

inspection report

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

Royal School for the Blind

Church Road North

Wavertree

Liverpool

Merseyside

L15 6TQ

15th – 17th November 2004

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

Royal School for the Blind

Address

Church Road North, Wavertree, Liverpool, Merseyside, L15
6TQ

Tel No:

0151 733 1012

Fax No:

0151 733 1703

Email Address:

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

The Royal School for the Blind

Name of Head

Mr. J.P. Byrne

CSCI Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Residential Special
School

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

12/11/04

Date of Inspection Visit		15th November 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09.40	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Sonya Robinson	080391
Name of CSCI Inspector	2	Paul Gillespie	72774
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		Ms. Lesley Poole- Head of Care Mr. Byrne- Head teacher	

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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 Royal School for the Blind

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

The report will show the following:

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

INSPECTION VISITS

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

The report represents the inspector's findings from the evidence found at the specified inspection dates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

The Royal School for the Blind provides places for up to 66 pupils male or female from ages 2 –19 years. All students have a visual impairment and learning difficulties ranging from moderate to profound. The school accepts students from across the country and are residential from Monday to Friday. All parts of the school are accessible to all pupils and much thought has been given to the lighting and décor to enhance the environment for visually impaired pupils. Facilities within the school include a swimming pool, a soft play area, a multi sensory room, an outdoor adventure playground and an outdoor mobility circuit. The school has access to its own transport. Teaching programmes are developed using either non-visual or low vision methods, which encourage the pupils to develop their tactile skills and any residual vision. As well as print enhanced by visual aids, a few pupils will use Braille as a reading medium and others will use the 'Moon' system. The classes are small with a high staff to pupil ratio.

The school has a multi-disciplinary approach, which includes the involvement of specialist staff, i.e. Physiotherapists, Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Mobility Therapists.

Accommodation is provided within four units, Heron, Sandpiper, Kingfisher and Bradbury.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The residential facilities excel in the area of informal good communication and promotion of continuity of care. Feedback has included that the staff and school have a caring, sensitive attitude to the children, parents and placing authorities. Further, that the management approach is consistent and the inspectors would concur with this view. The care offered is multi disciplinary in its approach to each child and their families. This school is particularly keen to embrace new legislation and guidance and has always worked positively and proactively with the CSCI. For this they should be commended.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The residential units and school could improve in their documentation particularly in recording the positive work that they do which appears to go largely undocumented. Policies and procedures have been greatly improved in the last twelve months though there is some work still remaining.

Over the next year the school is to look specifically at training for residential staff if the National Minimum Standard in this area is to be achieved in 2005. Personal development plans for staff members are to be developed along with appraisals. The inspectors also discussed that an internal monitoring system could be introduced to aid the high standards that this school seeks.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

The school has made good progress in addressing the National Minimum Standards that were introduced in April 2002 and as a result the school now meets many of the standards. If they continue with this they will surely achieve beyond the minimum standard to the excellence they strive.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

NO

No	Standard	Recommended actions	
1	RS5	Staff have last undertaken training in respect of child protection in April 2002 and the next formal training is planned in October 2004. (This has now moved to April 2005) Given that this is some time away it is suggested that all staff including ancillary staff, agency staff and volunteers have the opportunity to discuss child protection issues and procedures regularly in team meetings.	N/A

2	RS6	The anti-bullying policy needs to be expanded in accordance with NMS 6.2. In discussions with the head of care and other staff it was clear that they have a good understanding of the children's challenging behaviours and have given a great deal of thought to how to manage these effectively. It is recommended that these strategies are formalised as written risk assessments as outlined in NMS 6.5.	N/A
3	RS32	NMS 32.2 states the Head or senior member of staff delegated by the Head should now monitor and sign the records as identified within this standard as per the timescales laid down.	N/A
4	RS9	It is recommended in accordance with NMS 9.5 all staff in direct contact with children receive training in positive care and control of children.	N/A

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	
1	RS5	Staff have last undertaken training in respect of child protection in April 2002 and the next formal training is planned in October 2004. (This has now moved to April 2005) Given that this is some time away it is suggested that all staff including ancillary staff, agency staff and volunteers have the opportunity to discuss child protection issues and procedures regularly in team meetings.	N/A
2	RS6	The anti-bullying policy needs to be expanded in accordance with NMS 6.2. In discussions with the head of care and other staff it was clear that they have a good understanding of the children's challenging behaviours and have given a great deal of thought to how to manage these effectively. It is recommended that these strategies are formalised as written risk assessments as outlined in NMS 6.5.	N/A
3	RS32	NMS 32.2 states the Head or senior member of staff delegated by the Head should now monitor and sign the records as identified within this standard as per the timescales laid down.	N/A
4	RS9	It is recommended in accordance with NMS 9.5 all staff in direct contact with children receive training in positive care and control of children.	N/A
5	RS2	It is recommended that the key worker undertake half termly summaries as discussed on inspection which reflect social interaction, good health and well being and care planning.	N/A

6	RS3	Consideration needs to be given to ensuring new staff receive appropriate training and furthermore a policy needs to be introduced with regards to the role of volunteers within the residential units. This should include clear guidance on supervision and appropriate tasks.	N/A
7	RS10	It is recommended that the school's records of sanctions and physical intervention are reviewed at least twice a term by a senior member of the school staff to monitor compliance with the school's policies and procedures and any appropriate action is taken as necessary.	N/A
8	RS10	Minutes from staff meetings should more clearly evidence that discussions concerning issues of care and control have taken place.	N/A
9	RS14	There were multiple errors in the recording of the administration of medication even though it was apparent that a number of staff had received training. It is essential that there is a robust monitoring system in place and that all staff are reminded of their responsibilities with regard to the safe administration of medication.	N/A
10	RS14	The location of the fridge that is used to store appropriate medication should be resited for security purposes.	N/A
11	RS15	It is recommended that suitable protective clothing is available for all staff and/ or visitors who need access to the kitchen.	N/A
12	RS15	It is recommended that first aid training be extended to the domestic staff along with training in the Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH).	N/A
13	RS15	It was noted that some of the tiling in the kitchen on the Bradbury unit had fallen off. This requires to be repaired as soon as possible.	N/A
14	RS16	Monies that children may bring with them can be held in safekeeping however there were instances observed where recordings did not reconcile and it is recommended that the current system be reviewed.	N/A
15	RS17	It is recommended that key workers develop a report that can be presented at the end of each half term to reflect the progress and achievements that each child has made.	N/A

16	RS19	There were a number of issues pertaining to staff files that need to be urgently addressed. These include the necessity to secure all the relevant documentation identified in NMS 19.2 to ensure safe recruitment, selection and vetting practices.	N/A
17	RS19	There needs to be a clearer distinction as to what should be recorded as an accident and what constitutes an incident. Also the accident records would benefit from having a front sheet that chronologically lists the entries so that at a glance any patterns may be identified. The current record notes that the respective social work has been informed, this would be further enhanced by including the time, date and name of person informed.	N/A
18	RS29	The induction process that new staff undertake would benefit from being more fully documented to reflect the actual content of the induction.	N/A
19	RS29	It is recommended that staff training be mapped against Appendix Two of the NMS and where short falls are identified, these are to be included in their personal development plan.	N/A
20	RS30	All staff should now receive an annual appraisal and this should be documented within their personnel files.	N/A

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

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

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	RS31	The inspectors referred the Head Teacher and the Head of Care to NMS 31.11 This refers to the registration of care workers with the General Social Care Council (GSCC) and consequently the need for care workers to be registered with the GSCC in the future in order to be able to practice.
2	RS33	A nominated representative from the Board of Governors visits the school unannounced on a monthly basis. These reports are available to the CSCI upon request although they would benefit from including confirmation whether they were carried out announced or unannounced as well as stating the actual time and length of the visit.

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	NO
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	YES

Checks with other Organisations

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

Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	NA
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NA

Date of Inspection	15/11/04
Time of Inspection	09.40
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	53.20
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	3

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) |

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

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

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

STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The school has a written statement of purpose in the form of a school prospectus. Since the last inspection this has been reviewed and is now available in various formats including CD and Braille. The statement outlines the purpose of the school, the ethos and philosophy of the school, and the provision for both day and residential pupils.

The children's and parent's guide has also been recently revised and is informative and detailed. It is clear that a lot of thought and hard work has been done to produce the above. The inspectors was particularly pleased to see that it contained a children's charter outlining the rights of the children to be given the best quality of care that promotes equality for all children, to be valued, to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness. This statement appears to reflect the care practices of the school that were observed during the inspection.

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?

2

The staff clearly do a great deal of positive work in this area. The inspectors observed many examples of staff seeking pupils' wishes and feelings about decisions affecting their daily lives and these being taken into account. The school provides frequent and suitable means for the pupils to make their views known about their care and provides opportunity for pupils to make everyday choices. Pupils are encouraged to attend their reviews and make their views about their future known. Some units hold unit meetings each week, others not as frequently. The topics of these meetings tend to focus on what activities the pupils wish to do that week. If these meetings were held each week on each unit and the discussion expanded to include other topics then they could be commended as an example of good practice. This would be a means of documenting and formalising the views of the young people, and reflecting the good work of staff.

There was evidence of pupils being able to observe requirements of any specific cultural, religious and linguistic need, however as discussed on inspection this could be further expanded upon.

The school has developed close links with the children's parents and families, and is able to demonstrate that they seek their views about their children's care. Communication between the school and parents has been documented and formalised through the use of school - home books. This is a useful means of sharing information. There is also frequent telephone contact with parents. Parents are informed of any significant event or incident and are included in the planning of their child's care and education. This was evidenced from comments made in a number of parental questionnaires received, for example: "We are very happy with the care", "we cannot speak too highly of the staff, "my son is safe and well cared for".

It is recommended that the key worker undertake half termly summaries as discussed on inspection which reflect social interaction, good health and well being and care planning.

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?****2**

The school provides guidelines to staff on privacy and confidentiality. There was evidence on personnel files of staff signing a confidentiality agreement. The guidance has been expanded to cover NMS 3.2, including access to case records.

Children's case records are kept safely and securely, and the contents remain confidential. Staff are aware how to deal with and share information which they are given in confidence when necessary for child protection. Information with regard to Childline was available in Braille on each unit.

The School provides space for parents to meet with their children in private.

The School does not undertake room searches. If this were to change then a policy would require to be introduced.

There was evidence that a number of staff have received appropriate training about undertaking intimate care tasks, and the school has clear written guidelines on providing such assistance. However consideration needs to be given to ensuring new staff receive appropriate training and furthermore a policy needs to be introduced with regards to the role of volunteers within the residential units. This should include clear guidance on supervision and appropriate tasks.

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**

There was evidence that pupils were able to complain if they were unhappy. This tends to happen informally and staff appear responsive to issues that are raised. Some consideration should now be given to clarifying what will be recorded as an informal complaint.

The school's complaints policy and procedure has been further revised since the last inspection. It is recommended that all staff receive training in area that should reflect the matters referred to in NMS 4.4.

There were no recorded complaints since the time of the last inspection.

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

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

Number of complaints received by CSCI about the school over last 12 months:

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

CHILD PROTECTION

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- Children are protected from bullying by others.
- All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the school are notified by the Head of the school to the appropriate authorities.
- Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded positively to on return.

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.12)

There are systems in place in the school which aim to prevent abuse of children and suspicions or allegations of abuse are properly responded to. These are known and understood by all staff (including junior, ancillary, volunteer and agency staff).

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

There is a copy of the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures available in the school and on each unit. The school does have a child protection policy that is consistent with LEA guidance and the ACPC procedures. The school's procedures for responding to allegations and suspicions of abuse to a child include all the requirements in Appendix 1 of the Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards.

It was evident through the staff interview process held during the inspection that there is clearly a need to undertake training child protection. All new staff should receive child protection training as part of the induction process in order that they can demonstrate that they are knowledgeable about child protection policy and procedures. It is acknowledged that training is planned for April 2005 for all staff.

Given that this some time away it is suggested that all staff including ancillary staff, agency staff and volunteers have the opportunity to discuss child protection issues and procedures regularly in team meetings. Ad 5

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?**

2

There was no evidence to suggest that bullying was an issue in the school. Staff were observed managing disputes between children sensitively and clearly outlining that aggressive behaviour to others was unacceptable.

The school has an anti-bullying policy. This now includes the matters identified in the previous inspection report in accordance with NMS 6.2.

In discussions with the head of care and other staff it was clear that they have a good understanding of the children's challenging behaviours and have given a great deal of thought to how to manage these effectively. It is recommended that these strategies are formalised as written risk assessments as outlined in NMS 6.5.

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 has a system in place to notify promptly the CSCI, local social services, placing authorities, and DfES of all significant events relating to the welfare of children in the school in accordance with this standard.

NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO CSCI DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:

- conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children
- serious harm to a child
- serious illness or accident of a child
- serious incident requiring police to be called

X

X

X

X

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
The school has a written procedure identifying action to be taken when a child is absent from school without consent in line with this standard. In addition there was a record to document all incidents when children are missing without authority in accordance with NMS 8.6.		
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?	2
<p>Relationships between staff and pupils were observed during the period of the inspection to be positive. Staff were able to demonstrate when asked a good understanding of the needs of the pupils.</p> <p>The philosophy is to reward good behaviour. The school has a behaviour policy, which looks to develop a behavioural management strategy for pupils that is monitored and reviewed. If a pupil is persistently challenging then a personal behaviour plan would be draw up with the child and their parents. It is recommended in accordance with NMS 9.5 all new staff in direct contact with children receive training in positive care and control of children.</p>		

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?	2
<p>It was observed over the period of inspection that staff responded positively to acceptable behaviour and staff responded constructively where behaviour was unacceptable. The school has a policy and procedure on control and discipline that encompasses physical intervention. This is in accordance with NMS 10. In addition the school has a separate bound and paginated book to record sanctions and another for restraints in line with this standard.</p> <p>However it is necessary that all new staff receive appropriate training in the technique authorised for use within this setting. Currently the method used by this school is based on the Non-Abusive Psychological and Physical Intervention (NAPPI) technique that is accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD). It is recommended that the school's records of sanctions and physical intervention are reviewed at least twice a term by a senior member of the school staff to monitor compliance with the school's policies and procedures and any appropriate action is taken as necessary. Also refer to NMS 32.2 Minutes from staff meetings should more clearly evidence that discussions concerning issues of care and control have taken place.</p>		

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

All admissions are planned with parents and or the placing authority. The Head teacher visits every family prior to admission; moreover the child and their parent are encouraged to spend a day at the school to promote an awareness of the daily running of the school. The school operates a key worker system. Each key worker works closely with the child and their family. (please refer to NMS 2) Children's placements are initially reviewed after three months either by the placing authority or the Local Education Authority. Parents meetings are held annually.

When children leave School it is on a planned date and children are prepared well in advance and are given appropriate information and guidance to assist in the process of transition.

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

Care staff are familiar with the educational needs and progress of the children in their care and they inform teaching staff of any information which will assist in supporting the child in school time. They contribute to the annual review and participate where necessary in the implementation of the individual educational plan. Children do not undertake homework as a rule but they are encouraged to partake in education and social activities. Children are assisted by teaching and care staff in their preparation for independent living wherever possible. E.g Mobility training through use of local amenities. The inspectors were pleased to note that the home implement home to school workbooks which aid effective communication between the school, the care staff and the parents.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

The School provides a range and choice of activities both indoors and outdoors throughout the year. Children are encouraged to take part in activities that take into account their race, culture, language, religion, interests, abilities and disabilities. Birthdays and cultural/religious festivals are celebrated.

Children engage in a wide variety of activities, which include trips to the cinema, bowling, swimming, local shops, the local park, McDonalds, amongst many. The children also have access to a play station at the School as well as the multi-sensory room, soft play room, outdoor playground and mobility awareness area. It was pleasing to note the emphasis on purposeful activity.

There was evidence that risk assessments have now been further developed and are recorded in line with NMS 13. These assessments focus on the needs and risks for a specific child in particular circumstances and those reviewed were observed to be well put together and pertinent.

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?****2**

The management of the school have worked hard to develop effective systems for the administration of medication. This was acknowledged by the inspectors. However the inspectors were concerned to note that there were multiple errors in the recording of the administration of medication even though it was apparent that a number of staff had received training. These matters were discussed with the Head of Care, Deputy Head of Care and the Head Teacher who acknowledged that this was unacceptable and gave a commitment to address the issues raised as a matter of urgency. It is essential that there is a robust monitoring system in place and that all staff are reminded of their responsibilities with regard to the safe administration of medication.

On inspection all cupboards including the medicine fridge were locked, and a system in place to ensure that access to these keys restricted to staff authorised to administer medication. However the location of the fridge that is used to store appropriate medication should be resited for security purposes.

It was positive to note that since the last inspection the school has implemented individual health plans for each child. Children's health plans are in line with NMS 14 and include the necessary information. Likewise all care staff are understood to have completed a first aid training course.

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?****2**

The inspectors took lunch and tea with the children on day one of the inspection. The children had mixed views about the quality of the meals provided. This was a view shared by the inspectors, as the evening meal on the Bradbury Unit was of a good standard where as the meals on the main residence were less well received.

Meals were observed to be well-managed, orderly and social occasions. Children had access to a limited choice of menu. Residential pupils have their breakfast and evening meal on their respective units where there are facilities for preparing and serving of meals and snacks. Medical advice is sought when necessary for specific health conditions affecting individual children. Dining rooms and their furnishings were suitable for the needs and numbers of the children. Where children required assistance this was observed by the inspectors as being appropriate and promoted dignity and choice. Meals are served in accordance with religious and special dietary needs.

It is recommended that suitable protective clothing is available for all staff and or visitors who need access to the kitchen. Also it is further recommended that first aid training be extended to the domestic staff along with training in the Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health

(COSHH).

It was noted that some of the tiling in the kitchen on the Bradbury unit had fallen off. This requires to be repaired as soon as possible.

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?

2

Children bring their own clothing, toiletries, and are given assistance by staff to purchase further items if and when necessary. These are kept for the exclusive use of the individual child. Monies that children may bring with them can be held in safekeeping however there were instances observed where recordings did not reconcile and it is recommended that the current system be reviewed.

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?

2

Random samples of files were reviewed on inspection and were found to be well ordered containing an appropriate placement plan where necessary. A second file containing a care plan and other pertinent information was maintained on each unit. It is important to ensure that the current format of the care plan reflects accurately the cultural and religious needs of each child. Each child has at least one key worker within the School who provides individual guidance and support to the child. The key worker seeks the child's wishes and views with regard to their placement. Children, key workers, Head of Care, parents and Local Authority/LEA if appropriate attend regular reviews and these are documented. It is recommended that key workers develop a report that can be presented at the end of each half term to reflect the progress and achievements that each child has made.

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

Each child has a permanent, private and secure record of their history and progress. This would be further enhanced if a copy of a personal education plan (PEP) were available on each child's file within the residential setting.

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?**

2

The database devised by the Administrator in respect of staff details was clear and precise and is amongst the best examples that the inspectors have seen. The School is also registered with the Criminal Records Bureau. However there were a number of issues pertaining to staff files that need to be urgently addressed. These include the necessity to secure all the relevant documentation identified in NMS 19.2 to ensure safe recruitment, selection and vetting practices. These matters were raised with the Head Teacher and Head of Care at the time of the inspection.

Duty rota's are maintained and were observed on inspection to satisfactorily meet minimum staffing requirements. The School also maintains appropriate information as detailed in NMS 19 in relation to children.

The accident records were reviewed. There were 19 accidents documented in the last twelve months. It was apparent from the review that of these 10 were appropriately recorded as accidents and 9 represented a record of various incidents that had occurred. As discussed there needs to be a clearer distinction as to what should be recorded as an accident and what constitutes an incident. Also the accident records would benefit from having a front sheet that chronologically lists the entries so that at a glance any patterns may be identified. The current record notes that the respective social work has been informed, this would be further enhanced by including the time, date and name of person informed.

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**

Children are positively encouraged and enabled by the School to maintain contact with their parents and other family members whilst living at the School. Details of contact are clearly documented. The inspector met with one parent at the school who was visiting their child and very positive feedback was given by this parent as to the care given to their child. This standard is met.

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?****3**

The school works actively with each child and their placing authority, parents and LEA in order to prepare young people to leave school. This includes opportunities for children in the school, appropriate to their age and understanding, to develop their knowledge and skills essential for the likely future living arrangements. The inspectors commented to the Head Teacher and Head of Care that the records made available to them during the course of the inspection did not necessarily reflect the good work undertaken with the young people to prepare them for adult life.

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**

The school continues to actively promote the involvement of children within all social groups and supports those children who do not easily fit in to the resident group.

Individualised support was primarily based upon the Essential Lifestyle model of care and as previously stated this could be more effectively recorded. The School has an independent person who is in a position to offer advice, support/advocacy as and when appropriate (NMS 22.8), this person visits on a monthly basis.

The inspectors acknowledge the caring and sensitive attitude displayed by the staff during the inspection towards the children.

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?

3

The School is located and of a size and layout which provides an environment conducive to aiding individual child development and is sufficient in size for the number of pupils. Particular attention is paid to aids and adaptations that maximise the opportunity for the children to develop their independence. This includes rooms, which are identified with touch sensitive objects of reference and corridors/walls that have reference points either through floor texture or wall surfaces. Children have access to the library and the internet.

There are no outstanding issues with other relevant authorities including the planning, building control, fire or EHO.

The School maintains positive links with the local community and has benefited from several donations from local retailers.

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

There are currently four residential units within the school. Sandpiper, Kingfisher and Heron are located within the main school building and Bradbury unit, which is located within the school grounds.

All residential children have a lockable facility within their rooms so that they may keep private and or treasured possessions with them.

The inspectors are pleased to note that each residential pupil has a room of their own; this is considered very good practice. Further that many of these rooms are highly personalised. The children are actively encouraged to pursue personal hobbies and interests. There is designated staff sleep in quarters on each unit. Each staff member has his or her own bedroom.

The grounds of the school are maintained and there is a sensory garden for pupils' enjoyment. The inspectors were informed that on warm summer evening this is sometimes used by the residential units to have a picnic tea.

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
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There are sufficient bathrooms and toilets to meet the needs of the children within the residential units. These can be locked and accessed by staff if necessary. There are separate toilet and bathing facilities for staff.

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?	4
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Gas, electrical, hot water boiler certificates, employee's liability, lift servicing and fire certificates were all observed to be well maintained and up to date. Fire records and regulations were observed on inspection and found to be appropriate. The school has medical devices such as hoists and wheelchairs that are also regularly serviced. Risk assessments are in place and are recorded in writing. The Environmental Access Audit was particularly impressive. Each residential pupil has his or her own risk assessment.

It was positive to note that the school's crisis plan that has been introduced since the last inspection was activated as a result of a recent power failure in the area. The first stage of the plan was implemented appropriately and action identified should the crisis have had continued. This showed a commendable awareness and sound response to a potential emergency as well as good partnership working with a local school.

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There are careful selection and vetting of all staff, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers
- Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.
- Children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs.
- Children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare.

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those employed on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with the children in the school includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (at Standard or Enhanced level as appropriate to their role in the school), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The school has a database compiled by the administrator for the purposes of inspection. This proved an efficient and valuable tool. The inspectors spoke to the school bursar on specific areas that the school must improve upon in light of the findings of the referred to in NMS 19.2.

There was evidence that transport staff and any regular taxis services used by the school are checked by social services or the LEA who undertake CRB disclosures. (NMS 27.9)

Some staff have remained with the organisation but have moved to new positions within the school.

Total number of care staff:

15

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

X

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

Staff rotas are maintained and were observed on inspection. There are sufficient staffing arrangements in place to meet the minimum staffing levels during the day and night. A staffing policy as described in NMS 28.2 has been developed and formalised in writing. There are senior on call arrangements in place 24hrs. Residential staff live in the residential units Monday to Thursday whilst the residential children are present. This inevitably aids continuity of care. The inspectors were informed that staffing levels would be increased if the needs of the children increased. Risk assessments are carried out and recorded in writing for night staff identifying any likely risks to children of a night (NMS 28.6) All children currently go home at weekends and holidays. The residential staff include male and female employees.

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?**

2

New staff undertake an induction/ probationary period and receive a staff handbook. The induction process that new staff undertake would benefit from being more fully documented to reflect the actual content of the induction. New staff are supervised which includes one to one supervision and mentoring and there are clear lines of accountability and reporting.

The inspectors were informed that all residential care staff are due to commence NVQ 3 imminently. It is recommended that staff training be mapped against Appendix Two of the NMS and where short falls are identified, these are to be included in their personal development plan. NMS29.5 Each staff member should have a personal development plan. The inspectors observed documentation regarding this that is due to be implemented.

The school has undertaken a review of some of their policies and procedures that include those identified in Appendix three of the NMS. As discussed on inspection the school have several more to update within the coming months. The inspectors were pleased to note the continued positive work undertaken to date.

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?****2**

The residential staff receive supervision in line with this standard. New staff receive one to one supervision at least fortnightly during the first two terms of their employment. Also the administrative, domestic and maintenance staff are now supervised by the Bursar who commented to the inspectors that this has been constructive and positive for those concerned.

All staff should now receive an annual appraisal and this should be documented within their personnel files. System's are in place for the introduction of personal development plans.

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?

3

It was stated that NVQ level 3 in Caring for Young People or equivalent has been extended to all care staff in order to comply with NMS 31.4 and this was discussed on inspection. Staff time is scheduled to ensure that they attend supervision, staff meetings, handover, record writing, and attending reviews. Staff working hours are consistent with the Statement of Purpose and were staff exceed the requirements laid down by the Working Time Directive a waiver of their rights is to be included within their personnel files. The School has developed plans to respond to a range of foreseeable crises (e.g. outbreaks of illness, fire and major incidents) NMS 31.9

It was positive to note the initiative to introduce a senior position in one of the residential units. In the opinion of the inspectors this should be extended to each unit. It is felt that this would assist the line management process and lines of accountability. It may also offer potential for career progression.

The inspectors referred the Head Teacher and the Head of Care to NMS 31.11 This refers to the registration of care workers with the General Social Care Council (GSCC) and consequently the need for care workers to be registered with the GSCC in the future in order to be able to practice.

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?****2**

NMS 32.2 states the Head or senior member of staff delegated by the Head should now monitor and sign the records as identified within this standard as per the timescales laid down. This recommendation is restated.

Currently the Head Teacher provides a report half termly to the Board of Governors which exceeds the NMS 32.4.

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 nominated representative from the Board of Governors visits the school unannounced on a monthly basis. Written reports are provided to the Head of the School within two weeks of the visit without amendment or summary. Reports on all of the above visits are available to the CSCI upon request although these reports would benefit from including confirmation whether they were carried out announced or unannounced as well as stating the actual time and length of the visit.

PART C**LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY****(where applicable)**

There was no lay assessor on this inspection.

Lay AssessorNot applicable**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 15th – 17th November 2004 of Royal School for the Blind and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

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

Note:

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

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 21st December 2004, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

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, Mr J P Byrne of the Royal School for the Blind, 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	<u>J P Byrne</u>
Signature	<u></u>
Designation	<u></u>
Date	<u></u>

Or

D.3.2 I, Mr J P Byrne of the Royal School for the Blind, 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:

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Print Name	<u></u>
Signature	<u></u>
Designation	<u></u>
Date	<u></u>

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

Commission for Social Care Inspection
33 Greycoat Street
London
SW1P 2QF

Telephone: 020 7979 2000
Fax: 020 7979 2111

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120
www.csci.org.uk

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