



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

Boarding School

Reading School

Erleigh Road

Reading

Berks

RG1 5LJ

21st February 2005

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Launched in April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is the single inspectorate for social care in England.

The Commission combines the work formerly done by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI), the SSI/Audit Commission Joint Review Team and the National Care Standards Commission.

The role of CSCI is to:

- Promote improvement in social care
- Inspect all social care - for adults and children - in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Publish annual reports to Parliament on the performance of social care and on the state of the social care market
- Inspect and assess 'Value for Money' of council social services
- Hold performance statistics on social care
- Publish the 'star ratings' for council social services
- Register and inspect services against national standards
- Host the Children's Rights Director role.

Inspection Methods & Findings

SECTION B of this report summarises key findings and evidence from this inspection. The following 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

'O' or blank in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

'9' in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not applicable.

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

Reading School

Tel No:

0118 9390900

Address

Reading School, Erleigh Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5LJ

Fax No:

Email Address

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

Reading Borough Council

Name of Head

CSCI Classification

Boarding School

Type of school

State boarding school

Date of last boarding welfare inspection

X

Date of Inspection Visit		21st February 2005	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:00 am	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Mr K Ball	111565
Name of CSCI Inspector	2	Mrs Maire Atherton	
Name of CSCI Inspector	3		
Name of CSCI Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):		Mrs Alison Scott	
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.		Not applicable	
Was this inspection conducted alongside an ISI or OfSTED inspection as part of a Joint Whole School Inspection?			NO
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection			

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Boarding schools are subject to inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to determine whether the welfare of children (ie 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 Boarding 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.

Inspections are carried out by the CSCI, and in most cases the inspection team includes a specialist in boarding provision working, or with experience of working, in the boarding sector. Boarding welfare inspections by CSCI may also be carried out in conjunction with a full inspection of the school by the Independent Schools Inspectorate or OfSTED, so that the two inspections together constitute a Joint Whole School Inspection of the school. In such cases, a joint summary of main findings and recommendations from both inspections will also be available.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Reading School.

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

The report will show the following:

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

INSPECTION VISITS

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

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

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

Reading School has a long, established and distinguished history as a site for providing education, being the tenth oldest school in England. The school became grant-maintained in 1991 and in turn a foundation school in 1998. Reading School is one of thirty state grant boarding maintained schools in England. The school achieves very well academically, achieving fifth place in the league of schools tables for A-level results in 2004.

The school provides for over 862 students, with approximately 70 weekly boarders split between two separate houses, South House and East Wing. The school does not offer weekend boarding and only accommodates boys.

The school is set in the centre of Reading town and has good access to facilities in the local area.

For a more comprehensive picture of the services and provision available at Reading School this report should be read in conjunction with the last OfSTED report dated 5th November 2001.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The following constitute a selection of areas that Reading School performs well in:

- A solid Statement of principles and practice that accurately reflects actual practice within the boarding provision.
- A comprehensive health education programme.
- An open culture and ethos of empowerment, consultation and participation for boarders.
- A good programme of induction for new boarders.
- Commendable relationships between staff and boarders based on mutual respect and equality.
- Sound management of boarding houses.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The following are a selection of areas that Reading School need to improve upon:

- Introduce a robust recruitment and vetting process for all adults who have access to children on the school site.
- Improve upon fire safety measures and provision.
- Create, review and monitor risk assessments for various aspects of the boarding site and ensure that the boarding accommodation and other provision is free from foreseeable hazards.
- Introduce a crisis management policy.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

Of the 52 National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools three do not apply to Reading School. Of the remaining 49 Standards the school exceeds five, meets 37 and achieves minor shortfalls for five Standards. The School has a major shortfall in two areas.

The school received the inspection team in an open and receptive manner and were happy to assist throughout the entire process of planning and inspection. This is the first inspection of Reading School under the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how Recommended Action 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 Boarding 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	9	The school to create a comprehensive policy to deal with a range of foreseeable major incidents or crises and ensure that staff are aware of it and its application.	End of July 2005
2	15	Ensure the provision for storing medication is secure and that medication is held in this provision, rather than more convenient locations.	Immediate
3	23	The school to evidence greater formal monitoring of issues as highlighted in this Standard and ensure that there are robust systems in place to prevent slippage, and emphasize and monitor for patterns or themes.	End of July 2005
4	26	Ensure compliance with recommendations of the Fire Service inspection report.	End of May 2005
5	38	Review all existing staff files; ensure that the appropriate checks are in place in order to satisfy the requirements of this Standard and to the suitability of staff to work with children. The school to introduce a robust recruitment process for all adults who have access to children on the school site and ensure that this process is monitored for its efficacy.	Immediate
6	39	Review the current system of visiting adults (as outlined in the Standard), who may have contact with children, in the boarding accommodation, ensuring it is effective in safeguarding children's welfare. Amend accordingly.	Immediate
7	39	Ensure that there is a written agreement between the spouse of the Senior Housemaster, who lives on the school site, and any other adults to whom this is applicable, but is not employed by the school.	End of May 2005

8	47	Ensure comprehensive risk assessments are in place for the boarding provision and all other areas that impact upon boarders' care and welfare.	End of June 2005
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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	4	The school may wish to review the administration of the merits system to ensure a consistent and open approach is adopted.
2	4	The school is advised to consider reviewing the policy and guidance on physical restraint to provide more comprehensive guidance to staff on this aspect of behaviour management in line with DfES guidance
3	5	The school may wish to consider creating a more formal route, or making available their existing Complaints Procedure to students. This should include contact numbers for CSCI.
4	13	The school may wish to consider reviewing the appointment and role of the Prefect in order to promote their developmental opportunities.
5	16	Ensure boarders are able to summon staff assistance readily and rapidly when ill.
6	20	Ensure student's sign for their pocket money in order to confirm receipt.
7	34	Introduce a more focused performance appraisal system for those staff with boarding duties.
8	35	Review the Staff Handbooks to ensure that they cover all of the policies and procedures as detailed in Appendix One of the National Minimum Standards concerning boarding practice and provision. Refine and streamline as appropriate.
9	46	Formalise the policy on student access to staff accommodation

*Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. BS10 refers to Standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS**

The following Inspection Methods have been used in the production of this report.

Direct Observation	YES
Pupil guided tour of accommodation	YES
Pupil guided tour of Recreational Areas	YES

Checks with other Organisations and Individuals

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Services • Fire Service • Environmental Health • DfES • School Doctor • Independent Person or Counsellor • Chair of Governors 	YES
	YES
	YES
	NO
	NO
	NO
	NO
'Tracking' individual welfare arrangements	YES
Group discussion with boarders	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Group discussion with ancillary staff	YES
Group discussion with Gap students	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Boarders' survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Invitation to parents to comment	YES
Inspection of policy / practice documents	YES
Inspection of Records	YES
Visit to Sanatorium	NA
Visits to lodgings	NA
Individual interviews with pupil(s)	NO

Date of Inspection	21/02/05
Time of Inspection	09.00
Duration of Inspection (hrs.)	20
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	2

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION:

AGE RANGE OF BOARDING PUPILS

FRO

11

TO

18

NUMBER OF BOARDERS (FULL TIME + WEEKLY) AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

Boys	69
Girls	0
Total	69
Number of separate Boarding Houses	2

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 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?"

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

WELFARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.
- Boarders are protected from bullying.
- Boarders are protected from abuse.
- Use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate.
- Boarders' complaints are appropriately responded to.
- Boarders' health is promoted.
- Safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records.

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.4)

A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
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Reading School has a suitable statement of the school's boarding principle and practice that is available to parents, boarders and staff. This is demonstrated through the school prospectus that includes information about the history of the site, admissions policy and criteria, curriculum, pastoral care and activities, staff and Governors. This is an excellent document. In addition to this the school produce a leaflet summarising the above details. This information is also available on the website.

Further to this, a Notes for Boarding Parents Handbook is produced that outlines the Aims and Statement of Boarding Principles. This document also contains many of the policy and procedural details that would affect boarding such as the bullying policy, special care requirements, induction, trips and exeats, contact details of house staff, complaints and routines. Again this is a good document that is user friendly, providing helpful information.

It is the quality of the information and the way in which it is presented that satisfies the Inspector that this Standard is exceeded.

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.6)		
The school should have an effective policy on countering bullying, which is known to parents, boarders and staff and which is implemented successfully in practice.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Reading School, Notes for Boarding Parents Handbook, contains information and the procedure for dealing with bullying at the school. This is also contained in the Staff Handbook. The information does not contain a comprehensive definition of bullying but does state that it is a matter that needs to be dealt with on an individual basis. The procedure is clear in as much as the Housemaster will deal with any issues that arise. The policy suggests a no tolerance approach and an open culture of reporting any incidents of bullying.</p> <p>The boarding houses regularly conduct surveys of students regarding being bullied and evidence of these was noted. The Inspectors were informed that the prevalence of bullying is relatively low and that action is taken if any matters are identified through the surveys. The school has a system for recording incidents of bullying. The school has three levels of response to incidents of bullying starting with individual discussions with the victim/s and offenders as well as the parents of those involved. The Director of Student Support is also involved at this stage. The second level considers a more formal approach with interviews and possible sanctions being imposed, with the final level involving the Headmaster, the Director of Student Support and the local Police Liaison Officer. This may result in a fixed term exclusion.</p> <p>Boarder survey conducted by CSCI highlighted that 68% stated that they were 'never bullied', with a further 24% stating that they were 'hardly ever' bullied. Of those who stated that they were being bullied 13% highlighted that pupils their own age were the offenders.</p>		
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS REPORTING NEVER OR HARDLY EVER BEING BULLIED	92	%

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.9)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on child protection and response to allegations or suspicions of abuse, which is consistent with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures, and is known to staff and, as appropriate, to older boarders in positions of responsibility.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Staff Handbook contains the Child Protection Policy. This policy details that the Housemaster is responsible for dealing with such matters. In addition to this policy two further documents titled Governor's Policy and Child and Staff Protection are provided setting out further details about a Code of Practice. These documents were revised in October 2002 and are due for review in October 2005. The Inspectors were also provided with a more comprehensive policy document in draft form regarding child protection, including matters such as staff recruitment procedure, volunteers, and photographing children. This document will also need to contain information about the requirement to refer any child protection concerns within 24 hours. This document has the potential for being an informative and inclusive policy. In addition to this the school has good links with the local authority child protection services and a comprehensive document has been compiled by the LEA titled 'Safeguarding in Schools' for Reading School (January 2005). This usefully sets the context to the issue of safeguarding children as well as provides a great deal of information. The school hold a copy of the local Area Child Protection Committee Child Protection Procedures as well as a copy of the DOH Working Together to Safeguard Children document.

The Head Master is the designated individual responsibility for child protection however performs this function in collaboration with the Director of Student Support.

All staff spoken with confirmed that they had received training and/or guidance about child protection issues through either inset days, line management supervision or additional training opportunities.

Correspondence from the local area authority for children's services prior to the inspection confirmed that there were no records of child protection enquiries or concerns about the manner in which the school responds to child protection issues.

The school has policy on searching for missing pupils and this is contained in the Boarding Staff Handbook.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.7)

The school should have, and follow, a fair and appropriate policy on behaviour, discipline and use of punishments, known to boarders, staff and parents.

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

Documents titled Discipline and Punishments Policy and Discipline and School Rules are held in the Staff Handbook that set out expectations of behaviour. In addition to this there are separate and distinctive rules and guidance for each of South House and East Wing.

A rewards system is in place however the current system is relatively new, being revised following suggestions from the students. Merits can be awarded by staff and Prefects and may consist of allowing the individual to have quiet time for a week once prep is completed, half an hour's bedtime extension, and an end of term excursion. The administration of the merits does vary slightly across the two houses and some students voiced some dissatisfaction. The school may wish to review this to ensure a consistent and open approach is adopted.

Punishments for South House and East Wing appear to be basically similar however there is scope for some flexibility and variance. Punishments include reporting to the Duty Master in school uniform at prayers, being gated and not permitted to watch television, an early morning report, early to bed and litter picking. No unacceptable or idiosyncratic punishments were noted or reported during the inspection.

Prefects can administer limited sanctions however they reported that these often create more work for themselves and therefore they often do not bother. No reports from younger students of Prefects abusing their roles and responsibilities were received during the inspection.

Any sanctions administered were noted in a Log Book; these corresponded to the agreed sanctions and appeared to be used relatively infrequently. Student behaviour throughout the inspection was observed to be very good with students behaving in a courteous, thoughtful and friendly manner.

There is a short section regarding the use of restraint only being used as a minimum. The school is advised to consider reviewing this to provide more comprehensive guidance to staff on this aspect of behaviour management in line with DfES guidance.

The school has conducted an internal Behaviour Audit (2003/04) looking at class behaviour, rewards, sanctions and the promotion of positive behaviour. This was completed by a selection of staff and boys from each year group in Key Stages 3 and 4. The findings revealed a general contentment with the leadership/management, a consistency of dealing with issues, pupil support and bullying. Two areas were highlighted as needing attention. Firstly, further consideration to everyday policies, rewards, sanctions and promotion of positive behaviour and secondly, consideration to out of class behaviours. An action plan has been created to deal with these issues.

Student survey conducted by CSCI highlighted that 29% of students' felt that punishments were 'always fair' with a further 67% stating that they were either 'almost always fair' or 'mostly fair'. Discussion groups revealed that staff were considered to be fair and reasonable in their approach to behaviour management.

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.7) The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on responding to complaints from boarders and parents.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>A document titled Procedure for Dealing with Parents' Concerns and Complaints is noted that outlines the school's response and procedure to such matters. This document was revised in June 2004 and is due for review in June 2005. This provides for external conciliation if necessary through either the Chair of the Governors or the Secretary of State if no local resolution can be found. The Response to Complaints section in the Boarding Staff Handbook refers to the National Care Standards Commission; this will need to be updated to show the Commission for Social Care Inspection.</p> <p>All students spoken with were clear about who and how they would make a complaint however no specific guidance/policy was noted for children to make a complaint. Students explained that matters were often highlighted during the course of day-to-day living and responded to accordingly. Student survey conducted by CSCI highlighted that students would mostly go to their peers, the Matrons, parents or Head of house. Other options were listed.</p> <p>The school may wish to consider creating a more formal route, or making available their existing Complaints Procedure to students. This should include contact numbers for CSCI.</p> <p>The Inspectors noted evidence of complaints being responded to appropriately.</p>		
Number of complaints, if any, received by CSCI about the school during last 12 months:		0

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.3) The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on countering major risks to health, including substance abuse.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
<p>The school addresses these issues through the curriculum Personal, Social, Health education programme. In addition to this the school operate a Peer Mentoring scheme. One boarder is always trained as a Peer Mentor for substance abuse. Information booklets are available in each house.</p> <p>The school has a strong commitment to personal, social and health education. As an example of this on the second evening of the inspection there was a drugs awareness evening run by an external agency to which parents were invited. Pupils spoken with had a good knowledge of the school's policies relating to smoking, alcohol, and illegal substance abuse.</p> <p>The school's personal, social and health education was subject to an OfSTED inspection in January 2005. The report from this inspection reflected a very positive picture of the programme taught at the school.</p>		

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.5)

Adequate records should be kept in relation to individual boarders' health and welfare needs and issues.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The records seen evidenced that significant information relating to health and welfare is held on individual boarders' records. Also held are parents contact details and there was evidence that this information is actively pursued when details change, including guardian details.

There was strong evidence of good verbal sharing of welfare needs. There was also a written record of particular educational support needs of boarders.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There is clear leadership of boarding in the school.
- Crises affecting boarders' welfare are effectively managed.
- The school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.
- Boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school.
- The operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.3)

There should be clear management and leadership of the practice and development of boarding in the school.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The school has a comprehensive Development Plan (2004 – 2005) that includes a section on boarding provision. This sets out the short term aims and objectives for the boarding accommodation; there appears to be no clear objectives for longer term planning. Discussion with relevant individuals revealed that the present main objectives are to consolidate numbers and practice and maintain an optimum occupancy level, increase recreational facilities and promote a greater awareness of boarding.

The school does have a Governing Body that meets six times each year. One member of the Governing Body is responsible for boarding provision.

The present senior boarding staff are experienced and knowledgeable about boarding practice and are effective in their roles and responsibilities. They are very highly regarded by students and appear to be effective in their leadership and management of the boarding provision.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.3)

The school should be capable of satisfactorily managing crises affecting boarders' welfare

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****2**

The school does have a policy on dealing with Fire Practices and Emergencies and Fire and Major Incidents, both of which are contained in the Staff Handbook. These do apply to the whole school site as well as to the boarding houses.

The school has recently needed to manage a significant health issue affecting a number of students and this appears to have been managed effectively and professionally. The Inspectors were satisfied that the school satisfactorily manage any crises, however there is a lack of written guidance and policy documentation regarding the school's response to other potential crises.

The school is therefore advised to create a comprehensive policy to deal with a range of foreseeable major incidents or crises, ensure that staff are aware of it and its application. This would ensure that the Standard is met.

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.5)

The organisation of boarding houses or units should operate satisfactorily and provide appropriate protection and separation of boarders by age and gender.

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

Reading School is an all boys' school. Both boarding houses are for boys and accommodate a range of ages from Year 7 to Year 13.

Neither boarding house is significantly poorer than the other in respect of its provision, facilities or standards. Both have recently benefited from being partially redecorated. There are also no major discrepancies in respect of the principles or practice of boarding in the two houses. Both operate on very similar practices with the respective Housemaster complementing each other and working effectively as a team.

The majority of students have single rooms for sleeping and studying with the younger years sharing a room with a maximum of four beds in each room. Recreation, toilet and bathroom provision is suitably located near sleeping areas and, again, no major discrepancies exist.

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

There should be an appropriate range and choice of activities for boarders outside teaching time.

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

Students who board at Reading School benefit from a good range of activities, with a choice available. All boarders have sufficient free time for activities and interests following the end of the school day and the end of prep' time in the evening. Boarders return home either on Friday evening or Saturday mornings with no students staying over for the entire weekend.

Student survey conducted by CSCI highlighted that 19% stated there were 'plenty' of activities with a further 35% stating that there were 'enough'.

Discussion groups highlighted that boys were, on the whole, satisfied with the range and choice of activities, however appreciated that the facilities and provision on the school were limited. This did lead to some frustration, especially as some activities had been curtailed and stopped due to insufficient staffing levels and safety concerns. The School Development Plan has highlighted the need to increase the facilities and provision for activities for boarders. Discussions with relevant staff also highlighted that the size of the school site did place limitations on the activities available.

Boarders do have access to the internet, however suitable supervision of safeguards are in place to counter risks of accessing inappropriate material as far as is possible.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.2)

Boarders have opportunity to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****4**

The school perform very well on this Standard with a clear culture of inclusion, empowerment and participation from boarding students to contributing to the operation and provision of boarding.

Formal opportunities exist through the School Council, and a Food Committee, as well as nightly House meetings. Nominations are taken for representation on the School Council and Food Committee and students who attend confirmed that their views are listened to and often responded to, although this may take some time. They appreciated that this may be due to needing to consult with others in the school.

Student discussion groups confirmed that boarders were satisfied with their capacity to contribute to the operation and provision of boarding and that issues had been considered as a consequence of their involvement i.e. food/menu changes, activities, decoration, merit system.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.7)
Any prefect system (or equivalent) should give prefects (or equivalent) appropriate specific duties and responsibilities, with adequate staff supervision and measures to counter possible abuses of the role.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The school does operate a Prefect system, both within the whole school as well as the boarding houses. All Year 12 and 13 boarders become Prefects and nominations are proposed for school Prefects.

The House Prefects role is seen as one of a supportive helper, consequently they do not substitute staff. They are seen as having a responsible role within the boarding houses. A Sixth Form Handbook is produced that provides a level of information to assist and enable individuals to perform their duties. Prefects are able to administer sanctions as well as reward with merits, however as stated in a previous Standard this is an infrequent event. Prefects are provided with support through meetings with the Housemasters however these tend to be informal. Opportunities for leadership can be sought in other ways other than the prefectorial roles. These consist of becoming an academic mentor, a house Prefect in the day school, school Prefects, running house competitions and the Combined Cadet Force.

Discussion groups revealed that opportunities for leadership and other areas of responsibility outside that of their role as a Prefect appear to be limited. The school may wish to consider developing the role of the Prefect in order to promote their opportunities.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.6)
Each boarder should have one or more members of staff to whom he or she can turn for personal guidance or with a personal problem.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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Student surveys conducted by CSCI highlighted that boarders are able to contact a number of individuals for personal guidance or with a personal problem. These included parents, Matrons, the Chaplain and other staff on site.

Discussion groups revealed similar responses. Students spoke positively about the Tutor system, the Matrons, and both Housemasters. Tours of both boarding houses confirmed that telephone numbers for external help lines were posted around the accommodation.

WELFARE SUPPORT TO BOARDERS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders receive first aid and health care as necessary.
- Boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill.
- Boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems.
- Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination.
- Boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families.
- Boarders' possessions and money are protected.
- New boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in.
- Boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school.
- Risk assessment and school record keeping contribute to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive good quality catering provision.
- Boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals.
- Boarders are protected from the risk of fire.
- Boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands.
- The welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school.
- Boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high-risk activities.
- Boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.14)

Appropriate first aid and minor illness treatment are available to boarders at all times, with access to medical, dental and optical services as required.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

Boarding pupils are registered with a local GP and can ask the Matrons to make an appointment or can ring the GP themselves if they wish. The latter option is rarely if ever used.

The Matrons and some of the boarding house staff are first aid trained. There are clear plans in place to ensure that all boarding house staff are appropriately first aid trained.

The medication cabinet in East House needs to be secured and there was some evidence of medication not being stored in an appropriate facility. This will need to be rectified.

The Matrons have a very clear and well-understood system for the administration of medication, with appropriate written permissions from parents. There was written evidence that boarders administering their own medication had been assessed as competent to do so.

The Matrons spoken with demonstrated a good knowledge of the National minimum Standards and there was evidence that systems had been reviewed appropriately.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.3) Boarders who are ill should be regularly checked and adequately looked after by a member of staff, and be able to summon staff assistance readily and rapidly when necessary.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Boarders spoken with confirmed that they were checked regularly if they were ill in bed however boarders normally go home when ill.</p> <p>A simple system to enable boarders to summon assistance readily and rapidly when ill by day and night is advised.</p>		

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8) Significant health and personal problems of individual boarders should be identified and managed appropriately.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>There was good evidence that the staff had a very good awareness of individual boarders significant health and personal problems. This information was appropriately shared between the staff, both boarding and tutors, and there was evidence of links with external professional services where necessary. This information does however need to be more formally recorded in an agreed welfare plan.</p> <p>There is a good system for identifying potential special needs, managed by the Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO). The current post holder has been in post since September 2004 and teaches a full time programme as well as being the SENCO. The time allocation for the role is to be reviewed in March 2005. This is welcomed as the records seen indicated that the follow up and monitoring systems would benefit from being tightened up.</p>		

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.6) Within the school, there is no inappropriate discrimination on grounds of gender, disability, race, religion, cultural background, linguistic background, sexual orientation, or academic or sporting ability. These factors are taken into account in the care of boarders, so that care is sensitive to different needs.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Students spoken with confirmed that there is no inappropriate discrimination. Staff spoken with demonstrated a commitment to equal opportunities with cultural diversity being celebrated. Boarders provided good examples of ways in which the school actively supports children who do not easily 'fit in' and other examples were observed during the course of the inspection.</p>		

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.6) Boarders are enabled to contact their parents and families in private.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Reading School is a weekly boarding school, all boys return to their family home or their guardians every weekend.</p> <p>All the boarders reported, both in questionnaires and in discussion groups that contact with parents was well facilitated, with the availability of E-mail in addition to school telephones. Almost half the boarders have their own mobile phones. Contact telephone numbers were on display in the boarding houses.</p> <p>Student records showed that there were positive lines of communication between the house staff and parents.</p>		

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.3) Reasonable protection is provided for boarders' personal possessions and for any boarders' money or valuables looked after by the school.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Each boarder is provided with a lockable cupboard and boarders supply their own padlock. Boarders spoken with stated that they felt that their personal belongings were safe in the boarding houses.</p> <p>There is a system for distributing pocket money, for which there is a clear recording system with a staff signature required. It is strongly advised that the pupils sign for their money.</p>		

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.3) There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
<p>New boarders in years 7, 9 and 12 said that they had had a good introduction to boarding at the school. For those who could attend there was an overnight stay at the end of the summer term, after a barbecue. This social occasion had been enjoyed and provided an opportunity to meet current boarders as well as other prospective boarders. Those who had not been able to attend felt that the written material supplied provided them with useful, accurate information.</p> <p>There is a clear mentoring system in place that the students outlined well to the Inspectors. Year 8 students have a social mentoring role and Sixth Formers an academic and pastoral mentoring role. There is a booklet which gives the Sixth Form a broad-brush outline of mentoring, but is not specific to the role in the school. The Sixth Form spoken with felt that a discussion on this role with a senior member of staff would have been useful.</p>		

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.4) Any guardians appointed by the school should be subject to the same recruitment checks as staff, and their care of pupils should be monitored.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
This Standard does not apply to Reading School and has therefore not been inspected. The Head has informed the Commission that the appointment of Guardians is arranged by the child's own family and not the school.		

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.4) The Head, or a senior member of the school's staff, regularly monitors the school's records of risk assessments, punishments, complaints and accidents, to identify any issues requiring action.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>The Headmaster maintains overall responsibility for boarders' welfare, however delegates a number of areas of responsibility to various individuals. These include the Director of Student Support, the two Housemasters (one of which is a Senior Housemaster), the Bursar, and the Estates Manager.</p> <p>Gaps and deficits were noted in respect of risk assessments (covered in Standards 26 and 47), and evidence was lacking in respect of formal monitoring of punishments, complaints and accidents. Other gaps, deficits and inconsistencies were found regarding records within the school (staff recruitment). Due to the small size of the boarding provision, the good teamwork and the close communication there is a degree of informal monitoring taking place, that would highlight patterns or trends.</p> <p>The school will need to evidence greater formal monitoring of issues as highlighted in this Standard and ensure that there are robust systems in place to prevent slippage, and emphasize and monitor for patterns or themes.</p>		

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8) Meals should be provided to boarders, which are adequate in quantity, quality and choice, and provision is made for special dietary, medical or religious needs.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Boarders reported in discussion that the standard of catering had improved and student survey highlighted that 15% of students felt that food was 'very good' with a further 53% stating that it was 'good'. The current Catering Manager has been in post since October 2004 and the staff have confirmed that the variety and quality of food is much improved. There were a few issues in the Environmental Health Report in October 2004 but they have been rectified and some new equipment has been purchased e.g. in the washing up area. A follow up visit by EHO took place on the second day of the CSCI inspection but no further significant issues were raised.</p> <p>All staff have food hygiene certificates and a log book to ensure that their training is up to date. The catering staff and all ancillary staff spoken to had received training in child protection and written guidance on key issues affecting boys' welfare.</p>		

The Catering Manager had a written notification of a small number of boys with specific dietary needs. The Catering Manager made a point of researching the diets permitted for boys who were not Christians so that he could offer them appropriate and interesting dishes.

The Inspectors shared several meals with boarders during the course of the inspection and met with the catering officer. The pupil questionnaire responses about the food were positive and this was seen during the mealtimes. A good range of choice was offered to pupils. The Catering Manager stated that rather than have vegetables as a side dish they tried to incorporate vegetables into the meal to promote healthy eating. Fruit was seen to be available in the boarding houses throughout the day. At breakfast the boys ate in their house dining rooms, as the main dining room in South House is not large enough for all the boys to sit down together at one sitting. On three days per week they are served a cooked breakfast as well as cereal but on the other two days they had croissants, Danish pastries etc as well as the cereal. Fruit is also available at breakfast and toast is freshly made.

Lunch and the evening meal are taken in two sittings, in the South House dining room lunch in year groups and the evening meal as boarding houses. Breakfast is eaten in the respective boarding houses. The catering and dining facilities are small and the school is considering the provision of new whole school dining facilities in the development plan for the school.

The evening meal times are 5.15pm and 5.40pm. Bread and spreads are made available for boarders to snack on; boys in East House felt that their supplies were not replenished as frequently as those of South House. A number of boys reported that they were hungry later on and trips to the local shops were made frequently. It is advised that a more substantial supper be made available.

The Catering Manager confirmed that the recommendations made following the last visit by the Environmental Health Officer had been implemented.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.5)

Boarders have access to drinking water in both boarding and teaching areas, and to food or the means of preparing food at reasonable times in addition to main meals.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Students confirmed that drinking water was readily available in the boarding houses.

As noted above bread and spreads are available at break times and students were seen making toast and hot drinks. There is also a microwave available for all students and the seniors have a separate kitchenette.

There is also a tuck shop on the school site from which boarders can purchase snacks.

As stated in the previous Standard some student would welcome more snacks later in the evening.

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5)

Boarders and boarding staff should be aware of emergency evacuation procedures from boarding accommodation. The school should comply with recommendations of the Fire Service, and should regularly carry out and record risk assessments in relation to fire, together with fire drills and any routine tests recommended by the Fire Service.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

1

All boarders spoken to were aware of the fire evacuation procedures and confirmed that in both houses they had had a walk through of the fire routes and one planned practice drill but they had not yet done one in the hours of darkness and in one house this term they had had three evacuations in response to alarms but no planned evacuation. The practices are recorded on the house fire log kept by the Housemasters. It was noted that there were wedges holding doors open in the boarding houses on the first day of the inspection and in some key places there were no fire notices on display (Fire Report 14). There were also missing Fire Door notices in places.(Fire Report 13)

The caretaker and the maintenance team check the sounders and the call points weekly on a rotational basis and these checks are logged by the Estates and Property Manager. They also check the control panels. As yet there is no system for routine checks of the emergency lights by the caretaker.

The school has a contract with Reading County Council Contract Services PEL who maintains the Fire Warning Installation and they check the sounders, emergency lighting and control panels as well as random checking of call points every three months. (08/02/05) The Company that supplies the fire Extinguishers, RES, checks these appliances annually (14.2.05) and gives a full report with any actions taken. They replace any appliances that are damaged during the year.

The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service carried out an inspection of the school on 01/02/05 and have notified the school of 16 actions that must be taken. They will return to carry out a second inspection in early May by which time the school will have had comprehensive advice and taken action to meet the new regulatory requirements. The school have already arranged for a visit by a consultant MK Fire Training to carry out a complete Risk Assessment for Fire between 14th and 18th March in accordance with Action Point 16 of the Fire Report

In view of the report from the Fire Service the school has major shortfalls in its fire provision but the Inspectors recognise that the action points will be acted upon and note that arrangements were made by the school to bring in consultants on the day they received the report. Once these recommendations have been acted upon the Standard should be met.

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3) Schools where there are unusual or especially onerous demands on boarders ensure that these are appropriate to the boarders concerned and do not unacceptably affect boarders' welfare.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Boarders reported that they had a good balance between free and structured time. They did not feel that the demands on them were unusual or onerous.		

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.2) The welfare of any children accommodated at the school, other than pupils, is protected.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
This standard is not applicable, as the school does not accommodate any children other than pupils.		

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6) Identifiably high-risk activities provided for boarders should be competently supervised and accompanied by adequate and appropriate safety measures.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The school has a Combined Cadet Force, which meets weekly and operates strictly within the regulations of the MOD. Risk assessments are carried out for all activities on site and particularly the armoury where weapons and ammunition are stored according to regulations. In the time available it was not possible to see the written report of the last inspection but the Inspector was satisfied that the staff in charge were experienced in the operational routines demanded for all school cadet forces.</p> <p>The PE Department has comprehensive risk assessments for all sports and the Inspectors were advised the staff who supervise boarders' recreational swimming hold the RLSS National Pool Lifeguard qualification. It is advisable for the school to keep a copy of these qualifications on staff files. It is noted that boys who hold similar qualifications are not permitted to supervise swimming nor are any boarders permitted to use the Sports Hall without staff supervision in accordance with professional advice and in the interests of pupil safety.</p> <p>All boarders who wish to bring their bicycles to school have to wear a helmet when riding them and maintain their bicycles in good order. Similarly skateboarding and roller-blading is only permitted if boarders bring helmets and shin and elbow pads and there are strict rules about where these activities may take place on site.</p> <p>When visits are being taken off-site the leaders of the party have to seek written parental consent for any activity as well as giving full details of the activity, its risk, insurance cover provided and the competence of the staff running the activity. All such visits are only undertaken with the consent of the Headmaster and strictly in accordance with the LEA rules</p>		

and with the approval of the Governors if they are residential or overseas (St 52)
At the time of the inspection there were no planned visits to Adventure Centres.

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.5)

Boarders have access to information about events in the world outside the school, and access to local facilities, which is appropriate to their age.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

A selection of daily newspapers are delivered to each boarding house and made easily accessible to boarders.

All boarders spoken with were clear about the conditions that had to be met before they could leave the school site. These differed where appropriate for each year group. There is a signing in and out system, which was observed by Inspectors to be used in practice.

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are adequately supervised by staff.
- Staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site.
- Boarders are adequately supervised at night.
- Boarders are looked after by staff with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.
- There are sound relationships between staff and boarders.
- Boarders' personal privacy is respected.
- There is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders.
- 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.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.7)

The staff supervising boarders outside teaching time should be sufficient in number and deployment for the age, number and needs of boarders, and the locations and activities involved.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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Inspectors were shown satisfactory duty rotas that provided appropriate staff cover for both boarding houses. Each boarding house would always have two members of staff on duty or available at all times, with additional support on site if required. The school has a mobile telephone for the use of the duty member of staff and the number was posted on notice boards for all to use if needed.

Discussion groups was students highlighted that there was always a member of staff available, contactable and accessible. No problems or difficulties were reported. In the event of staff sickness or absence, other staff step in to cover responsibilities. These staff tend to be familiar with the boarding culture and ethos.

Boarders leaving the school site are required to sign in and out. This includes at the weekends when both leaving and returning. Many students' will make their own way homes and back to the school at weekends and as such are not formally handed over by those with parental responsibility.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)
Boarders temporarily away from the school site remain under the overall responsibility of a duty member of staff, and are able to contact a member of staff in an emergency.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The Staff Handbook contains guidance regarding their responsibilities for students' when leaving the school site on organised activities. This appears to be satisfactory.

The previous Standard highlighted that students' leaving the school site to go, for example, visit Reading, are required to sign in and out. Records were seen of this taking place and students' confirmed this to be the practice.

The school employs one Gap student. He confirmed that he is not left in sole charge of boarders or any other students without a supervising member of staff on site and contactable.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.5)
Staff should be present, and accessible to boarders as necessary, in each boarding house at night.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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As previously stated, Inspectors were informed that there were always two members of staff on duty in each boarding house, with further individuals available if necessary. The use of Sixth Formers and Prefects provides an additional source of supervision, however they are not left in sole charge of younger students. There is always on member of staff sleeping in each house at night and students' confirmed that is was easy to contact them if required. A recent example was cited by students' and staff during the sickness bug in the houses.

A name call/register takes place at the end of each day as well in the mornings at breakfast.

Standard 34 (34.1 - 34.7)

All staff with boarding duties have job descriptions reflecting those duties, receive induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receive regular review of their boarding practice, with opportunities for continuing training in boarding.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Interviews with staff confirmed that they had job descriptions reflecting their duties. These are also available in the Staff Handbook.

Ancillary staff confirmed that they were treated as valued members of a team and included in some meetings with students'. They also confirmed that they had a clear management line and were supervised accordingly.

Performance and appraisals are conducted for members of the academic staff through their annual school appraisal system. Appraisals specific for boarding duties tend to be tagged on to these whole school reviews. The Senior Housemaster intends to introduce a more focused appraisal system for those staff with boarding duties shortly. All staff interviewed confirmed that they were satisfied with the appraisals that they had received.

The Inspector was informed that training opportunities were available including Inset days, BSA training and other short courses where relevant. These opportunities included induction training and guidance for new staff.

Standard 35 (35.1 - 35.4)

All staff with boarding duties are provided with up to date written guidance on the school's boarding policies and practice.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The school produce a Staff Handbook for each academic year. In addition to this the Senior Housemaster has produced a Staff Handbook for the boarding provision. This provides a solid amount of information covering most areas that affect boarding practice and provision, however does suffer from some repetition. This appears due to holding school policy, boarding policy and Governor policy, some for the same area of practice. Additionally, the Inspectors found it a cumbersome document to navigate through. Nevertheless, it does form a good basis on which to build, review and refine.

Although the Standard is met the school is advised to review this document and ensure that it covers all of the policies and procedures as detailed in Appendix One of the National Minimum Standards concerning boarding practice and provision.

Standard 36 (36.1 - 36.4)

There are sound staff/boarder relationships.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

There was strong evidence, both directly from pupils and staff in conversation with Inspectors, from observations made during the course of the inspection and in the questionnaire responses of the existence of positive staff/boarder relationships. Feedback from students about staff was very positive and staff and students demonstrated a clear respect between one another. There was an easy warmth in the interactions observed whilst appropriate boundaries were maintained. The emphasis is on acknowledging and

rewarding positive behaviour and this was understood and appreciated by the pupils.

Standard 37 (37.1 - 37.2)

Staff supervision of boarders should avoid intruding unnecessarily on boarders' privacy.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

During the course of the inspection the staff were seen to respect the boarders privacy, for example by knocking on bedroom doors and awaiting a response before entering. Staff were seen to make themselves available in the boarding houses and boarders confirmed that they felt that their privacy was respected.

Standard 38 (38.1 - 38.10)

Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with boarders (as defined in the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000) includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (enhanced as appropriate), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

1

A selection of staff files were inspected to consider recruitment checks. This selection included academic staff and ancillary staff. Gaps, deficits and inconsistencies were found across the range of files examined. Some files contained an up to date and satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau check; others did not. Some contained information that requires an evidenced risk assessment as to decisions and judgements made as to suitability to work with children. Gaps and deficits were also found in respect of references being taken up and provided, as well as evidence of contact with the referee verifying suitability. A few files contained evidence of a written record of the interview process along with verification of academic qualifications. No retrospective CRB checks have been undertaken, and no CRB check for spouses of staff working on the school site, but not employed by the school.

The recruitment process and checks completed for the Gap student were satisfactory and in good order.

The Inspector found that four different departments appeared to hold information about recruitment checks on individuals, which appears to have created some confusion and blurring of responsibilities.

The school is required to review all existing staff files, ensure that the appropriate checks are in place in order to satisfy the requirements of this Standard and to the suitability of existing staff to work with children. In addition to this the school is required to introduce a robust recruitment process for all adults who have access to children on the school site and ensure that this process is monitored for its efficacy.

Standard 39 (39.1 - 39.4)

The school does not allow any member of staff (including ancillary staff, sessional/contract staff and volunteers) to work unsupervised with boarders unless that member of staff has been satisfactorily checked with the Criminal Records Bureau.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The school operates a system whereby all visiting adults i.e. workmen are required to report to and sign in at reception. They will then be required to wear an identity badge. The Inspectors are uncertain as to how efficient this system is and would advise the school to review this practice and system and amend accordingly.

The school will need to ensure that they only arrange taxi journeys by those drivers who have completed a satisfactory CRB check.

The Inspectors were informed that there is no written agreement between the spouse of the Senior Housemaster, who lives on the school site but is not employed by the school. This will also need rectifying to be in line with this Standard.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation.
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion.
- Boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.
- Boarders have satisfactory provision to study.
- Boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities.
- Boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day.
- Boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas.
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.
- Boarders are suitably accommodated when ill.
- Boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered.
- Boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school.
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits.

Standard 40 (40.1 - 40.8)

Boarding Houses (including dormitories and living areas) and other accommodation provided for boarders should be appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, suitably furnished, accessible to any boarders with disabilities, and adequately maintained.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

T

he boarding accommodation is clean, adequately lit and generally satisfactory with suitable furnishings. There has been a backlog of maintenance but there is in place now a dedicated maintenance budget and the maintenance team has been reorganised to provide maintenance support for 2.5 days per week as well as other help to deal with day to day jobs as they arise in the two boarding houses. In places doorframes are chipped and some rooms are tired but with the new arrangements progress is being made and there is a plan for updating and refurbishment as finance becomes available. The central heating system is not quite adequate but is supplemented by extra free standing heaters. A few boarders commented that their rooms were cold in winter and others that it was too hot in summer.

Standard 41 (41.1 - 41.8)

Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of those boarders designated to use it, and protected by access by the public.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Security of the boarding houses is good and external doors have keypads whose codes are changed regularly. Anyone visiting the boys in the Houses has to be introduced to and have the consent of the member of staff on duty.

The Estates and Property Manager arranges escorts for deliverymen or external workmen and staff will supervise any strangers while they are working in the boarding accommodation.

Extra lighting and alarms have been fitted in key areas on the site and the caretaker, who is resident on site, responds to any alarms. These alarms and lighting are supplied and serviced by Reading Borough Council Contract Services PEL. The school is applying for a grant from the LEA to install an alarm at the swimming pool but as yet they are awaiting the result of their application.

All staff and students are encouraged to challenge politely anyone on site whom they do not recognise and boarders relate accounts of contract school cleaners having been challenged. This is confirmed by the House Staff. The school may wish, in the next review of their Health and Safety Policy, to name boarding specifically and not, as at present, to include it under all departments on the grounds that it operates for 24 hours per day. As discussed with the Bursar, the school may also wish to review their Hire of Premises agreement to include a section making clear where the participants in the clubs or their escorts may be on site during the period of the hire.

Standard 42 (42.1 - 42.14)

Sleeping accommodation is suitably furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of boarders accommodated, with appropriate separation between genders, age groups and from accommodation for adults.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The dormitory accommodation is, on the whole, satisfactory and most boys have single rooms some of which are very small; this results in beds being placed immediately adjacent to heaters. The beds are of standard size and sound and there is a rolling programme of replacement mattresses; there are some bunk beds for Y7 and 8 but they are currently not in use. Bedding is laundered every two weeks. All the rooms have windows with restrictors fitted and all are carpeted. The rooms are personalised to a greater or lesser degree. Boarders do move rooms and their requests are taken into account.

All staff accommodation is separate from the boys accommodation but accessible both day and night if there is a need to alert staff.

Standard 43 (43.1 - 43.2)

Suitable facilities for both organised and private study are available to boarders.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Studying facilities in the houses are adequate and most boys study in their own rooms. There is supervision for the youngest boys in classrooms in South house and in the dining room in East Wing. Older boarders are permitted to work in the communal areas if they wish. There are computers in-house and a plan is in place to extend a limited network to both houses. In addition the IT suite is available as a school club during two evenings per week. The school Library is also available to the boarders until 4.30pm every day.

Standard 44 (44.1 - 44.10)**Adequate toilet and washing facilities are readily accessible to boarders, with appropriate privacy.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The school does meet the standard with regard to the number of baths, wash hand basins and WCs or urinals in both houses. The WCs and urinals are adjacent to both the sleeping areas and the communal areas. There is a programme to update the showers and some have new shower mechanisms and doors while others have been recently retiled. The students commented in the student surveys and in discussion on the lack of privacy and some mentioned that even the new shower doors are only partially glazed with frosted glass. The toilet areas were clean and on the whole adequately ventilated although some do require further refurbishment.

Standard 45 (45.1 - 45.3)**Suitable changing provision is provided for use by day.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The school has limited facilities for recreation and the sports hall; swimming pool and changing facilities are in one dedicated area. The changing areas are open-plan with a shower of the old communal style. It is difficult to keep the floor areas for changing dry, as all the boys, day and boarding, have to use the facilities, as do visiting teams when there are fixtures at home.

The Inspectors are aware that it would be costly and very difficult to alter the existing facilities; there are plans, as yet not costed or designed, to build a new sports facility on the second field but this is not yet on the immediate development plan.

Standard 46 (46.1 - 46.6)**Boarders have access to a range and choice of safe recreational areas, both indoors and outdoors.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The site and the nature of the buildings limit the recreation areas in the school. Both houses have common rooms and dining rooms but they are limited in size. Both houses have DVD and Video Recorders.

The boarders may also use the Sports Hall and the swimming pool when staff are available to supervise. Students in Y10 and above are also able to use the weights room after they have had an induction by a member of staff.

The students are free to wander in the school grounds on their own but generally are in groups. In the grounds the students have the use of the field in summer time and the hard court area behind the Chapel for basketball as well as other hard court areas. There is no dedicated place for the students to play football in the winter months apart from the Sports Hall and in discussion many of the boys expressed the view that such a facility would greatly enhance their leisure time in the evenings and after school. Students are permitted to bring

bicycles to school and also skateboards and roller blades but there is no identified space where they are able to lay out ramps and obstacles.

On the whole the students are understanding of the physical limitations of the site and cheerfully use the areas designated for play and leisure. The school may wish to formalise the policy of access to staff accommodation by boarders as discussed with the Housemasters.

Standard 47 (47.1 - 47.9)

Indoor and outdoor areas used by, or accessible to, boarders should be free from reasonably avoidable safety hazards.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The Estates and Property Manager is responsible for promoting and formalising safety procedures on site. There is a Health and Safety Policy and the Health and Safety Committee meets at least twice per term. Department Heads, including Housemasters, throughout the school are responsible for the Risk Assessments in their area and updating them annually or whenever there is a significant change in equipment or refurbishment.

The House risk assessments should be further developed to include issues where rooms are small and furniture is close to heating pipes or doors are only able to be partially opened; there are also some trailing flexes and overloaded sockets particularly for computer equipment in bedrooms and this requires to be reviewed. The Fire Consultant will advise on risk assessments in relation to fire in the boarding houses. (St 26)

The windows above ground floor level have restrictors or bars including large windows.

In the Houses and in the kitchen areas cleaning materials are locked securely in cupboards.

There is a thorough Risk Assessment of the Armoury that is maintained strictly according to MOD regulations.

In the grounds there were no very significant hazards but in the maintenance area where planks were stored Keep Out notices would reinforce the areas that are out of bounds.

There has been some discussion at the Health and Safety Committee about the safety of the trees following the felling of a tree infected by honey fungus. This should be reviewed annually to ensure the safety of everyone on the site.

Following a risk assessment of hiring the pool to local groups while the boys are on site the arrangements for parking and entry to and exit from the sports complex have been altered and it may be that further conditions re; access are added to the Hire Agreement as mentioned in St 41.

All members of staff are issued with a copy of the Health and Safety Policy that is reviewed annually.

Standard 48 (48.1 - 48.4) Suitable accommodation should be available for the separate care of boarders who are ill.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>In each house there is a separate room with one bed for boarders who are ill. There is no separate toilet and washing facilities designated solely for use by the occupant of this room.</p> <p>One Matron advised the Inspector that this could be arranged if necessary. As this is a weekly boarding school boarders would generally go home if they were ill. This was demonstrated in the month prior to the inspection when a boarding house was closed due to a particularly infectious virus and all the boys returned home to their parents or guardians.</p>		

Standard 49 (49.1 - 49.3) Adequate laundry provision is made for boarders' clothing and bedding.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The arrangements for carrying out boys' laundry are managed by the Matrons and are effective. Personal laundry is done in House and students reported that it is possible for them to have extra laundry, e.g. games kit, done at their request for which they are very appreciative.</p> <p>Bedding is sent to an external laundry and is changed every two weeks.</p> <p>Most of the students seen on site were smart and took an interest in their appearance.</p>		

Standard 50 (50.1 - 50.2) Boarders are able to obtain minor necessary personal and stationery items while accommodated at school.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The boarders are able to buy stationery items in school. They are also permitted to go to the local shops between end of school and tea and are able to purchase other items at these local shops or at the shop in the Royal Berkshire hospital adjacent to the school.</p>		

Standard 51 (51.1 - 51.11) Any lodgings arranged by the school to accommodate pupils provide satisfactory accommodation and supervision, are checked by the school before use, and are monitored by the school during use.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
<p>This Standard does not apply to Reading School and has therefore not been inspected.</p>		

Standard 52 (52.1 - 52.8)

Any off-site short-stay accommodation arranged by the school for any of its boarders provides satisfactory accommodation and supervision, is checked by the school before use (although this may not be feasible when accommodation is in private households), and is monitored by the school during use.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The school does offer some high-risk visits and camps with the CCF. In the case of the latter the CCF plans activities in meticulous detail and in accordance with MOD guidelines and regulations. A few students are planning a Team Challenge expedition to Mt Kilimanjaro under the guidance of two very experienced staff but the Inspectors were unable to evidence the planning during the inspection. This visit is carried out under the auspices of the World Challenge trust and has the consent of the LEA and the Governors

Other residential visits evidenced were the Crusaders' annual camp where some medium risk activities took place e.g. ice-skating. A detailed risk assessment was carried out for all activities on the camp and for the accommodation prior to the visit.

During the holidays there was also a cricket tour to the West Indies and the Inspector was able to evidence the risk assessment by the tour company Gullivers as well as the in house risk assessment. There was also an Art trip to Florence using a reputable tour company and both in house and company risk assessments were undertaken. All of these activities were judged to be very satisfactory.

The Inspector was unable to scrutinise the documentation for biology or geography field trips on this occasion and it is understood that the school is no longer organising language exchanges where boys live with host families but plans to organise residential visits with an approved school travel company.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Lead Inspector

Mr K Ball

Signature

K Ball

Date

03 March 2005

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 21 to 23 February 2005 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	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Comments were received from the Head	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Head's comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Head's comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 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	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Action plan was received at the point of publication	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Action plan covers all the recommended actions in a timely fashion	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Action plan did not cover all the recommended actions and required further discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head has declined to provide an action plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: <enter details here>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

D.3.1 I Andrew Linnell of Reading School 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 ANDREW LINNELL
Signature Signed
Designation Headmaster
Date 24/3/05

Or

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

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

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

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