupils, are displayed within the Lodge regarding the anti-bullying policy that operates within both the Lodge and the school. All staff are inducted into the anti-bullying policy by the Child Protection officer and training in anti bullying strategies and procedures is part of the behaviour management training programme. Staff who were interviewed showed a good knowledge of the policy and an awareness of the likelihood of some degree of bullying in any group of children. Staff are assisted in their assessment of whether or not bullying is taking place by the record of children's usual responses. Risk assessments consider the potential for bullying behaviour in different situations and action is taken to reduce any perceived risk. Groupings within the school and the Lodge are reviewed periodically in order to reduce inappropriate interactions to other pupils. Lunch and play times have been reorganised to allow for more peer compatibility with less crowding. Staffing levels allow for the pupils to be supervised at all times.		
Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied		100 %

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7) All significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified by the Head of the school or designated person to the appropriate authorities.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school is aware that all significant events should be notified to parents, CSCI and appropriate authorities. Any member of staff who was dismissed for unsuitability to work with children would be notified to the relevant party under the Protection of Children Act. There have been no serious incidents requiring notification in the past year. Any action or investigation of a notifiable event would be fully documented, a written record kept and the appropriate authority informed. The residential staff have a system whereby parents receive prompt notification of any allegation that a child has committed an offence. The school is aware that any serious concerns about the emotional or mental health of a child would refer to the G.P in the first instance.		
NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO CSCI DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:		
• conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children		0
• serious harm to a child		0
• serious illness or accident of a child		0
• serious incident requiring police to be called		0

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)		
The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The School and Lodge has procedures covering absences and has a comprehensive procedure for if a child goes missing. Should a child report that they went missing because of abuse, the School/Lodge would notify the appropriate services dealing with Child Protection and create a behaviour support plan if appropriate. There is a policy on physical restraint but such measures would normally be part of a package of care, agreed in advance and recorded in the care plan. Care staff are aware of the measures that they may properly take to prevent a child from leaving without permission.</p>		
Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:		0

CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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Relationships between staff and pupils were observed to be very positive and appropriate. At all times, staff spoke to pupils (using appropriate communication methods) explaining what they were doing and why. Choices were offered at every opportunity. Due to the complex needs of the pupils living at the Lodge there are very comprehensive guidelines in place that need to be adhered to and these are used as part of the behavioural support plans for each pupil. The Lodge uses various systems to recognise and reward positive behaviour and achievement, including “star charts” and certificates of achievement. Also displayed in the home were choice boards. There was no sign of favouritism. The home operates a key worker system, which provides that essential role of advocate for each pupil.

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)

Staff respond positively to acceptable behaviour, and where the behaviour of children is regarded as unacceptable by staff, it is responded to by constructive disciplinary measures which are approved by the Head of Care.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The school has a comprehensive policy and detailed guidance on the management of pupil behaviour, which covers the issues of control, discipline and physical intervention. The policies address the nature and characteristics of autism, the impact of these characteristics on pupil behaviour and the need for a problem solving approach to helping pupils manage their behaviour. Each pupil has an individual support plan (BSP), devised by the residential and day staff working with the pupil and the school’s psychology team, which is reviewed annually or more frequently as required. Its purpose is to clarify the intentions behind the behaviours, ensure consistency of response to pupil behaviours and assist pupils to become more independent. BSP’s are shared with parents to give greater consistency. The inspectors were informed that physical intervention is used as the last resort. All staff receive training in the management of pupil behaviour as part of their induction and take part in the rolling programme of 8 training modules based on the behaviour guidance document. The school’s psychology team work with staff and senior management to refine, develop, modify and evaluate all behaviour management programmes and are available to support staff and pupils with advice, guidance and interventions.

QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Prospective pupils are able to visit and view the Lodge prior to admission. Parents are involved in the planning process for admission. This is done on a gradual basis, starting with the pupil joining others at teatime and then staying overnight. The school has devised a pupil's 'Welcome to our Lodge' information pack which is provided to each prospective pupil prior to admission. This is in written, pictorial and sign format so that all pupils can understand it. Detailed recording of the pupil settling in is made in the home/school diary. Handover, between the school and the Lodge takes place on a regular basis and a group evaluation is also carried out. Feedback to parents is given on how the child is settling in. The Lodge has a 'Look after Children' (LAC) review programme. An initial review is held during the first six weeks of admission. Six pupils files were inspected. Each has a profile information sheet, parents contact form, medical consent form, Social Services report, annual review minutes and a behaviour support plan. Each pupil has a Development Learning Outcomes (DLO) programme, which includes self-help skills, daily living skills. A psychologist carries out a baseline assessment of achievement after admission and an individual educational care plan with objectives is devised in conjunction with the educational needs. Individual educational targets are set by a multi disciplinary team with the involvement of the pupil (where appropriate) and the parents. All pupils' departures are planned over a 12-month period and they are given appropriate information and guidance to assist in the process of transition.</p>		

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

There are very close working relationships between the Lodge and the school. A 24-hour 'handover' book is in use where care staff and teachers record the pupils' activities whilst in their care. There is also a daily verbal handover between the care staff and the teachers. Care staff attends the IEP (Individual Educational Programme) meetings. The Personal, Health and Social Educational (PHSE) curriculum is carried out jointly by the care staff and teachers. All staff work towards encouraging each child's personal, social and educational development and achievement. Independent living skills are promoted throughout the Lodge.

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?**

3

Due to the nature of autistic spectrum disorders, pupils often need extra support in order to participate in recreations, sports and cultural activities. Recreation and free times are structured to encourage participation and achieve maximum benefit from the activity. A wide range of leisure activities is arranged for the pupils including outdoors and community trips. The Lodge holds theme nights when food is brought and pupils engage in painting, decorations, dressing up and listening to different music to promote awareness of diverse cultures. The Lodge had just taken delivery of three new bicycles on the day of the inspection. Significant events such as birthdays are celebrated with a party, bouncy castles are also used for evening parties and pupils go out for meals, Bowling etc. Although the evenings are structured, pupils can chose to play and engage in other activities as they wish. They are provided with appropriate magazines, toys, games and music facilities. Cinema Nights are held at the Lodge and pupils have the opportunity to visit the local cinema. The Lodge has the use of a mini bus to enable pupils to visit local attractions such as 'Activity World', local parks, bowling alleys, shops and cafes. Pupils have the opportunity to use the school gymnasium and the garden apparatus. Individual and generic risk assessments are carried out and personal interests and hobbies are recorded in care files.

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 home has detailed and comprehensive policies in relation to intimate care of children and all RSW staff receive this information as part of their induction programme. Currently, care staff are not called upon to meet any intimate needs. They are sensitive to individual emotional and physical needs and actively support individuals (each child has a care plan that includes a health section). There are specific plans drawn up to cover individual needs and these include protocols and emergency procedures. The School has a Health Education programme that is also promoted by the residential staff as appropriate. Residential staff receive first aid training and will assist with or oversee the use of prescribed medication (there is a drugs cupboard available and children also have lockable facilities). The home now records all medication received. Issues of personal hygiene are dealt with sensitively. Children have an annual medical examination as part of their statement of educational needs. To a large extent, parents deal with routine medical, optical and dental appointments, although a number of children are registered with a local G.P. and with the family G.P. on a visitor basis. Staff will accompany a child to an appointment as is appropriate to their age, wishes and the circumstances.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)

Children are provided with adequate quantities of suitably prepared wholesome and nutritious food, having regard to their needs and wishes, and have the opportunity to learn to prepare their own meals. Where appropriate special dietary needs due to health, religious persuasion, racial origin or cultural background are met, including the choice of a vegetarian meal for children who wish it.

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

The Lodge has a new cook who has been in post for a period of three months and meals offered appear to be both varied and nutritional. Fresh fruit is delivered on a weekly basis and offered to pupils each day. Staff discuss with pupils the choice of foods available by showing pictures of food in order to devise the menu, which is compiled on a weekly basis. Choices of two main courses and alternatives are provided and ample drinks are made available. Menus have been reviewed since the last inspection took place and evaluated from the comments received from the children and adapted accordingly. There are two sittings in the dining room with different groups at different times. Vegetarian meals and cultural needs of pupils are met. Some pupils require verbal prompts with their meals. The inspector joined a group of children for supper and thoroughly enjoyed the interaction and manner in which mealtimes were organised. Pupils were encouraged and supported in making their own choices of food and assisted in the serving their own meals. There was plenty of food available and the choice of two main meals that was provided was both nutritious and attractively presented. The inspector wishes to thank the children that helped provide her with a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)

Children are provided for adequately on an individual basis and encouraged to exercise their own preferences in the choice of clothing and personal requisites. Children who require assistance to choose what they wear and/or how they spend their money are provided with the assistance they need, in a way which maximises their choice.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Pupils are able to bring and keep their own clothes for the duration of their stay. The school Bursar keeps £2 per pupil per week and parents are asked to contribute this if they are able. Pupils are taken for shopping to spend their pocket money by care staff. Pupils do not manage their own money and parents or the school provide their pocket money.

CARE PLANNING AND PLACEMENT PLAN

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school.
- Children's needs, development and progress is recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions.
- There are adequate records of both the staff and child groups of the school.
- In accordance with their wishes, children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while living away from home at school.
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.
- Children receive individual support when they need it.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

There is a written placement plan specifying how the school will care for each boarding pupil in accordance with his or her assessed needs, the school cares for that child in accordance with that plan, monitors progress in relation to that plan, and updates that plan as necessary.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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There are excellent systems of recording and the home should be congratulated in providing comprehensive and detailed individual care plans for the pupils living at Radlett Lodge. All pupils have very detailed care plans and IEPs (Individual Education Programmes). All placements are voluntary and parents are very involved with the devising of care plans, from providing information to attending review meetings. There are annual reviews of IEPs and parents and pupils are invited to attend these. Local Authorities are held responsible for 6 monthly reviews of the placements, while care plans are reviewed every term within the school. Each child has a key worker. Four care plans were inspected were found to contain all the required information, with sufficient detail to enable staff to meet assessed needs.

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
On the day of the inspection four care plans were examined. The care plans were found to be written in a clear accessible style. Changes in behaviour were carefully noted, and generally the recording was undertaken in a positive style, noting progress and development. Children are involved in reviewing their own progress and there was evidence of involvement with children's comments, likes and dislikes being included in the plans. Staff stated that any requests for access to the records are supported, subject to the Data Protection Act. The Head of Care is fully aware that these records must be kept for a period of 21 years, or passed on to the next school.		

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)		
The school maintains clear and accurate records on the staff and child groups of the school, and major events affecting the school and children resident there.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Records were sampled during the Inspection and those for staff and children contained all the elements required by this standard. Recruitment procedures were thorough and the Head of Care is fully aware of the need to keep details of anyone living or working on the schools premises. Some records are kept in the school building; such as staff records (personnel). Records relating to menus, risk assessments, and child health care needs are kept within the residential unit. Each child has their own independence checklist record, as skills are attained so they are recorded as being met. This checklist is clearly presented and provides a quick reference point to a child's attainment. The Head of Care was aware of the need to keep these records for a period of five years and menu's for one year.		

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Pupils are positively encouraged and enabled by the Lodge to maintain contact with their parents and other family members. The Statement of Purpose states that 'any restrictions on contact between the pupil and those significant to them will be detailed in the placement plan and must be strictly adhered to. It is the right of the pupil to remain in contact with those significant to them, and due to differences in communication, social understanding of children with autism, staff will usually need to provide encouragement and facilitate this'. During the week, staff contact parents regarding any welfare concerns and there are currently no restrictions placed on contact with any of the parents imposed by a court or on the grounds of risk of significant harm to a child. Pupil's can meet in private with their parents should the circumstances arise. Staff do receive some training, as part of the induction programme, develop their skill to work with the pupils and their parents.

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?**

0

This standard is not applicable as none of the pupils are in care.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Each pupil has an individual care placement plan (and each pupil has an individual education plan). All residential staff are available to pupils to support them with any personal or welfare concerns and they also take care to ensure that no pupil is left isolated within the Lodge. All pupils receive individualised support as detailed in their care plans. Pupils are encouraged to participate in social groups and isolation is minimised by the school choosing not to admit pupils without a peer group of young people with similar needs. Communication is facilitated through a variety of aids including Makaton and Symbols. Pupils may contact any member of staff with their concerns, although it is most likely that staff members will first notice a difference in mood or behaviour of the young person and ask what is the matter. Psychologist, speech and language therapy are provided within the school. No therapeutic techniques are employed other than those under the instruction of the qualified Psychologist and speech and language therapists. Referrals are made for other specialist support as required. While personal, health, social education commences in the classroom, it is reported to carry over into the residential unit. Support is given to pupils following any traumatic incidents, and the school states that it will facilitate a particular expertise in bereavement counselling if required.

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
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The Lodge has been re-decorated since the last inspection took place with the help of a "colour" specialist using low-arousal colour schemes. Radlett Lodge is situated in the village of Radlett, which has open spaces and pleasant countryside. It is purpose built and is within the grounds of the school. The main entrance has electronically controlled security gates and the boundaries are fenced providing a safe and secure environment. Radlett Lodge is a two-storey building. On the ground floor there are three separate lounges, three toilets for children and two for adults. There is also a kitchen, dining room and a small quiet/relaxation room. The first floor has nine bedrooms, two bathrooms with toilets and four other bathrooms. There are a further four toilets, a staff shower room, two staff sleeping in rooms, a laundry room and a linen room. None of the children accommodated have disabilities and therefore aids and adaptations are not required.

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?****3**

A tour of the Lodge was undertaken as part of this inspection and it was noted that it was homely, clean and free from any offensive odours. There has been an extensive re-decoration programme carried out since the last inspection took place, which has created a colourful and creative environment for everyone to enjoy. Pupils are encouraged to furnish their rooms with personal possessions and there was evidence of this in the rooms. Possessions brought into the Lodge by pupils are recorded. The Lodge has nine bedrooms, which are located on the first floor of the building. Two of the bedrooms occupied by pupils are not carpeted. The reasons why laminate flooring is provided in these bedrooms is stated in the pupils care plans and the inspectors were informed that when the current pupils no longer occupy these rooms carpets would be fitted. A portable telephone is available for pupils use. There is a vast range of materials to enable pupils to pursue hobbies and interests. There is a laundry facility for bedding and some clothing but the majority of each pupil's clothes are taken home to be washed. Visitors can be seen in private, if wish. There are three members of waking night staff and one sleeping-in each night.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)

The school has sufficient baths, showers and toilets, all of good standard and suitable to meet the needs of the children. The school has appropriate changing and washing facilities for incontinent children where necessary.

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

There are adequate numbers of toilets and bathrooms facilities for the number of pupils in the Lodge. On the ground floor there are three toilets for pupils and two for adults. The first floor has two bathrooms with toilets and four other bathrooms. There are a further four toilets and a staff shower room. Bathrooms and shower rooms are suitably equipped and accessible. Privacy of pupils is ensured, although some pupils may require staff assistance.

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 Lodge undertakes regular fire drills. Emergency lighting is tested on a monthly basis and weekly fire alarm tests are undertaken. All of these tests are recorded. All staff have received fire safety training which includes the use of fire extinguishers. Comprehensive risk assessments have been undertaken and recorded. Risks assessed include the school's premises and grounds, children's known and likely activities, risk arising from pupils not able to appreciate risks themselves and potential risks to children from public access to pupils during activities or outings and fire risk assessments. Water temperatures are recorded and on the day of the inspection were tested and were being maintained within safe limits.

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 carries out the appointment of staff working within the residential setting. Four staff files were inspected and all contained the information required by this standard. Staff files are held securely within the school offices. The inspector was informed that agency staff, volunteers and students on placements are required to complete Criminal Record Bureau checks. Evidence to confirm this was not inspected on this occasion.

Total number of care staff:

26

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

8

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The Lodge is managed by the Deputy Principal of Care who is supported by a Senior Team Leader. The staffing is divided into two teams led by a team leader and the team is made up of 3 staff. The Lodge provides adequate staffing for the needs of the current pupil group. There are 9 members of staff on duty from 7.30 a.m. to 3.30p.m with the Deputy Principal of Care supernumerary to these numbers. This provides three members of staff per group of children. The evening staff arrive at 2.45 p.m. and work until 9.45p.m. During the night there are two staff sleeping in and two waking night carers on duty. The home currently has no vacancies. There is a full time cook in the residential unit. The assistant caretaker carries out domestic and routine maintenance jobs within the home.

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?**

4

All staff receive induction training within the first six weeks of appointment. A schedule of training needs is identified as part of the supervision process. The home provides an excellent training programme both internally from senior staff members and through the NAS rolling programme and also through external professional trainers. Staff spoken to during this inspection stated that they had the opportunity to attend a range of courses. Courses attended include behaviour management, child protection, SCIP-1, first aid, manual handling, food hygiene and spell-2. There are several staff who are currently working towards achieving either NVQ level 3 in Caring for Children and Young people and NVQ level 4 in management. The Lodge is expected to achieve its target of 80% of staff with NVQ level 3 by 2005.

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The Head of Care is line managed by the Principal. All staff received MSD (supervision) from their line manager, which is formally provided at least six times a year. All staff receive an annual appraisal. Staff meetings between the two staff groups are held weekly and there is an expectation that all staff attend these meetings. The agenda is set and all staff are encouraged to contribute. As part of this inspection members of staff completed a written questionnaire asking them to state the systems that are in place to support them. 9 completed questionnaires were forwarded to the inspector and all staff stated that they receive support through a variety of means including supervision, training, teamwork, debriefing sessions at the end of each evening shift, through the senior members of staff, shadowing and induction. Staff confirmed that they have written job descriptions. These were inspected and it was noted that these related to the Statement of Purpose and that they clearly stated that duties expected of the staff member.

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?

4

The Head of Social Work has been in post for a period of a year post. The current staff team within the Lodge have a wealth of experiencing and knowledge within the field of Autism are currently receiving support form the senior management team with the school. The Lodge has good systems of communication, with three handover shifts per day to ensure the consistency of approach is maintained. The School and Lodge have planned responses to all foreseeable crises. Residential care staff will become registered with the General Social Care Council once it is fully operational. The Lodge provides adequate staffing levels for the needs of the children, currently using the service. On occasions additional staffing is provided where a risk assessment has dictated that a child requires additional support, in order to ensure the safety of the child, and other children living at the lodge and staff. The staff team appeared both knowledgeable and professional in their approach with the children and should be congratulated on providing a safe, stimulating and homely environment for everyone using this service. The Principal Head of Care and support staff have worked extremely hard in creating a professional, creative and enjoyable environment in which to work and should be congratulated on their commitment throughout the year and in preparing and producing some excellent documentation and delivering a truly excellent service to children with the Autistic spectrum. There is currently a “pilot” scheme running to provide a respite care service at weekends and holidays, which is being utilised by several families. This scheme will be reviewed after a period of six months.

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

X %

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

The Commission for Social Care Inspection is informed within 24 hours if a receiver, liquidator or trustee in bankruptcy becomes responsible for the school. Such persons on becoming responsible for the school have ensured that the school continues to be managed on a day to day basis by a Head who meets recruitment and qualification requirements for a Head under these Standards. Such a temporary Head must make sure that the operation of the school meets the requirements of these standards in relation to the day to day running of the school.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The Commission for Social Care Inspection is notified of any significant events that occur within the Residential Unit. The Principal signs and monitors all the records listed in this standard except where records are delegated to a senior member of staff. The Head of Care and the Principal take action in relation to any concentration, trend or pattern in recorded issues. There are annual reports prepared for governors and for parents. The residential unit is part of an overall audit, which is carried out on an annual basis. There are clear and comprehensive policies in relation to the budgeting and financial responsibilities of the home. Financial control is carried out by the Principal and supported by the Bursar and administration staff. The home is also part of the overall planning and reviewing of the annual budget and linked to the schools development plan.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)

The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body receive a written report on the conduct of the school from a person visiting the school on their behalf every half term.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

A representative from the National Autistic Society visits the home on a monthly basis and written reports following this visit are sent to the school. Copies of the reports were available for inspection. The school has a comprehensive policy detailing the role of the Appointed Visitor. This policy also details staff responsibilities and states that 'any member of staff within the residential setting may be required to host an inspection and will be expected to understand and support the process'. Further guidance in the policy includes the role of the Appointed Visitor, an example of an official National Autistic Society Identity Card, Interviews with residents, representatives, parents and staff, issues to consider and guidelines for making a complaint. The school and residential unit also have a Service Support Committee who monitor and review care practices, the welfare of the children and current policies and procedures. The membership of this committee includes, professional involved in the school, professionals from other educational establishments, a representative of the local council, parents and staff representatives. Communication links are clear and policies and procedures are both comprehensive and detailed regarding the health and welfare of the children living at the Lodge. The home continues to work hard in establishing positive and open communication links with families, carers and relevant professionals.

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 on 23rd February 2005 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

We are working on the best way to include Head's responses into the final published reports. In the mean time a copy of the response can be obtained from the Herts Area Office.

Action taken by the CSCI in response to Head's comments:

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

Head's comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report

YES

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

Note:

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

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 20th April 2005, 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

NO

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.

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