



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

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

Ash Field School

Broad Avenue

Leicester

Leicestershire

LE5 4PY

28th 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

Ash Field School

Address

Broad Avenue, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE5 4PY

Tel No:

0116 273 7151

Fax No:

0116 273 9762

Email Address:office@ashfield.leicester.sch
.uk**Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school**

Leicester City Local Education Authority

Name of Head

Mr D Bateson

CSCI Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

LEA

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

26/01/04

Date of Inspection Visit		18th January 2005	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		10:00 am	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Joanne Vyas	090009
Name of CSCI Inspector	2	NA	
Name of CSCI Inspector	3	NA	
Name of CSCI Inspector	4	NA	
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):		NA	
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.		NA	
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)		NA	
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Janet Chaplin (Head of Residential Care) & Rosemary Stokes (Senior Residential Link Teacher & Counsellor).	

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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 Ash Field 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)

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

Ash Field Residential Special School is a school for boys and girls who primarily have physical disabilities and some also have an associated learning disability or communication difficulties.

The residence is sited on the ground floor, running on a flexi-boarding basis, with up to 18 pupils staying over night at any one time. Pupils stay in the residence for four nights in four weeks. Some pupils stay only for an “extended school day” visit, these pupils staying only for activities and tea. Currently forty-seven pupils stay over night in residence.

The residence also incorporates an Independent Living Flat where up to two pupils can reside from the age of fourteen to practise their independent living skills.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

All pupils attend Ash Field's residential facility voluntarily and are only resident on a part-time basis and are only in residence because they have expressed a wish to be there. The strength of this school lies in its staff and pupils. The management team offer a supportive, cohesive, learning environment for staff as well as pupils. Staff are highly motivated and committed and have been commended for the many opportunities they provide for pupils to give their opinions. Activities offered are an excellent example of how pupils' ideas have been put into practice. Activities are planned, displayed, and reviewed. Pupils appeared well informed about what is happening currently in residence and its future. A high staffing level together with this highly motivated team ensures the safety of pupils and promotes an anti-bullying ethos. Staff showed a high level of competence in child protection procedures.

Staff provide positive role models and it was evident to the inspector that the ethos of the school is imbedded in practice. A recently introduced reward scheme has proved very popular amongst the residential pupils.

High on the agenda, in residence, is education. The pupils appeared enthusiastic about learning in this relaxed and informal atmosphere. Although education is a high priority the school has found the right level of free time to structured time. Staff use effective communication systems between school, parents/carers and residence, therefore enabling collaboration to identify and encourage each pupil's personal, social and educational development.

Independence, communication and social targets are set and reviewed at each annual review in residence, which are closely linked to the Statement of Special Educational Need. Residence also offers an Independent Living Flat to older pupils. Meal times were an important part of the social framework.

The school, although short of space, is clean and well maintained.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The inspector made six advisory recommendations at this inspection.

Although the school prefer the use of rewards to encourage positive behaviour, they occasionally also use sanctions. These were not recorded.

Menus have been consulted over with pupils and some meals have been replaced. However food is not cooked from fresh and is not always appealing or tasty.

Pupils complained that some of the beds are uncomfortable.

Risk assessments need to be more comprehensive, covering all health and safety issues for individual pupils. Medical information needs to be fully completed and accessible to residential staff.

References for new staff should be verified.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This school offers an excellent opportunity for pupils to engage in a well thought out and relevant 24-hour curriculum. For this inspection the school has been commended in six standards. The school has not met seven standards with six advisory recommendations made.

The inspector received two questionnaires from pupils, no questionnaires from staff and four questionnaires from parents. All comments were positive.

A pupil said about what he likes best about the school, "The friendships I have built up with other students. Being given the opportunity to go out on trips. Independent living."

A parent said, "Dedicated staff and a great variety of opportunities. I cannot praise enough the excellent work they do; they treat each pupil as an individual and educate them as a whole, i.e. educationally, socially and in life skills. They promote self-esteem and worth and as result pupils realise that they are not the only ones in life who have difficulties as they are fully aware of world events e.g. famine in Africa, Tsunami in Asia etc. which they actively help to fund raise for."

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

Is Notification of any failure to safeguard and promote welfare to be made by the Commission for Social Care Inspection to the Local Education Authority or Department for Education and Skills under section 87(4) of the Children Act 1989 arising from this inspection?

NO

Notification to be made to: **Local Education Authority
Secretary of State**

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

NONE

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

Recommended Actions from the last Inspection visit fully implemented?

NO

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	
		NONE	

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

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

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	RS10	The school is recommended to implement bound and numbered books for recording sanctions or any physical intervention if/when the school imposes any sanction or physical intervention for any child accommodated in the school.
2	RS14	The school is recommended to ensure medical information is completed for each pupil in residence that is accessible to staff and this may include what type of epilepsy a pupil has and what an individual's seizure looks like.
3	RS15	The school is recommended to consider the quality of the meals offered to pupils in residence, ensuring meals are appealing and tasty as well as healthy and nutritious in consultation with pupils.
4	RS24	The school is recommended to review the beds used in residence to ascertain which beds are seen as uncomfortable by pupils and take the appropriate action.
5	RS26	The school is recommended to review its risk assessments to ensure risk assessments are carried out for all activities listed in standard 26.3 of the National Minimum Standards for residential special schools and that they are comprehensive.
6	RS27	The school is recommended to verify all references and record on the staff file that this has been done.

Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. RS10 refers to standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS**

The following inspection methods were used in the production of this report

Direct Observation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Accommodation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	YES

Checks with other Organisations

• Social Services	NO
• Fire Service	NO
• Environmental Health	NO
• DfES	NO
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person	NO
• 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	NO
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	NA
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	NO
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	28/02/04
Time of Inspection	13:30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	18.25
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 Positive Ethos policy and a school prospectus, which sets out the school's aims and objectives. The school's aims and objectives apply equally to all parts of it including residence. There is a regular exchange of information between school and residential staff. The school's aims and objectives are reviewed annually at a Governors' meeting. It was last reviewed in June 2004 when no amendments were made.		

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?	4
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Consultation with pupils is intrinsic to school life. The school has an active school council and youth council where key discussions are held. Residence has also started a residential council, which is proving very popular and has already made significant changes to residence. A "Suggestions Wallet" is also provided for pupils to leave suggestions, which are then discussed at a residential council meeting. The inspector observed such a meeting and found that all the members were asked for their opinions/ideas and these were valued.

Pupils are given a choice whether to stay in the residence, it is not compulsory. Residential staff discuss the pupil's care plan and set targets for the residence with parents/carers and pupils. Pupils who the inspector spoke to felt they were consulted on all aspects of residential life. As an example of this, pupils are asked for their opinions on the activities they have engaged in and when the activities are reviewed, these opinions are crucial to any decisions made. The inspector observed on many occasions consultation with pupils over their care and welfare.

The school is commended for ensuring all pupils are enabled to communicate their needs/likes/dislikes/choices and are listened to, regardless of their disability.

Residence have recently conducted a survey with parents/carers with regard to the quality of care offered in residence at Ash Field. A large number of parents/carers responded and all responses were positive.

The school cater for the religious and cultural needs of its pupils. It offers opportunities for religious observance and dietary requirements if requested. This is evidenced in the care plans.

Staff have completed training in the British Sign Language and Makaton.

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)

The school and staff respect a child's wish for privacy and confidentiality so far as is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect the child.

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

The school's Positive Ethos policy and staff handbook for residential staff embraces privacy and confidentiality including child protection policies.

All pupils' files are kept in a secure place until the pupils are staying in residence. Their files are then kept in the pupil's bedroom to enable staff and pupils easy access.

Pupils have access to a pay phone in the kitchen of the residence but if they have not got any money, arrangements can be made for them to use the office phone. A number of pupils had personal mobile phones.

All staff receive appropriate training and guidance when giving intimate care to pupils and the Positive Ethos policy includes "Personal contact between a pupil and a member of staff."

All staff the inspector spoke to were competent in their knowledge of child protection procedures.

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?

4

The school has a comprehensive complaints procedure that all staff, pupils and parents/carers have access to. All pupils whom the inspector spoke to knew how to make a complaint and seemed very able to do so if they were inclined to.

The school does not have an Independent Listener but a senior teacher is a trained Counsellor whom the pupils know they can talk to in confidence if they wish to. The Counsellor does make it clear to pupils that there are some issues they may wish to discuss with her that she is unable to keep confidential, those that have legal implications. Pupils are also asked to complete a form for their annual review where they are asked if there is anything they don't like about school.

Residence has also recently introduced a system where students can leave suggestions in a folder posted on a notice board in residence. Any suggestions left are discussed in the next residential council meeting. These are held each term but more can be put in if there is a need.

Pupils told the inspector that all suggestions/complaints are listened to and acted upon if possible.

The school is commended for ensuring pupils are given a number of different opportunities to complain if they wish to do so.

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?

3

The school has a comprehensive child protection policy which all staff, pupils, and parents/carers have access to.

All staff receive child protection training as part of their induction and this is updated annually. All staff interviewed had a sound knowledge of child protection procedures. The inspector observed staff following procedures to protect children as part of their everyday routine; for example, two staff support pupils with their personal care. If one staff should be left alone with a pupil, the door is left open.

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

0

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5)

The school has, and follows, an anti-bullying policy, with which children and staff are familiar and which is effective in practice. Where possible children in the school contribute to the development of the policy.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The school encourages pupils to value themselves and others. This was evident throughout the inspection in the way pupils behaved towards each other. All teaching and care staff interviewed were able to define bullying and how to manage it. The pupils the inspector spoke to know what to do if they felt they were being bullied or if they saw someone else being bullied. The inspector received two questionnaires back from pupils. Both pupils reported that they are never bullied.

Throughout the Positive Ethos policy references to anti-bullying and disciplinary measures are made. School assemblies cover bullying and there are "Loud Mouth" posters around the school.

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 for promptly reporting all notifiable events to the appropriate authorities.

Staff in the school promptly notify parents of any incidents involving their child. This is stated throughout the Staff Handbook and the Positive Ethos policy. Completed incident/accident forms state the time parents and the Head or senior teacher were notified of the incident and action to be taken.

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**

0

0

1

0

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)		
The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Staffing levels are high in residence, which leads to a high level of supervision. Pupils also would find it difficult to move unaided out doors due to the nature of their disabilities. Therefore absence without authority is highly unlikely.</p> <p>The school does have a policy called “Absence of a child without authority.”</p>		
Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:		0

CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
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All staff are given a copy of the Positive Ethos policy and a staff hand book when they take up employment at the school which clearly states expectations of behaviour for both staff and pupils.

Care staff work in pairs when providing intimate care and pupils know which staff are supporting them each evening as this is posted on the notice board in the residential corridor. The inspector observed pupils checking this board throughout the day. If pupils are unhappy with particular staff giving care, these staff can be reorganised. A pupil told the inspector that the best part of staying in residence was the staff.

Throughout the inspection, but specifically during the activity sessions and the residential council meeting, the inspector felt that staff demonstrated exemplary competence in ensuring all pupils were valued and their contribution seen as important. The school is commended for this.

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

The school has a comprehensive policy and procedures relating to measures of control, discipline and physical intervention.

All staff, the inspector spoke to, stated that they rarely use sanctions as a means of control as they prefer to encourage and encompass positive behaviours, which alleviates the need for sanctions. Residence has recently introduced a reward scheme, which appeared very popular amongst pupils.

The school have forms for recording physical intervention but does not have a bound and numbered book for this. However, the school does not use physical intervention with its pupils due to the physical disabilities pupils have. However, there was evidence in one out of the five files the inspector viewed that sanctions can be applied.

The school is recommended to implement a bound and numbered book for recording sanctions if/when the school imposes any sanction for any child accommodated in the school.

The pupils of the school are positive towards themselves, each other and the school, showing understanding and compassion towards each other.

A school counsellor, who is also a teacher and part of the senior management team, is available to pupils. Pupils can refer themselves to her or a teacher may refer them or, the school councillor may be aware of a situation and may approach the pupil.

QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Admission to the residence is on a voluntary basis only. Admission is usually discussed at annual review and the Senior Management Team meetings each week. Leaving residence/school is also monitored and achieved through the annual review process.</p>		
<p>During a senior residential staff meeting the inspector observed, it was noted that staff are sensitive to the needs of the individual, and will try to accommodate those needs. This may mean an introduction to residence through extended day provision therefore giving the pupil an opportunity to get to know the residential staff and the routines in residence or ensuring that the correct healthcare provision is in place prior to admission.</p>		

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

The Senior Residential Link teacher stated that residence offers a 24-hour curriculum, which not only has a homework club but also offers a broader curriculum such as independent living skills and communication skills. Pupils said they felt it was a good opportunity to meet with their friends. One pupil said, "I appreciate the time to complete my drama work."

All activities in residence are planned and evaluated.

All senior staff, including the Head Teacher work in residence during the evening. Residence has set up its routine to include a homework session where school and residential staff support pupils. Some residential staff also work in school therefore having an holistic view of the child.

The school are commended for their across-school working.

Access to all parts of the school are available until at least 8pm. The residential staff contribute written reports for annual reviews.

There is also an "independence flat" in residence where pupils can stay, supported by staff, and cook their own meals, money management and carry out domestic tasks. Targets are set and these contribute towards an ASDAN award, which is a recognised accredited course.

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

There is a choice of two main activities each evening, including swimming, various sports and games. Activities have been chosen initially by pupils at the beginning of the term and evaluated by the pupils to inform what activities are offered the next term. Activities are displayed on a large notice board outside the residential office with the names of key staff who are running the activity. The school host various clubs such as Youth Club, The Brownies, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. The Youth Club is very popular amongst older pupils, many staying after school for it. Activities outside the school might include Family Night Football, bowling or the cinema. The inspector observed a wheelchair dance class, where pupils took part in line dancing and country dancing and appeared to thoroughly enjoy the experience, as did the inspector!

The school are commended for the choice of activities on offer to pupils and the consultation process with pupils for activities that are offered. Also for the high staffing levels to enable the pupils to take a full and active part.

The parents' consent form states consent for age range of films pupils can watch.

Pupils are given the opportunity to celebrate religious festivals.

Risk assessments are completed for some activities such as swimming, trips off-site and moving and handling. The moving and handling risk assessments are not comprehensive and there are no risk assessments completed for activities carried out in the independence flat such as cooking and making hot drinks.

The school is recommended to review its risk assessments to ensure all activities are covered and that they are comprehensive.

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 residence has in-depth Care Plans for each pupil with regard to health and intimate care, which have been agreed in consultation with pupils and parents/carers. The school also keep medical information on file. In the five files the inspector viewed, this was not complete. Also there was no information about the type of seizures pupils with epilepsy have or what these seizures look like.

The school is recommended to ensure medical information is completed for each pupil in residence that is accessible to staff and this may include what type of epilepsy a pupil has and what an individual's seizure looks like.

The school's Positive Ethos policy details policies required by this standard.

Pupils only stay in residence for a total of four nights every three weeks, therefore their medical, dental and optical needs are a parental responsibility. Usually pupils who are ill are sent home. Senior staff are on-call if a pupil becomes ill during the night.

Some staff are trained in First Aid and others have the emergency aid certificate. The school intend to train one or two more staff in First Aid.

The school does not employ a qualified nurse, but they do have a nursing assistant who carries out medical procedures throughout the school day. During the evening, nursing cover is organised on an individual basis.

Medication is kept in a locked drugs trolley and a medication cabinet, which is stored in the office when not in use. All medication is labelled and appropriately administered and recorded. The school adhere to the Leicester City Council's Administration of Medicines in Schools Code of Practice. Written protocols are provided by the Health Authority for any medical or nursing procedures school staff may carry out. Parents/carers permission is always sought and staff are trained to be competent in such procedures.

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

Menus are based on a four-week cycle. Tea is generally a light tea as a main meal is offered at lunchtime.

As a result of a recommendation made in this report last year, a full review of menus was undertaken which involved consulting with pupils and taking out meals that weren't liked and replacing them with meals that are liked. However, some of the pupils the inspector spoke to still complained about the quality of the meals although some felt they had improved. One pupil stated, "Yes the food is alright but I'll eat anything!" The cook and the Head of Care explained that they no longer cook meals from fresh ingredients due to the cost. They explained that although the meals are nutritionally balanced, they are neither appealing nor tasty.

The school is recommended to consider the quality of the meals offered to pupils in residence, ensuring meals are appealing and tasty as well as healthy and nutritious in consultation with pupils.

Meals are carried out unhurried and are very much a social occasion. All staff were fully interacting with pupils positively and pupils were enjoying the social experience.

The residence also has an Independent Living Flat where older pupils reside and prepare and cook their own meals under staff supervision.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The inspector observed that staff are continually encouraging pupils to make choices.

Pupils do not have to wear uniform during the school day and therefore can choose what they wish to wear. All personal belongings including toiletries are labelled and are only used by the person named. Young ladies bring in their own supply of sanitary protection but staff keep a stock in case of emergencies. All pupils go home at the weekends so therefore there is rarely a need for pupils to purchase extra toiletries.

Pupils in the independence flat are encouraged and supported in money management skills.

CARE PLANNING AND PLACEMENT PLAN

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. In addition, Care plans are drawn up between parents/carers, pupils and residential staff. Care Plans cover the following areas; a profile; home; communication; equipment; eating and drinking; moving and handling management; personal hygiene; management through the night; medication; undressing; dressing; current parental consent; current residential stay dates; current Individual Education Plan and residential targets. Targets are agreed with pupils. The Head of Care informed the inspector that care plans are evaluated after every annual review.

The school has also has a keyworker system. Keyworkers will, with pupils, set targets, review Care Plans and write reports for annual reviews.

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

All pupils have an individual file that is kept secure and contains most of the relevant information specified in Standard 18 of the National Minimum standards. See standard 14. Although this information is available in the main school files it should be easily accessible to all care staff.

Written entries are signed and dated. When pupils are in residence, their files are kept in their rooms so that they are easily accessible for staff and pupils.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)

The school maintains clear and accurate records on the staff and child groups of the school, and major events affecting the school and children resident there.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Registers for staff and pupils are completed and accurately reflect staff and pupils in residence.

Contracts of employment and Criminal Record Clearances for staff are kept with the City Council's Education Personnel Department. The school receive a letter of confirmation from the council with regard to Criminal Records Bureau clearance. The school run a three-year cycle of checking all staff with the Criminal Records Bureau.

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

All the pupils who reside at the school live with parents/carers for the majority of the time.

Pupils have access to a pay phone if they wish to contact parents/carers while in residence. Staff support pupils to use the phone if they require this. Pupils can also use the office phone to make a call in private. Phone calls from parents/carers are also received and staff contact parents/carers if the need arises. A number of pupils had their own mobile phone.

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?**

4

Leaving care is a planned process, which will include annual reviews and the Transition team.

The residence also gives the opportunity for pupils 14 years and over to stay in the Independent Living Flat where they carry out domestic tasks as well as personal care under staff supervision in preparation for leaving school. Pupils staying in the flat were keen to show the inspector around the flat and discuss what targets they work on in the flat. The school is commended for this.

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's Positive Ethos policy sets out appropriate support given to pupils.

Pupils the inspector spoke to, felt they were able to talk to any member of the residential team or the senior management team with regard to any concerns they have.

The school cover Personal, Social and Health Education as part of the curriculum.

A teacher at the school is a qualified councillor who the pupils can discuss issues with confidentially. They can self-refer or a member of staff may refer them. The councillor has a debrief session once a week with the Head Teacher.

The school does not have an Independent Listener but the school provides phone numbers for pupils to access outside support agencies. All pupils easily access these.

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
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The school is accommodated on the ground floor with the appropriate equipment installed for pupils to access all areas within the school as independently as they are able. Most pupils in the school use a wheelchair. Wheelchairs are stored appropriately and recharged over night for pupils who are in residence. Manual wheelchairs are put outside bedrooms for over night use in case of a need to evacuate the building in an emergency.

Playgrounds are suited to the pupils who use them.

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?**

2

The residence has a small kitchen for pupils to make themselves drinks and snacks, a lounge with Sky television and a “playroom.” It also has a laundry room.

The residence has eighteen beds. These are split into two single rooms, four double rooms, two rooms with three beds and a flat with two beds. Rooms are small but pupils seem to spend little time in their room. Some rooms are fitted with ceiling track hoists and the school also use mobile hoists. Hoists are serviced regularly. A number of pupils complained to the inspector that beds are uncomfortable. Beds are the hi-lo type and some have pressure-relieving mattresses as required by some pupils.

The school is recommended to review the beds used in residence to ascertain which beds are seen as uncomfortable by pupils and take the appropriate action.

Pupils in the residential council have stated to the management that they feel bedrooms need “brightening up.” Staff in residence have responded positively and have acquired material swatches to show pupils to choose material for new curtains and quilt covers.

The school try and offer this valuable experience to as many pupils as possible but space is an issue throughout the school not just residence.

The accommodation is clean and well maintained.

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

The residence has one small walk-in shower room; a recently refurbished large walk-in shower room/changing room and a room with a bath and a shower in it separated by a partition.

The residence has a number of disabled toilets including a “Super Loo.” The Independent Living Flat has its own bathroom and toilet.

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?

2

The school carry out risk assessments on fire, environment and individual pupils.

Risk assessments are completed for activities such as swimming, trips off-site and moving and handling. The moving and handling risk assessments are not comprehensive and there are no risk assessments completed for activities carried out in the independence flat such as cooking and making hot drinks.

The school is recommended to review its risk assessments to ensure risk assessments are carried out for all activities listed in standard 26.3 of the National Minimum Standards for residential special schools and that they are comprehensive.

The school carry out fire drills monthly during school terms, the last fire drill being on the 8th January 2004. All pupils the inspector spoke to knew what to do in case of a fire. Fire routine posters are posted around the 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?

3

The school has a comprehensive recruitment and selection policy, which includes the recommended checks, documentary evidence, a written record of the interview and subsequent offer of employment and two references. The school ensures the Criminal Records Bureau checks all staff, including agency staff. The school have implemented a three year rolling programme for all staff to have a Criminal Records Bureau check.

Currently, references are not verified as a matter of routine as it is the policy of the Leicester Education Department that references are only checked if there is good reason to assume they are not genuine.

Total number of care staff:

15

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

2

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The residence is staffed according to the need of the pupils. The rota shows there are six staff on every evening. Over night there are two waking night staff and two sleep-in staff, one of which is a senior member of staff. Also a member of the senior management team is on-call each night.

Two staff provide intimate care to pupils due to moving and handling requirements. An intercom system is set up for pupils to be able to contact a member of staff during the night.

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?**

3

All new care staff are put through an induction programme which includes child protection training; the fire routine; moving and handling; and hoist training. Staff are also given a staff handbook and a copy of the Positive Ethos policy.

Child protection training is updated annually.

Other training may include training specific to the pupils at the school including specialised forms of communication; splint, First Aid and Food Handling and Hygiene.

Staff have access to four training days a year plus any external courses they may attend.

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 school has an Open Door policy and the care staff felt they are well supported. All staff are appraised annually and then targets are checked half way through the year. The school have implemented a formal system of one to one supervision. All staff receive supervision once every term. The standard states that staff should receive supervision once every half term so this standard has not been met and therefore awarded a score of 2 but as all staff the inspector spoke to, stated that they felt well supported, the outcome has been achieved for this standard and therefore a recommendation has not been made.

The senior residential staff have a management meeting every week. A full residential staff meeting happens once a term. The inspector attended a senior residential management meeting and found it to be informative and comprehensive ensuring the smooth running of the residential facility.

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

The Head of Care has thirty-four years experience in care, seventeen years of which were at Ash Field and has completed a two year course called The National Diploma in House craft and Child Care. The Head of Care has recently commenced a National Vocational Qualification level 4 in Management.

Two other senior staff are also completing the National Vocational Qualification level 4 in Management and one member of staff is completing the National Vocational Qualification level 3 in Caring for children and one member of staff has completed this National Vocational Qualification.

The school has planned responses to foreseeable crises.

As pupils are not full-time boarders of the school, the school has regular contact with parents.

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

7 %

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The school is under the control of the Leicester City Education Authority.

The Senior Management Team monitors all the relevant records. The Head Teacher reviews the whole school through the Head Teachers report to the Governors.

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

Ofsted and the governing body inspect the school. Reports are completed and left in the staff room, the resources room and the senior management team room for staff to read.

A designated governor has specific responsibility for monitoring residence. This governor makes regular visits to the school and makes a formal report to governors once a year.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Not Applicable

Lay Assessor Not 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 28th February to the 2nd March 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

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

NO

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

YES

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 13th April 2005, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

NO

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

NO

Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion

NO

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

NO

Other: comments only received. Changes required to report before action plan can be written.

YES

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

D.3.1 I Mr David Bateson of Ash Field confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the recommended actions made and will seek to comply with these.

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Or

D.3.2 I Mr David Bateson of Ash Field 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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S000006451.V196306.R01

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