



Making Social Care  
Better for People

# inspection report

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

## **Falconer School**

Falconer Road

Bushey

Hertfordshire

WD23 3AT

11th January 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.

<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION</b>
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**Name of School**

Falconer School

**Address**

Falconer Road, Bushey, Hertfordshire, WD23 3AT

**Tel No:**

0208 950 2505

**Fax No:**

0208 421 8107

**Email Address:**

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

Governing Body

**Name of Head**

Mr J S B Page

**CSCI Classification**

Residential Special School

**Type of school**

Residential Special  
School

**Date of last boarding welfare inspection:**

20/01/04
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<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>	11th January 2005	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>	10:00 am	
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	1	Pat House
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	2	Louise Bushell
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	3	
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	4	
<b>Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):</b>	Not applicable	
<b>Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)</b> 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.	There was none present.	
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>	There was none present.	
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>	Mr J S B Page, Head Teacher	

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## INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to determine whether the welfare of children (i.e. those aged under 18) is adequately safeguarded and promoted while they are accommodated by the school.

Inspections assess the extent to which the school is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools, published by the Secretary of State under Section 87C of the Children Act 1989, and other relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 as amended. Residential Special Schools are not registered as children's homes unless they accommodate, or arrange accommodation for, one or more children for more than 295 days a year.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Falconer 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 SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION**

Falconer School is a Secondary Special School for boys with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school provides education for both day and boarding pupils. The newly refurbished residential unit known as “Chimneys,” now provides boarding accommodation for 12 boys, from Monday to Friday. The school is situated in a residential area of Bushey, which has a nearby High Street with shops, and a library within walking distance.

## **PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE**

The new boarding unit, “Chimneys”, now provides spacious attractive accommodation, which the boys are clearly proud of. The increased numbers of care staff have enabled less split shifts to be worked, and more consistency in care provision has resulted. This has also meant that more activities are being offered and all the boys said how much they valued this provision. Extended day opportunities have also been increased and more day boys appear keen to become boarders at the school. The new unit now has its own laundry and kitchen, and there is increased scope for the boarders to be involved in meal planning and preparation. NVQ training is underway for care staff and training in general continues to be given high priority at the school, where dedicated budgeting enables staff to pursue and consolidate their training.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE**

Now that the new unit is in operation, some procedures and recording needs to be re-assessed to include these new areas. Some Health and Safety issues need attending to, as listed in the Recommendations, and in general risk assessments need expanding for the increased activities, extended internal areas and for what will be changes to the use of outside space. It is hoped that the Local Authority will also complete the landscaping of the grounds and in particular, there is an area that the boarders are keen to cultivate, which needs preparing. The lack of sports facilities continues to be a concern for a school whose children especially need physical exercise and the hazard presented by the only play area being shared with parked cars is still an issue. However, this latter issue should be resolved soon, as a new outside play area is due to be provided, (although this will still have a surface which is finished with tarmac, and therefore still has limitations).

### **CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE**

Falconer School continues to provide safe and positive boarding accommodation to an increased number of boys, many of whose development has been noted over three inspections. The school's policies and staff aims are directed at the individual, and it was reassuring to see how individual boarders have thrived at the school. Questionnaires received by the CSCI from boarders and parents were all positive and confirmed there is little or no bullying in the residential unit, and that the boys were involved in their planning and in all decisions around sanctions and rewards.



<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION</b>
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**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.**

<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION</b>			
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<p>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.</p>			
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No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	RS14	It is recommended that two staff are responsible for booking in medication, that both sign the records, that equipment for counting tablets is purchased and that the medication policy is amended to include changes now identified.	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2005
2	RS24	It is recommended that the night lighting system in the boarding unit be re-assessed and that adequate equipment is provided to ensure safety and security in the corridor.	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2005
3	RS26	It is recommended that the school's Health and Safety statement is expanded to cover all the new areas being used in the school and that more risk assessments are completed, including those for kitchen equipment.	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2005
4	RS26	It is recommended that fire doors are not wedged open in the boarding unit and that appropriate door closures are provided where needed, especially in the kitchen.	11 <sup>th</sup> January and henceforth

### 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	RS23	<p>It is recommended that the lack of indoor sports facilities or outdoor field, be reconsidered by the Local authority in order to fully meet the needs of an increasing number of boys of secondary school age, (who have a wider than average range of needs).</p> <p><b><i>THIS RECOMMENDATION HAS BEEN CARRIED FORWARD FROM THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION REPORT</i></b></p>
2	RS26	<p>It is recommended that maintenance staff are provided with accredited training in Health and Safety, which includes risk assessment planning.</p>

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Services</li> <li>• Fire Service</li> <li>• Environmental Health</li> <li>• DfES</li> <li>• School Doctor</li> <li>• Independent Person</li> <li>• Chair of Governors</li> </ul>	YES
Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	YES
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	11/01/05
Time of Inspection	10.00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	17.00
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	2

**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
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The school has a Statement of Purpose, which accurately describes the facilities, systems and ethos of the school. This document is reviewed annually by the school governors. It was amended in December to include the changes in the boarding accommodation, and information about the suitability of the school buildings for disabled access. The Head Teacher said that the Statement of Purpose is available at the time of the initial entrance interview and then on request. All boarders are given a copy of The Children's Guide to the boarding unit.

## 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?	3
<p>The school has an effective disciplinary regime, which was witnessed during this and at previous inspections. Children are only admitted to the school if they are in agreement with the placement and its regime and a home/school agreement is therefore signed by the boys and their parents prior to entry. Boarders and their families are given copies of the Guide to the boarding unit, which sets out general boarding policies. The children are involved in decision making through the regular reviews of their care plans and the pupil surveys, (initiated by the CSCI), showed that boarders felt they were involved in, and in agreement with, their placement plans. There is also an annual review of each child's Statement of Educational Needs, which is attended by the pupil, the key worker, family and relevant professionals. On the questionnaire returned by one parent, there was a comment that they would like more regular use made of the communication book, to have more information sent home each week. This information was shared with residential staff during the inspection. The boys who spoke to the inspectors confirmed that there are informal meetings for all boarders held every evening, where general issues and personal targets are discussed. There is an unstructured period after school when the boys are free to choose how they spend their time and the inspectors joined the boarders for some of these activities. A school council is now in operation and boarders have their own elected representative on this. The new residential accommodation includes telephone facilities, which can easily be used by the boarders in private. During this and at previous inspections, boarders have told the inspectors of their wish for a garden, which they could help cultivate. Although such a site has been identified. It was disappointing that the ground had not yet been made ready, and it is hoped that this can be achieved soon so that cultivation can commence in the spring.</p>		

**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 has a policy on privacy and confidentiality and staff and children spoken to confirmed that privacy was respected and that boarders' bedrooms were the boys' private space, with staff maintaining a "knock and wait" policy. Boarders' files are kept locked in cabinets and staff confirmed that information about the children is only given on a "need to know" basis. Staff spoken to were aware of the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures. It is the school's policy to bar the children from having mobile phones in the school, but the new building now provides boarders with a phone booth, which has doors that can be closed for privacy. The boarders showed the inspector how to use this phone and were aware of the adjacent help line telephone numbers. Letters for boarders are not opened by staff unless this is requested or there are special circumstances. E-mail access is available within the main school. Staff said that supervision of the children is always done sensitively and the pupil questionnaires received confirmed this is the case. None of the boarders at Falconer need assistance with mobility or personal care, but such issues are discussed by all children during lessons in the school. The searching of children is rare at Falconer, but the procedure for this is clearly set out and would be recorded. The school has an "option to handover" procedure in place where banned materials such as cigarettes are handed to transport staff on entering the school, in the knowledge that these will be returned on the journey home.

**Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.8)**

Children know how and feel able to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living in the school, and feel confident that any complaint is addressed seriously and without delay.

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

3

The school has an official complaints policy, which is given to all parents and guardians. The Children's Guide has detailed but simplified information about making a complaint and this is written in a reassuring manner and includes details of the CSCI and Childline. The boys spoken to told the inspector that they were aware of the complaints procedures and that they would tell staff if they had any concerns or complaints. Boys spoken to confirmed that there were opportunities to talk to both boarding and teaching staff in private if they wanted to do this.

**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 named Child Protection Officer and Home Liaison Manager and there are rigorous procedures in place covering all child protection issues. Evidence was seen of intensive work being done with the boys and their families, including home visits and the introduction of counselling services. All staff, including ancillary staff, have now received training in child protection procedures from the Local Authority and the Head Teacher is planning to ensure that all staff have regular updates of this training, in addition to the ongoing inclusion of this area in induction training. There have been a number of child protection concerns highlighted during the past 12 months, but these have been referred by the school, not initiated by the Local Authority. (See standard 7).

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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The school has an anti-bullying policy, which the children and their families were involved in writing. The policy complies with the requirements of this Standard and risk assessments have been completed for times and areas of the school which provide the most problems and control measures, have been put in place. Pupil questionnaires, returned to the inspectors indicated there was little or no bullying amongst the boarders in the school. A local police liaison officer has been involved in talking to pupils in the school and topics covered included issues around bullying.

<b>Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>%</b>
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**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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The school has systems in place for notifying agencies about events relating to the protection of children and these systems comply with Local Authority guidelines. There are also robust systems in operation for reporting all serious incidents to other appropriate agencies and to parents and guardians. However there continues to be concern expressed by staff in the school about the response from the Local Authority, to referrals made by the school, regarding their concerns for individual children. This situation was noted in the previous inspection report from the CSCI.

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

• <b>conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children</b>	0
• <b>serious harm to a child</b>	0
• <b>serious illness or accident of a child</b>	0
• <b>serious incident requiring police to be called</b>	0

<b>Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)</b>		
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.		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
The school has written procedures for dealing with unauthorised absences from the school. These procedures also link into the child protection procedures and records are kept and relevant authorities are notified. The school has detailed records covering incidents of unauthorised absences and these are reviewed monthly. As with the school's recording of all serious incidents, the boys concerned usually write their comments about the incidents alongside staff summaries. These records were seen during the inspection and were well documented and assessed. Currently, records for the boarders are not separated for monitoring purposes, but this modification will now be implemented by staff in line with the requirements for this standard.		
<b>Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:</b>		<b>X</b>

## 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?	3
<p>The school's policies clearly define expectations of behaviour in the school and aim to improve pupil behaviour to enable them to function better, both socially and educationally. The boarders spoken to were clear about the rules and policies and felt the credit and points system used was fair. The system for gaining credits is evidence based and so limits any suspicions of favouritism. The crisis management technique used in the school is currently under review and staff training aimed at upgrading and reassessing skills is underway.</p>		

### Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)

Staff respond positively to acceptable behaviour, and where the behaviour of children is regarded as unacceptable by staff, it is responded to by constructive disciplinary measures, which are approved by the Head of Care.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The school has clear policies and procedures to deal with control and discipline and the teachers spoken to said that there was a consistent approach to discipline across the school and in the boarding unit. Staff were aware that written policies were kept in the staff room and felt these were working documents. No evidence was found of any unreasonable sanctions in operation in the school and children's comments and signatures continue to be written at the end of all reports in the Sanctions Log. There is a system operating where a "Life Space Interview" takes place after all supervision and restraint. Staff also told the inspectors that boys who abscond from school, have special targets set as a result, which directly address their particular problems. One bedroom in the new building has had minor adaptations made to ensure an individual child's safety is maintained and details are documented for this. Staff have training in the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Approach, used in the school and this procedure is currently under review.</p>		

## QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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Children spoken to confirmed that they had a full introduction period on entry to the school. All new entrants receive written information about school policies and children and their families meet the Head Teacher and staff and are shown around the premises. Admissions are reviewed informally in an on-going way and a report is produced within six weeks of entry, in which the children have their comments recorded. The school completes an information file for all children, which contains all the details required by this Standard. Children who will be leaving the school, begin their preparations more than a year before, where possible. Staff said that the new facilities and staffing arrangements had increased flexibility in what could be offered to the children and that more day pupils were now keen to become boarders at the school. There have been big increases in the range of activities now offered to boarders and more pupils can now take part in these as the "extended day" scheme has been widened for more non-boarders to take part in.

**Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)**

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

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

3

In line with previous inspection findings, teachers and boarding staff who spoke to the inspectors said that liaison between all areas of the school was extremely good and that boarding staff encouraged pupils' attention to homework, supported teaching staff in the classrooms. Care staff contribute to individual education plans, and teachers said they are kept informed of any significant issues that might arise with the children. Children can go to the school's library when they wish.

**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?**

3

The boarders spoken to confirmed that there was a wide range of out of school activities on offer at Falconer and questionnaires received by the CSCI all highlighted this area as of great importance to the children. Activities which regularly take place include craft, bikes, skates, the cinema, Quasar, bowling and a variety of sports. Tables in the dining room also adapt to snooker tables and the boys clearly enjoy playing football outside. Recently, boarders have been introduced to the St. Albans Hockey Club and have attended several nearby leisure centres. Some play badminton at a local centre and some have been introduced to an RAF club. The boys said they are able to choose which activities they take part in and can use computers and watch videos, within agreed time-spans. Staff have received training in procedures for "off-site" visits, and the school has a written policy, which covers all trips out. Risk assessments are produced which cover activities, both inside and outside school grounds, but staff acknowledged that the range of these now needs to be increased in line with the developments connected to the new building.

**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 school has a written policy regarding health care needs in the school. All such needs are assessed prior to children entering the school and needs are written into plans with details of any treatments required. There is waking night staff cover in the unit and clear plans around bedwetting have been seen by the inspectors. Children carry their own inhalers. The school provides accredited sexual education and guidance and all care staff are trained in first-aid. Height and weight checks take place monthly. The children in the school continue to be registered with their own G.P.s and all prescriptions for medication come from parents or guardians. Medication is usually sent in with the boys from their homes, and there is a form, which parents complete, detailing exact amounts being sent. This ensures the correct medication is received by the school. Procedures for storage, recording and the administration of medication were examined by the inspectors and were generally sound. However, there are some issues connected to the handling of medication which are being reviewed in this and other residential special schools. When more advice is received, the school's written policies on administering medication will be finalised. However, during medication checks, one amount of medication did not tally with records and it is recommended that two staff are responsible for booking medication in to the unit and that both sign the records. It is also recommended that equipment for counting and handling medication is purchased, while advice is sought about 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?**

3

The boys spoken to said they enjoyed the food in the school and felt they had enough to eat. There is always a choice of dessert or fruit offered and the inspectors saw an alternative sandwich meal offered at supper time where a boy did not want the main meal. The new building has its own kitchen facilities and new menus are being planned for the morning and evening meals taken here. It is unfortunate that the kitchen design does not fully meet the needs of the increased numbers of boarders, but staff are endeavouring to find ways to overcome the difficulties. The boys said they can get drinks during the night if they needed to and there is drinking water available throughout the school. Snacks and drinks are available to the children after school hours, and the inspectors saw the boys enjoying snacks on the evening of the inspection. There was a recent visit from the Environmental Health Officer and there are no outstanding requirements from this visit. One new member of the kitchen staff is booked on a Food Hygiene course and all other kitchen staff have completed this training.

**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 children have a school uniform, but bring their own clothes to the unit for the evenings. The school keeps some supplies for the boys to purchase, but they can also go to the local shops to buy the things they need. Each child has storage in their bedrooms to keep their belongings, including lockable space. The boys confirmed they can bring a limited amount of money into the school.

## 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
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The questionnaires returned to the CSCI, showed that the boarders generally were aware of their care plans and mostly felt they were involved in them. There are written placement plans for all children in the school and some were tracked during the inspection. All plans were detailed and reviews and monitoring, as well as Statutory Reviews were up to date and there was evidence of the school involving pupils and parents throughout. Reports and referrals to other agencies were in the records, as were copies of incident reports, with written notes by pupils. Overall the care planning continues to be focused on each individual boarder and during the inspection, it was clear that the planning was meaningful and reflected the actions taken and changes implemented for each boy in the residential unit.

**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

The Pupil Record Forms were checked and contained all the details required to meet this Standard. Details of each boarder's G.P. were in place, as required from the previous inspection. Files are kept securely in the school office and the Head Teacher said that children are made aware that they can see their records, subject to compliance with the Data Protection Act.

**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

The school maintains records of children and staff in the school and these are kept securely in the office. Accident recording was checked and this recording complied with Data Protection requirements. Menus are kept in the kitchen for at least a year and there are duty rotas and an up to date Visitors Book in operation.

**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

The boys spoken to confirmed that they could contact their families whenever they wanted, outside lesson times and could see visitors in private if they wished. The boarders also said that families were kept informed of all concerns and issues, which might arise during the weekly board and this was confirmed by the questionnaires received by the CSCI from families of the boys.

**Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)**

Where a pupil is in care and will be leaving care on leaving the school, the school agrees with the young person's responsible authority what contribution it should make to implement any Pathway or other plan for the pupil before the pupil leaves school. These arrangements are in line with that young person's needs, and the school implements its contribution where feasible from at least a year before the pupil is expected to leave care or move to independent living. The school works with any Personal Advisor for the child.

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

3

Boys who spoke to the inspectors said they start planning for leaving the school, at least a year before that date. There are Transition Plans for boys who are leaving. Planning includes a phased return to living at home, skills training for independent living and support from staff in practical arrangements. The teaching staff said that lessons include careers training and a citizenship programme, as well as cleanliness and sex education.

**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 boys spoken to confirmed they are able to speak to their teachers or key workers at any time they need to and receive support and advice when it is required. Currently there are no children in the unit for whom English is not their first language, or who have communication difficulties. Referrals to the Children Schools and Families Service continue to have a slow response, as noted in the last inspection report, and specialised external support for individual pupils is clearly difficult to access, as evidenced in records during the inspection.

## PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children live in well designed, pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.
- Children live in accommodation that is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.
- Children are able to carry out their ablutions in privacy and with dignity.
- Children live in schools that provide physical safety and security.

### Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The school is located, designed and of a size and layout that is in keeping with its Statement of Purpose. It serves the needs of the children and provides the sort of environment most helpful to each child's development, and is sufficient for the number of children.

### Key Findings and Evidence

### Standard met?

3

The final part of the internal refurbishment for the residential unit of the school was finished earlier in January. The boarders were keen to show the inspectors the new facilities and were establishing the subsequent new routines with boarding staff. The new building has been completed in accordance with planning, building and fire regulations, and gives access to all ability groups. The residential unit now provides secure accommodation, which is entirely appropriate for the needs of the boarders in the school. However, the ongoing safety issue concerning the playground area, where the boys play sport and where cars are also parked, has not yet been resolved. Staff said that the mobile classrooms are due to be removed soon and a new playground area has been identified and should also be constructed soon. Similarly, the outside areas around the school have not been landscaped yet, and in particular, an area which the boys have been keen to cultivate themselves. It was noted at the last inspection that an area should be prepared for their use as soon as possible. There is also an on-going recommendation, carried forward from the previous inspection, which highlights the lack of sports facilities provided for boys at the school, (there is no sports hall or sports field connected to the school). However, although some consideration is apparently being given to the issue by the Local Authority.

**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 residential unit has been well furnished and decorated and provides four single and four twin bedded rooms. All rooms have good lighting, a sink and all boys have been provided with stereo music players in their rooms. Lockable space has been provided and the boys now pay a small deposit and hold their own keys. The boarders said the accommodation was always warm and clean and said they found it homely and comfortable. There have been some areas identified in the new building which have needed adjustments and night staff have improvised a system for providing unobtrusive, but safe lighting at night, and have positioned a mirror to enable the corridor area to be seen. This whole area should be reassessed and an appropriate system for night security and safety should be installed.

**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 boarding accommodation now has a bathroom providing two showers; one bath, and three toilets, as well as three sinks. There are also wash hand basins in all the bedrooms. The boys said there was usually enough hot water provided, although staff said there have been some initial problems with temperature delivery and that this is being monitored. The boarders told the inspectors that their privacy was always maintained in the bathroom and that they had not had to queue to use the facilities at any time.

**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**

During the inspection, it was emphasised by staff that the school's site manager had been invaluable in rectifying many of the small but important shortfalls in the completed building work and in enabling the boarders to occupy the unit. Now that this work is almost complete, the manager will be completing new risk assessments for the building and expanding the school's written Health and Safety statement. It is recommended that maintenance staff are now provided with accredited Health and Safety training, which includes the topic of risk assessment. Outside lighting around the school is light sensitive and the site manager said that half-hourly school checks take place for security. The site manager completes the school's PAT tests and there is a quarterly site visit completed by the manager and the Head Teacher. Evidence of maintenance and safety checks were seen during the inspection and were in order. An outside company is contracted to regularly service all kitchen equipment, but more risk assessments are needed in this area. Transport staff are responsible for vehicle maintenance and all such staff have CRB checks and have licences to drive a minibus. The fire officer has made some recommendations since the building work has been completed and the site manager is currently implementing these changes. Staff said they are now planning some night fire drills for the boarding unit. Boys spoken to were aware of evacuation procedures in the event of fire. Fire doors are, however, being wedged open in various areas of the boarding unit and this is a fire hazard, (especially around the kitchen). The containers being used were removed from doors during the inspection and a recommendation has been made that alternative arrangements are made.

## 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 recruitment procedures in the school were checked during the inspection and were thorough. Evidence of all appropriate staff checks were in place. All staff who work at the school have enhanced police checks in place before starting employment. These checks are made and kept by the Local Authority, but clearance is confirmed to the school in writing by the Authority. There is currently no one living on the school's premises other than staff employed by the school. There are no Gap students at the school and no guardians arranged by the school.

**Total number of care staff:**

8

**Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:**

0

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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As a result of boarding numbers being increased to twelve, boarding staff numbers have also increased. Staff said that this increase has enabled greater flexibility in routines and meant a reduction in split-shift working has been possible. They felt that this change has benefited care provision to boarders. There are two new female staff members now working in the boarding unit and all staff felt these appointments had given a greater balance to the staff group. The school has a written statement about minimum staff numbers who must be on duty. Staff said there were usually four, and often five care workers on duty in the mornings and evenings. There is one night supervisor working every night. Children spoken to felt there were adequate numbers of staff on duty. There are no agency staff working at the school.

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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One new member of staff told the inspector that a very thorough induction programme had been provided for her and that she had received a great deal of support for her training. This staff member said she had read the school policies and had discussed them with the Head Teacher. All staff have received child protection training. All staff have completed training in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, although the Head Teacher said that procedures were currently being reassessed and changed. The Head of Care is doing NVQ assessor training and intends to start NVQ level 4 in the near future. There are currently four care staff doing NVQ level 3 training.

**Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)**  
**All staff, including domestic staff and the Head of the school, are properly accountable and supported.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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Staff spoken to confirmed that they now have regular formal supervision usually every three to four weeks. There is a timetable on the wall in the boarding unit, where supervision is planned. The Head Teacher now has supervision provided by an experienced LEA officer. Staff have annual appraisals with targets set. A new post of Training Liaison Manager has now been set up in the school and this staff member is establishing new processes for Performance Management, and is co-ordinating NVQ training.

## 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 4 years experience in a leadership role and at least 3 years learning his trade in a residential setting and is doing NVQ assessor training. He plans to start NVQ level 4 training in the near future. Currently four of the care team staff are also studying for NVQ level 3 and one other staff member is an NVQ assessor. Staff training in general is given a high priority in the school, and there is a budget in the school for staff time spent doing NVQ. Boarding staff spoken to felt that the reduction in split-shift working has meant that there has been more continuity of care provided to the boarders and said that planned working time includes time for supervision, support and regular staff meetings. None of the boarders in the school have any responsibilities for supervising other boys and records seen and questionnaires received by the CSCI, confirm that appropriate procedures are followed in all areas of the children's care.

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

X %

**Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

3

The Head Teacher and other senior staff monitor the records as listed in this Standard, although as already stated, changes to the procedures will mean that statistics and trends for the boarders will be separately monitored for next year. The Head Teacher reports to the Governors three times each year and a formal report is produced annually. There are plans in place for responses to crises, but work is still being done to expand this area, now that the new boarding unit is functional. Much of the information which might be needed in a crisis is in place needs bringing together, with boarding, teaching and the site manager having input. This will link in to the work being done on risk assessments.

**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

The school has a named Governor, responsible for visiting and monitoring activities in the school. This governor was present during the inspection and confirmed her visits to the school, which take place at least half-termly, were often unannounced. Written reports of these visits were seen during the inspection.

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

There was none present.

Lay Assessor \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Lead Inspector: Pat House</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Second Inspector: Louise Bushell</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Regulation Manager: Helen Pettengell</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Draft Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2005</b>	
<b>Final Report Date: 8<sup>th</sup> April 2005</b>	

## 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 11<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

We are working on the best way to include provider responses in the published report. In the meantime responses received are available on request from the Hertfordshire Area Office.

**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

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

**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 17<sup>th</sup> March 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

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

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

NO

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

NO

Other: <enter details here>

NO

**D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT**

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

**D.3.1 I Mr J S B Page, Head Teacher of Falconer 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** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Designation** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Or**

**D.3.2 I \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
~~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.~~

**Commission for Social Care Inspection**  
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