



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Northeast Manor School

**Rodmell
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 3EY**

Lead Inspector
Lindy Latreille

Announced Inspection
21st February 2006 10:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

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

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

Those outcomes are:

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

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

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

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of school	Northeast Manor School
Address	Rodmell Lewes East Sussex BN7 3EY
Telephone number	01273 472915
Fax number	01273 472202
Email address	headofcare@northeast.co.uk
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Northeast Manor School
Name of Head	Mr Paul Stanley
Name of Head of Care	Mr Paul Ludlow
Age range of residential pupils	10-17 years
Date of last welfare inspection	28/06/04

Brief Description of the School:

Northeast Manor School is a day, and weekly boarding school, for young people aged between 10 and 17 years of age.

It is a DfES approved co-educational day and boarding special school for pupils with specific learning difficulties (Dyslexia).

At the time of the inspection there were a total of 78 pupils on the school roll. 37 of these were boarders, of which 30 were boys and 7 were girls. There are three boarding houses on the main site, two of which provide accommodation for the boys, and separate accommodation for the girls.

SUMMARY

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

This was an announced inspection that took place over two days from 10.00-21.00 and 0800-16.00. Two inspectors carried out the inspection. In the main only the core standards were assessed as the school has actioned recommendations in the past. A broader view of the school can be obtained by reading the previous report of 28/06/2004. There were thirty male and seven female boarders at the school. The boarders were seen during their daily residential routines, and evening activities were observed. All meals were taken with the boarders. A tour of the boarding premises was undertaken and the boarders were spoken to in their houses during the evening. Two groups of boarders were interviewed across the age range. Staff were interviewed including the Headmaster, Head of Care, Head of Girls, Acting Kitchen Manager, Housekeeper, Bursar, Gap student, Matron and Houseparents. A sample of parents were contacted and their feedback is incorporated into the body of the report. Documentation seen included pupil files, medication records, complaints book, sanctions recording and minutes of: Council meetings, boarders meetings and Houseparents' meetings.

What the school does well:

Northeast Manor School provides a twenty-four hour curriculum of care and education where individualised needs of pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia) are identified and addressed.

What has improved since the last inspection?

All boarders are now on the main site and no pupils have to cross the road. A newly built boarding house for senior boys is in use. The Stables boarding house has been refurbished and is now used by the girls. Questionnaires have been sent to parents to gather their views on aspects of the school. There is a new parent support group, F.A.N.S., and termly workshops are available for all parents. The provision of speech and language therapy has been increased by 50% and an increased investment has also been made in Occupational Therapy. Improved management and recording of medication is now in place. The Acting Kitchen Manager has initiated healthy menu changes. There is a new handbook for staff and updated policy on child protection. Care plans have been introduced. Two full time Houseparents have been appointed. The Head of Care has successfully completed a Professional Development Certificate in Education. The Head of Care holds a Solution for Concerns book. A Boarders Forum has just been started. The Pharmacy Inspector from Commission for Social Care Inspection has consulted with the school satisfactorily with regard to best practice in the management of medication.

What they could do better:

Sickbay should be painted and the area used for appropriate health education. The window in sickbay should be restricted. Training in listening to children should be offered for care staff. Feedback to boarders following meetings should be in a format that is clearly understood by the boarders. The Solutions for concerns book needs to include outcomes.

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

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

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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Achieving Economic Wellbeing

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

14 and 15.

Boarders' health needs are identified and addressed positively. Following the advice from the Pharmacy inspector from Commission for Social Care Inspection medication administration is robust. Re-organised menus are offering healthier meals, which are enjoyed.

EVIDENCE:

New care plans are in place and developing to identify the care needs from the Statement of Educational Need (SEN) and actioning agreed strategies. Matron ensures that the parents supply up to date information so that health care plans are comprehensive documents. The parents carry out most health appointments at weekends or during the holidays. There were examples of topical health promotion in one boarding house that invoked discussion. There is a qualified first aider on every shift, and the Gap student has followed training in first aid. None of the boarders self medicate and the management and recording of medication is robust. The sickbay area has not been painted recently and has one window that can fully open onto a small flat roof giving external access to the main roof.

A Food Policy in July 2005 sought to reduce the amount of processed food and re-heating and increase the salad bar. The Acting Kitchen Manager has a planned four-week healthy menu and the some pupils reported an improvement in the quality of food. Meals times were social events with the young people serving and clearing appropriately. Kitchen staff were encouraging and friendly to the pupils and voice their concerns appropriately to staff when pupils are observed not eating. The kitchen staff felt supported and valued and are well supervised by the Bursar. The boarding houses have wall mounted hot water facility for making tea, coffee and hot chocolate. The senior boarders are allowed to bring in snacks. Where one house developed a social evening sharing biscuits and drinks this was stopped following a review, as it was not taking place in the other boarding houses. Where the boarding houses

have basins in the rooms there is no labelling to state that the cold water is not for drinking.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

3,4,5,6,10, 26 and 27.

The confidential management of recorded material is good. Issues around the privacy of boarders and trust were raised by the young people. The boarders in the majority said that they would take concerns to family or friends as a few felt that they were not listened to in school. Child protection training continues to be addressed and new materials have been developed. The boarders confirmed that bullying is not a problem at present. The recording of sanctions is in a bound, but not numbered book and does fulfil the National Minimum Standards. There have been no restraints used. The environment is well maintained and safe. Recruitment has not consistently met the requirements of the National Minimum Standards.

EVIDENCE:

Recorded material is kept confidentially. Feedback from the boarders, and some parents, was that they feel they have little privacy, for example speaking on the telephone, and that they are "always watched " and "not trusted". The Headmaster confirmed that supervision was close and, in his opinion, appropriate given the needs of many of the boarders. Training for staff in child protection and safeguarding continues to be addressed and new materials have been developed in a staff handbook and the policy has been further updated.

The boarders said that they would mostly take their worries home or to a friend. Training for care staff in listening to children might support the boarders further and offer them a listening ear at school.

The staff and the Gap student are clear in their role with regard to child protection and safeguarding and have followed current training. A new handbook and revised policy supports their current knowledge.

The boarders were clear that there was little bullying in the school. The Head of Care confirmed that care staff have received training in the awareness and strategies to prevent of bullying delivered by himself. His currency in this area has been his achievement of his Professional Development Certification in Education.

The records of all sanctions and restraints are kept in a bound book, though the pages are not numbered. Where sanctions are linked to an incident it was not easy to cross reference to a detailed report as entries are made in the daily incident book. These entries are signed and monitored by senior staff and where reports or incident forms were completed they were filed in the boarders files. The Rewards and Sanctions Committee also monitors the outcomes of behavioural incidents.

The environment of the school is well maintained. Necessary health and safety checks are recorded. The recommendations of the fire service have all been dealt with satisfactorily.

Of the three files sampled shortfalls were found in two. One member of staff had a Criminal Records Bureau check that related to their last employment position but not the one sited on their CV or from whom references had been taken. All qualifications should be seen as original and endorsed on the copies and dated and signed. Where references are faxed there needs to be a hard copy posted. The school has developed a new application form, following the Bishard Inquiry that is more detailed, but still needs to ask for a written explanation for gaps in employment.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

12 and 22.

The boarders are provided with facilities to support their studies and staff offer positive guidance if requested. The boarders' needs are well known to the staff and well supported in the care setting.

EVIDENCE:

The boarders were observed being supported to completed their educational tasks and activities in small groups with appropriate equipment and staffing. A small number of parents disagreed with this statement, but the majority did not raise any concerns.

Northeast Manor School has a small number of boarders and this allows for the individual and focused care in school to move seamlessly into boarding life routine and activities. There are two Independent Visitors that, at present, are little used. The boarders can speak to any member of staff if they have a problem. Most parents consulted supported this view.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

2,17 and 20.

Boarders are consulted but the process could be improved. Individual care plans for all boarders are developing and beginning to show an overview of each young person's care needs. Boarders go home each Friday afternoon and so maintain contact with parents.

EVIDENCE:

The boarders stated that they do not feel that consultation is effective for them. Some minutes of meetings do not contain feedback on issues raised, and School Council meetings are held irregularly. Most parents reported that they felt involved in their child's care at the school but a small proportion felt the regime was somewhat "restrictive" and not open to input from parents. The new parent support group, FANS, and termly workshops are in place for parents to share information. Some of the boarders stated that there was no point in speaking out. They were uncertain as to how the new Boarding Forum would develop; this view reflected that only one meeting had so far been held. The Head of Care thinks it will address issues more quickly and he is aware of the need to feedback and is developing a timetable to support this. Some houses have house meetings and the feedback from those was very positive. A calm room had been created following consultation with the girls and has been

most effective. House parents could see the potential for supervising pupil led meetings that would develop social and leadership skills much needed in this group of young people according to some parents.

The individual care plans are now in place and the outcomes for boarders are good. Care staff need to identify all the relevant care targets from the Statement of Educational Need and then detail the individual strategies needed for each young person, together with how staff will support these in the boarding setting. Statement objective are addressed during the school day as part of each pupils Individual Educational Plan (IEP).

Being weekly boarders the young people go home each Friday afternoon and return to school on Sunday evenings so there is close family contact. Many boarders have mobile telephones and can maintain contact that way, for others there are telephones in the boarding houses. Some boarders said that they felt their conversations were overheard when on the school telephone. Of the parents contacted all commented on the improved abilities of their children in education and social skills, though some felt that the telephone contact from the school to them could be improved following behavioural incidents.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

23.

Northeast Manor School is on an attractive campus with spacious internal and external facilities that provide a quality environment for the young people.

EVIDENCE:

Northeast Manor School is situated in a tranquil part of the East Sussex countryside. The school is all on one site and offers spacious accommodation for boarders in new or refurbished houses. The new senior boarding house is a pleasing building, somewhat short on storage but the school are aware and making contingency plans. There have been major refurbishment to other parts of the building; boys shower, thatched roof, and door releases to meet the fire service requirements.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

29,30 and 31.

The new Houseparents are experienced but lack formal care qualifications. Care staff are supervised informally but there is no recorded programme of induction or supervision in place. The Head of Care holds a professional qualification.

EVIDENCE:

Personnel files support that the two newly appointed Houseparents are experienced, but care qualifications were not evidenced. One Houseparent has worked in the school for many years and followed in-house training over that time; the new Houseparent has followed some in-house training. The Head Master stated that at interview he was satisfied that the new member of staff held qualifications but at the inspection there was no evidence in the personnel file that confirmed a named qualification held, whether it was educational or care, or if original certificates were seen. The Head of Care confirmed that

both staff would be offered training through the Boarding Schools Association. The Head of Care reiterated that staff have been fully inducted and supported in the early weeks of their new positions. There were no records to inspect to substantiate this. No staff have a personal development plan; the Head of Care explained that they would be put in place following the completion of appraisals.

There is no recorded programme of formal supervision in place and as new staff the Houseparents should have received one-to-one fortnightly, recorded supervision for their first two terms of employment. Both of them said that they felt supported informally by the Head of Care and their weekly, recorded houseparent meetings. The Head of Care agreed that unless records are kept matters that needed to be revisited might prove more difficult. All supervision should address 30.4 in the National Minimum Standards.

The Head of Care has successfully completed a Professional Development Certificate in Education and is a member of the Independent Schools Council Committee on Child Health and Well-Being and also represents the Independent Schools Association.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

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

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

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

“N/A” in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

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

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

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

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

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
16	X
21	X
23	4
24	X
25	X

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

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1	RS3	That care staff supervision of the boarders is reviewed.	21/05/06
2	RS14	That sick bay is repainted and the widow restricted.	21/05/06
3	RS4	That care staff are given training in listening to children.	30/07/06
4	RS10	That all sanctions relating to boarding care, kept in the bound book, have numbered pages.	21/05/06
5	RS27	That recruitment checks fulfil the requirements of 27.2 National Minimum Standards.	21/05/06
6	RS29	That there is a formal and recorded programme of induction for all new care staff.	30/07/06
7	RS30	That there is a formal and recorded programme of supervision for all care staff.	21/05/06

Commission for Social Care Inspection

East Sussex Area Office

Ivy House

3 Ivy Terrace

Eastbourne

East Sussex

BN21 4QT

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120

Email: enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.csci.org.uk

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