



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

BOARDING SCHOOL

St Michael`s School

**Harts Lane
Burghclere
Near Newbury
Berkshire
RG20 9JW**

Lead Inspector
Brian McQuoid

Announced Inspection
8th May 2006 10:00a

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 *Boarding 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.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of school St Michael`s School

Address Harts Lane
Burghclere
Near Newbury
Berkshire
RG20 9JW

Telephone number 01635 278137

Fax number

Email address

Provider Web address

**Name of Governing body,
Person or Authority
responsible for the
school** Society of St Pius X

Name of Head Father Frank Kurtz

Name of Head of Care

**Age range of boarding
pupils** **11 to 16 years.**

**Date of last welfare
inspection** 09/05/05.

Brief Description of the School:

St Michael's is a boarding and day school for boys and girls, aged 5 to 16 years. The school is run under the auspices of the Society of Pius X and provides a Traditional Catholic education. Boarding at the school is provided for boys only and at the time of the inspection there were 12 boys boarding. The school is located a few miles south of the town of Newbury in the village of Burghclere. The school offers weekly or full boarding facilities for boys and boarders are cared for by lay members and religious members of the Society of Pius X. At the time of the previous inspection there was a girls boarding house located a short distance from the main school site. This has now closed and the school does not now accept girl boarders.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection of the school took place over two days and involved two inspectors. Boarders completed questionnaires prior to the inspection. The inspectors spent time with the school's head and members of staff as well as being shown around the premises by boarders and joining them for some mealtimes. A group of boarders selected at random met with one of the inspectors. In addition three girls staying in lodgings arranged by the school were also met and spoken with. Relevant records and documentation were also looked at as part of the inspection process.

What the school does well:

Pupils at the school display high standards of behaviour, they get on with each other extremely well and incidents of bullying are rare. The school is good at welcoming and integrating new pupils into school life. Relationships with staff who have boarding responsibilities are good and there are good systems in place within the school for ensuring the physical environment and activities undertaken by pupils are safe.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There is an increased awareness and knowledge of child protection within the school and the school's Head has attended specific training on the subject. There was no evidence of girls experiencing any inappropriate discrimination in any aspect of school life and the school's discipline policy was being applied fairly for all pupils. New boarders from overseas are now being well supported upon arrival at the school and there is access to a range of activities for boarders.

What they could do better:

The school need to improve the provision for educating pupils about major risks to health and to ensure a policy for the administration of medication is in place. The recruitment and vetting of staff must be carried out in accordance with the National Minimum Standards. The school also need to ensure their independent visitors are appropriately vetted. A notification to the DfES and a letter to the society's Father Superior have been sent detailing the serious concerns in relation to recruitment. There needs to be a system in place for reviewing the performance of staff members and opportunities provided for staff to undertake further training relevant to boarding. Attention needs to be given to further promote the welfare of the pupils accommodated in lodgings arranged by the school.

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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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders' health is promoted. (NMS 6)
- Safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records. (NMS 7)
- Boarders' receive first aid and health care as necessary.(NMS 15)
- Boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill.(NMS 16)
- Boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal Problems.(NMS 17)
- Boarders receive good quality catering provision (NMS 24)
- Boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals.(NMS 25)
- Boarders are suitably accommodated when ill. (NMS 48)
- Boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered.(NMS 49)

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

6 and 15.

Quality in this outcome area is poor. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school provides a healthy diet for pupils and regular opportunities for physical activities. The school does not provide pupils with appropriate information or guidance on countering major risks to their health. Pupils receive suitable first-aid and health care according to their needs. Parental consent forms for medical treatment need to be revised and the school needs to have a written policy in place for the administration of medication.

EVIDENCE:

The school's head confirmed that there is no formal personal, social and health education programme operated within the school. There was one instance reported by a pupil where they had been given a leaflet relating to drug misuse but others spoken to could not recall having received any information or guidance relating to countering major risks to health while at the school. The school's stance on alcohol, smoking and illegal substance abuse by boarders is detailed within the staff and parents handbook . There were no reports of any incidents involving boarders in any of these activities.

Boarders at the school are registered with the local GP and appointments are made as necessary. Those boarders spoken with who had visited the local surgery reported positively on the experience. There are a number of qualified first-aiders among the staff group and the relevant certificates were seen . First-aid boxes are located throughout the school and records of accidents

were seen to be being maintained. Medication was seen to be stored securely and records being kept appropriately. The practice of administering medication was satisfactory but there was no supporting written policy or procedures. Parental consent for emergency treatment and for identified non-prescribed medication was seen to be in place for some boarders while some had only the permission for non-prescribed medication. At the time of the inspection there were no boarders self-medicating other than those with inhalers for asthma.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders are protected from bullying.(NMS 2)
- Boarders are protected from abuse.(NMS 3)
- Use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate.(NMS 4)
- Boarders' complaints are appropriately responded to.(NMS 5)
- The operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare (NMS 13)
- Boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school.(NMS 22)
- Boarders are protected from the risk of fire. (NMS 26)
- The welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school.(NMS 28)
- Boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high risk activities.(NMS 29)
- Boarders' personal privacy is respected.(NMS 37)
- There is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders.(NMS 38)
- Boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures and there is supervision of all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises.(NMS 39)
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion. (NMS 41)
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.(NMS 47)

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

2, 3, 4, 5, 26, 37, 38, 39, 41 and 47.

Quality in this outcome area is poor. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Boarders at the school are suitably protected from bullying. There is a satisfactory knowledge of child protection reporting procedures amongst staff however the member of staff with chief responsibility for boarders should receive more specific in-depth training on the subject. Boarders are well behaved and the school's use of discipline is fair. Punishments are suitably recorded. The school should have a suitable physical restraint policy in place. Complaints are addressed appropriately at the school, boarders are suitably protected from the risk of fire and their personal privacy is respected. The school's recruitment procedures are not implemented consistently and do not provide adequately for the safeguarding of pupils welfare. Boarding accommodation at the school is suitably secure and the lodgings provision is satisfactory.

EVIDENCE:

The school have an anti-bullying policy in place and evidence from pupil questionnaires and discussions with boarders showed that bullying is not a problem within the school and that pupils get on very well with each other.

The school have a satisfactory child protection policy in place and all of the staff spoken with during the inspection displayed an awareness of the relevant reporting procedures and what to do in the event of receiving an allegation of abuse. The school's head who is the nominated child protection liaison officer for the school has attended two courses relevant to child protection since the previous inspection and certificates were seen to confirm this. Boarding staff confirmed that they had also received child protection guidance during an orientation day prior to the start of the Autumn term 2005. A recent Ofsted inspection of the school carried out during January 2006 recommended that all staff receive child protection training and the head reported that a scheduled date for this to take place was cancelled and that a further date is to be arranged.

The school's handbook for parents makes clear the expectations of pupils behaviour and gives details of the school's discipline policy. The majority of boarders described staff as treating them fairly and there was no evidence of any excessive or idiosyncratic punishments being used. Punishments were seen to be recorded and to be in accordance with the school's policy. Standards of pupil behaviour observed during the inspection were exemplary. The school do not have a policy in place for the use of physical restraint.

The school complaints procedure is contained within the handbook for parents and details for pupils of what to do if they have a concern are displayed on noticeboards . The contact details for the Commission are included in the information provided. The school's head maintains a record of complaints and informed inspectors that there had not been any received since March 2005. Boarders reported having staff to be able to approach with a concern if the need arose.

Records showed that all of the necessary checks and tests of fire safety equipment were being carried out on a regular basis and that fire evacuation drills were also being held regularly. Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed throughout the school and boarders were aware of what to do in the event of a fire. An up-to-date fire risk assessment was in place and a letter was seen from the local Fire and Rescue department confirming that they would be carrying out an inspection of the school's premises during June 2006. This was at the school's request.

Boarders confirmed that their personal privacy was respected by staff.

Recruitment records sampled showed procedures were not being followed and that mistakes had been made. Criminal Records Bureau checks were in place for the majority of staff, the exceptions being those who had been at the school for a considerable time and for these there was a check against List 99 on record. A number of enhanced CRB checks on record did not include a check against the POCA (Protection of Children Act) list because the relevant box on the application form had not been crossed. This applied to staff from overseas who in addition did not have any check or certificate from their country of origin. Application forms including CV's and references were on record but there were no records of interviews being carried out, no evidence of checks on qualifications and no record of references being verified.

The boys boarding house has a coded lock on the entrance and staff confirmed that the boarding accommodation is restricted solely for the use of boarders with no public access. The school is a fairly open site with direct access from a main road. There are currently no signs directing visitors to a central point. The school's head informed the inspectors that this was a shortfall they had identified and were planning to address.

There were no hazards to the safety of boarders observed during the inspection. The school have a health and safety policy in place and a system for recording written risk-assessments and carrying out health and safety checks. Risk-assessments were seen for the use of the school's swimming pool, for off-site activities and trips, for the use of hazardous substances and machinery and for procedures within the school's main kitchen. Windows within the boarding house were seen to have restricted openings where necessary and records showed that portable electrical appliances were being tested annually. The schools water supply had also been recently tested.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.(NMS 11)
- Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination.(NMS 18)
- Boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands.(NMS 27)
- Boarders have satisfactory provision to study.(NMS 43)
- Boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas.(NMS 46)

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

14 and 18.

Boarders receive appropriate personal support from staff, however there is a need for the school's independent persons to be subject to Criminal Records Bureau checks. Boarders are not subject to any inappropriate discrimination.

EVIDENCE:

Quality in this outcome area is poor. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Questionnaires completed by boarders indicated that the majority had one or more members of staff they would go to if they had a personal problem and this was confirmed by the group spoken with during the inspection. The school does have two independent persons whose contact details are provided for boarders and who visit the school on a regular basis. Boarders spoken with were aware of the persons concerned and their role in providing support for them. The school's head confirmed that neither of the independent persons had been subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check.

The school have an equal opportunities policy that is detailed within the staff and parents handbook. The school does have pupils from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds but there was no evidence gained during the inspection of any inappropriate discrimination, either from pupils or from observation. At the time of the inspection there were two French boarding pupils who had arrived at the school within the previous two weeks and who had limited English. The school's French teacher spoke to both pupils in the presence of an inspector and it was established that they had been made to feel very welcome and were being well supported and integrated into school life.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school.(NMS 12)
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.(NMS 14)
- Boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families.(NMS 19)
- New boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in.(NMS 21)
- Boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school.(NMS 30)
- There are sound relationships between staff and boarders.(NMS 36)

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

12 and 19.

Boarders are able to contribute their views on boarding provision at the school although there is no formal provision for doing so. There is suitable provision enabling boarders to maintain private contact with their families but the rules governing the possession and use of mobile phones does need to be clarified for the benefit of boarders.

EVIDENCE:

Quality in this outcome area is adequate. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to the service.

Boarders spoken with reported having good relationships with the staff looking after them and feeling able to express their views and opinions. There are regular trips out to different venues during term-time Saturdays and boarders said their views had been sought on where to go.

The school provides a payphone for boarders that was seen to afford an appropriate level of privacy when being used and able to be used without having to seek staff permission. Boarders reported being happy with this provision with most having pre-arranged times when their parents would call them. The school rules state that boarders are permitted to bring mobile phones into school but must hand them in to the housemaster on arrival. Some boarders were not aware that mobile phones were permitted.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders' possessions and money are protected.(NMS 20)
- Boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation.(NMS 40)
- Boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.(NMS 42)
- Boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities.(NMS 44)
- Boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day.(NMS 45)
- Boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school.(NMS 50)

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

51.

Quality in this outcome area is adequate. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The lodgings for three pupils at the school provides satisfactory accommodation and suitable safeguards for their welfare. There is however insufficient being done to promote their welfare in terms of activities and peer interaction.

EVIDENCE:

The Convent residence of the Sisters of the Society was providing lodgings for three sibling girl pupils at the school. The arrangement involved the girls lodging for four nights from Monday to Friday and going home every weekend. A written agreement was seen to be in place between the school and the pupils parents concerning the arrangement and the accommodation had been seen by the parents. The three girls reported being happy with their accommodation and an inspector was shown around the premises by two of them. The accommodation was seen to be satisfactory. The three girls concerned reported being lonely at times and would like to have more opportunities for activities and interaction with their peers. This information was relayed to the Sister in charge of the Convent during the course of the inspection.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- A suitable statement of the school's principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff (NMS 1)
- There is clear leadership of boarding in the school.(NMS 8)
- Crises affecting boarders' welfare are effectively managed.(NMS 9)
- The school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare.(NMS 10)
- Risk assessment and school record keeping contribute to boarders' welfare.(NMS 23)
- Boarders are adequately supervised by staff.(NMS 31)
- Staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site.(NMS 32)
- Boarders are adequately supervised at night.(NMS 33)
- Boarders are looked after by staff with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.(NMS 34)
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.(NMS 35)
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.(NMS 51)
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

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

1, 23, 31 and 34.

Quality in this outcome area is adequate. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school handbook provides suitable information for parents and staff about the ethos of the school and how it operates. It would be beneficial however to have something available that was designed specifically for pupils. The school monitors records relating to pupil welfare appropriately and there is suitable provision for the supervision of boarders at all times. New staff to the school are well supported but there is inadequate provision for the ongoing appraisal of staff and for providing opportunities for further training relating to boarding.

EVIDENCE:

The school's handbooks for both staff and parents were seen to be up-to-date and to include details of boarding at the school as well as the school's child protection , anti-bullying, discipline and complaints policies and procedures.

Some boarders were aware of the parents handbook and related parents having shared it with them while others had not seen any written information concerning the school and how it operates.

Records of risk-assessments, punishments, complaints and accidents were seen and were being monitored by the school's head and a senior member of staff . There had been no complaints received by the school since the previous inspection and there was no identifiable trend or concentration in relation to punishments. Risk-assessments were seen to be up-to-date and to record action taken to address identified risks.

Boarding staff reported meeting weekly to plan their duties for the week ahead. Boarders said they were always aware of who was on duty at any one time and knew where to go to find a member of staff if they needed to. They also felt that there were sufficient staff on duty during the evenings and at week-ends. Boarding staff have accommodation directly adjacent to the boys boarding provision and there are a number of staff that reside on the school site. Observations during the inspection showed boys to be adequately supervised during the evenings and at break times during the school day.

Boarding staff spoken with reported having job descriptions reflecting their duties and although not being subject to a structured induction described being well supported when first arriving at the school. They had received guidance from more experienced staff and were provided with the school's staff handbook. An in-house orientation prior to the start of the Autumn term 2005 had provided all staff including those new to the school with guidance on some of the school's policies and procedures including child protection. Staff reported that they had not been provided with opportunities for training specific to boarding practice.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 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>
6	1
7	X
15	2
16	X
17	X
24	X
25	X
48	X
49	x

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	3
3	2
4	2
5	3
13	X
22	X
26	3
28	X
29	X
37	3
38	1
39	3
41	3
47	3

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
11	X
18	3
27	X
43	X
46	x

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	3
14	3
19	3
21	X
30	X
36	x

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
20	X
40	X
42	X
44	X
45	X
50	x

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

Continued

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	2
8	X
9	X
10	X
23	3
31	3
32	X
33	X
34	1
35	X
51	2
52	x

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection? YES

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.	BS6	That the school provide age appropriate advice and guidance for boarders on countering major risks to their health.	
2.	BS15	That written parental permission has been obtained in advance for all boarders for the administration of first-aid and appropriate non-prescription medication , and to seek medical, dental or optical treatment when required.	
3.	BS15	That the school have in place a written policy for the administration of medication to boarders.	
4.	BS3	That the school's housemaster receives additional child protection training.	
5.	BS4	That the school have a relevant physical restraint policy in place.	
6.	BS38	The school carries out rigorous selection and vetting procedures for all staff in accordance with the National Minimum Standards. This was a recommendation of the previous report.	01/08/06
7.	BS14	That the school's Independent persons are subject to Criminal Records Bureau checks.	01/08/06
8.	BS19	That the school rules governing the use of mobile phones is clarified for boarders.	
9.	BS51	That ways are sought to increase opportunities for activities and peer interaction for those pupils currently being accommodated in lodgings.	
10.	BS1	That the school provide boarders with written	

		information relating to the school that is designed specifically for them.	
11.	BS34	That staff with boarding duties receive regular review of their boarding practice and are provided with opportunities for continuing training in boarding.	

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