



Champions for  
Social Care  
Improvement

# inspection report

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

## **St Dominic`s School**

Hambledon

Godalming

Surrey

GU8 4DX

21st January 2004

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

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

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

### **The role of CSCI is to:**

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

## **Inspection Methods & Findings**

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

### **The 4-point scale ranges from:**

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

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

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

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

**SCHOOL INFORMATION**

**Name of School**

St Dominic`s School

**Address**

Hambledon, Godalming, Surrey, GU8 4DX

**Tel No:**

01428 684693

**Fax No:**

01428 685018

**Email Address:**

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

Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary

**Name of Head**

Mr Gerry Chapman

**NCSC Classification**

Residential Special School

**Type of school**

Residential special  
school

**Date of last boarding welfare inspection:**

5<sup>th</sup>  
February  
2003

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		21st January 2004	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		9:00 am	
<b>Name of NCSC Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Ms R. Saimbi	135561
<b>Name of NCSC Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>	Mr S. Sullivan	
<b>Name of NCSC Inspector</b>	<b>3</b>	Mrs G. Yates	
<b>Name of NCSC Inspector</b>	<b>4</b>		
<b>Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):</b>			
<b>Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)</b> Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>			
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>			

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## INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) 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 NCSC in respect of St Dominic's 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**

St Dominic's school was established in 1929 by the order of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. It is one of the oldest schools in the country catering for children and young people with special needs.

The school provided for both boys and girls in five self contained residential units. Additionally therapies are also catered for such as physiotherapy and speech and language therapy. Applications are normally made through the Local Education Authority in whose area the family resides.

The school is situated in fifty-six acres of wooded grounds. It is accessible by road and is situated approximately a mile from the main line station at Witley.

After consultation with staff at the school, it was felt inappropriate to complete questionnaires as it was felt to be an inappropriate format to consult with the children. Instead the inspectors were able to meet with children in a formalised way through group meetings and informally during lunchtimes and breaks. The inspectors also met with children individually, on the units and through the tour of the premises.

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

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

The introduction of the care planning system was felt to be very positive. It allowed for planning and for self-audit purposes. It enhanced the already good care that was provided by the care team. ...

The behaviour management programme adopted by the school, 'Team Teach' was effective. Staff received regular training and there was a whole school approach. Staff felt that this benefited their working practice.

The inspectors felt that the school had adopted a clear, co-ordinated anti-bullying policy. The policy had been developed by a working party and had been agreed by the school council, which was made up of pupils. The anti-bullying policy was well understood, and there was acceptance of the stance that was taken. The inspectors felt that it was positive that there was a strong visual element to the policy, which could be understood by pupils of varying abilities.

The school offered a variety of activities both in-house and within the local community. The inspectors felt that there was a suitable balance, which allowed pupils the opportunity to become involved in these activities if they wished, or have unstructured time on the units.

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

The inspectors felt that areas the school could do better in, were areas where work was already in progress. In particular the continued development of care planning and the formalisation of processes for all children and young people.

In addition, continuation of the modernisation of the boarding units. With particular emphasis on improving the outside lighting along the paths and drive; and to ensure that the security of units is increased at night with the installation of buzzer systems.

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

The inspectors wish to commend the school and its staff on the immense work that has been undertaken since the last inspection in February 2003, which was in fact the first inspection under the Care Standards Act 2000 by the National Care Standards Commission.

There was inspection of thirty-three standards in total, of these twenty-four were felt to meet the standards; seven had minor shortfalls, one exceeded the standard, one standard was not assessed.

The information received from parent's questionnaires verified that the care received by the pupils was good. Twenty-eight parents replied in total of these ninety-six percent felt that their children were cared for very well or quite well. With only four percent feeling that the care was adequate. It is also significant that one hundred percent of parents felt that they were both listened to and encouraged to visit the school. The inspectors felt that this would only enhance the feeling of openness and foster good practice in the school.



**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION**

**Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended action and any advisory recommendations are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.**

<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION</b>			
Identified below are the actions recommended on issues addressed in the main body of the report in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders adequately in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.			
No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	23.6	To ensure security for pupils and staff it is recommended that the lighting in the main driveway and car park be improved. In addition the lighting around St. Abysius should be enhanced.	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2004
2	23.6	Security of the units should be reviewed with a view to the installation of buzzer systems.	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2004
3	25.5	Bathrooms and showers should take into the account the need for privacy, dignity and safety. Therefore it is a recommendation that the showers in St Anthony's should be modernised with suitable doors.	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2004
4	27.1	That all staff working with children should have a current CRB check.	21.1.04
5	27.2(iv)	That written references should be followed with direct contact from the school to verify the reference.	21.1.04
6	30.2 +30.6	It is recommended that the head of care should receive regular supervision from her manager and should be appraised annually.	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2004
7	33.3	That the visits required under standard 33 should include all elements of the standard in full	21.1.04

### 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	24.5	To consider wall mounted lighting for children in their bedrooms

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.

<b>PART B</b>	<b>INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS</b>
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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	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	YES
• Independent Person	YES
• Chair of Governors	YES

Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	YES
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	21/1/04
Time of Inspection	9:00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	35
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	4

**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:**

<b>BOYS</b>	<input type="text" value="46"/>
<b>GIRLS</b>	<input type="text" value="12"/>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<input type="text" value="58"/>

**Number of separate Boarding Houses**     

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the NCSC 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 had a clear and comprehensive statement of purpose, which stated clearly what the school sets out to do for the children it accommodates as is indicated by the National Minimum Standards. It would be helpful if this document also included qualifications of the care staff as indicated by the standards.

The inspectors felt that the school was achieving the aims set out in the statement of purpose.

There was in addition a residential guide available for parents, placing authorities and social workers. This was a clear document, which was accessible to those using it. It would benefit from the inclusion of the complaints procedure and statement of purpose.

## 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
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There were a number of systems in place at the school, which enabled young people and their carers to express their opinions regarding decisions. These ranged from the informal to formal.

During discussions with pupils, all felt that there was a range of adults that they could talk to; there was regular circle time for pupils to air their views which took place on the residential units; Unit leaders and key workers had regular contact with carers and parents via the telephone.

Formally, a sample of home/school books were viewed which showed regular contact regarding a range of topics. The questionnaires received from parents were very positive with the general view that communication was positive.

Reviews are held annually or when needed/requested by family or funders. Pupils are aware of their reviews and are encouraged to contribute in whatever way they feel able. There was also parents evenings, prize-giving days and other social events. The Chair of Governors spoke positively about the schools attempts to engage and keep in contact with all parents and carers, despite the distances involved, and the ability of some of the parents to engage fully in school life.

The inspectors felt that it was worthy of note that the Personal Care Targets set for every pupil was shared with parents and with the pupils themselves.

**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 implemented well the principles of privacy and confidentiality. Staff demonstrated a sound understanding of the issues relating to both privacy and confidentiality. Some staff spoke of wanting to have more information about individual pupils as they felt it may impact on their work. However, the inspectors noted that in residential schools information could be disseminated through a staff group although it may not always be appropriate for it to do so. The inspectors felt clear and confident that the school had managed this dilemma effectively and were keeping clear boundaries and informing staff on a strictly need to know basis.

On a practical note all pupil telephones had privacy; all pupils had access to lockable storage facilities; washing and bathing facilities were adequate. However, the showers and baths in St Anthony's lacked privacy as they had pull across curtains. The inspectors have viewed the rolling programme of work, which is to be undertaken at the school and had observed that this work is to be undertaken.

**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 had a detailed complaints procedure, which outlined the process and gave clear timescales of expected outcomes.

The pupils themselves had an opportunity to raise issues and make complaints at circle time. This circle time took place on the residential units twice a week. In addition, pupils had the opportunity to confide in a range of people, or to use the independent person who came in weekly.

Some children spoken to were not aware of the complaints procedure. However the inspectors felt that there was a very visual element on all the units on how and whom pupils could talk to if they felt unhappy. This included clear displays of appropriate telephone numbers of Childline and the National Care Standards Commission, and details of the independent person including her photograph.

The School Council meetings take place on a regular basis, although there was a feeling that some work was needed to empower the pupils thus making the meeting more effective. It was positive that policies and procedures, which relate directly to the pupils, such as anti-bullying and the complaints procedure, went through the School Council initially before being approved.

**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 NCSC 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 have a comprehensive child protection policy in place, and held copies of the Surrey County Council procedures.

All staff questioned were aware of the child protection procedures and had recently received training. It was positive to note that the recommendation from the previous inspection, that ancillary staff also receive training appropriate to their contact with the pupils had been acted upon. In discussions with the Chair of governors she also had an awareness of the issues.

The designated Child Protection Liaison Officer had recently attended a refresher course regarding child protection.

There is appropriate emphasis on keeping information regarding child protection as confidential.

The National Care Standards Commission is kept informed of all incidents within the appropriate timescales.

**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

Since the last inspection, an anti-bullying programme has been implemented within the school. It has clearly become an effective tool. Pupils spoken to had a strong awareness that bullying was not acceptable. If they did speak of bullying it was in the context of being bullied at previous schools or many years ago. This relatively new initiative was welcomed by staff and pupils.

There was a high 'visual' element to the anti bullying policy, which made it accessible to all pupils within the school.

In addition to this strong stance, incidents will be monitored in future to see if particular patterns are emerging. The policy will be reviewed on an on-going basis by a working party, which has been set up specifically for the purpose.

The inspectors felt that the progress made in this area since the last inspection was commendable.

**Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied**

0 %

**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 had a notification procedure, this included details of which agency needed to be kept informed of which issue. All relevant documentation was maintained at the school

There was also regular review of incidents to identify patterns.

The National Care Standards Commission are being informed of any significant events.

**NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO NCSC 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

1

<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>
As a recommendation of the last inspection, the procedure for dealing with a child's absence without authority is now in place. Staff are aware of the procedure, although there has been no recent incidents of children running away.		
<b>Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:</b>		<b>0</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
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The inspectors observed appropriate and empowering relationships between staff and boarders. With a genuine warmth evident in the relationship, whilst maintaining effective boundaries.

The school and boarding units used positive reinforcement to maintain good behaviour. This system was understood and liked by the pupils.

Some of the older boarders reported that they found some staff inconsistent in their approach, and felt that they did not always know where they were. There was a complaint from one pupil that some residential staff shouted at them. This matter was raised by the inspectors with the Head of Care. She was already aware of this matter, and was dealing with it. The inspectors felt reassured that it would be dealt with appropriately.

**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**

The school have adopted 'Team Teach' which is a programme for the management of children and young people's behaviour. There was evidence that it was understood and practiced effectively within the whole school environment. Staff confirmed that they received regular refresher training, which was effective, and there was a feeling that they could manage pupil's behaviours.

Inspectors noted that there was clear guidance about what is considered acceptable and unacceptable as a sanction. All sanctions were recorded in a bound book as identified by the National Minimum Standards. In addition, all sanctions given were signed by the pupils themselves. This information was then reviewed by a senior member of the management team, to enable possible patterns of behaviour.

In discussions with pupils, all felt that the sanctions were fair and commensurate with the bad behaviour.

## 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?	2
<p>The inspectors viewed the formal admission assessment protocol, which was comprehensive whilst allowing for some flexibility. This document was in draft format at present.</p>		
<p>The management team had developed specific criteria for admission to the school. Admission for the residential care was given careful consideration in relation to the individual needs of the child and of the children already in residence. Information was sought from a variety of appropriate sources</p>		
<p>The inspectors felt that current practice is good, however it is not as yet formally recorded.</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?**

2

Care plans do incorporate educational goals when appropriate. This has been a rolling programme undertaken by the school and should be completed by Easter 2004.

The inspectors felt that generally there was good communication between school and boarding with some handovers and joint training sessions. Residential staff spoke positively about the 'drop ins' by therapy staff, which they felt enhanced, their work with pupils holistically.

There is room for improvements in this area namely the afternoon handovers between school and care, which did not take place at all or were unsatisfactory. The head teacher is in the process of addressing this area with the staff team.

**Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)**

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

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

4

The school excelled at the range of in-house and outside activities, which promoted a balance of structured and free time.

The plethora of activities available was imaginative and wide ranging these included Karate, kayaking and rock climbing. All pupils were encouraged to undertake the Duke of Edinburgh award once they had reached the appropriate age. There was no pressure on pupils to engage in activities if they really did not want to.

This was balanced by free time on the units. Where they had access to television, audio equipment, various games and books.

All the pupils spoke positively about the range of activities available to them, the only complaint was that the holidays could be a bit boring!

**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

A separate report is provided by the NCSC pharmacist. The summary of which states the following,

*“The staff had all clearly worked hard to raise the standard of medication handling in the school. In particular the new medication administration record charts gave a clearer record of what was prescribed and what was administered to the pupils.”*

**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

There was a range of nutritional food available throughout the day. Main meals were freshly prepared with a choice on offer. Special diets were catered for. There was a range of snacks available, though there was some comment from pupils that the snacks on offer varied between the residential units.

The inspectors were present during lunch and the evening meals, which were taken with the young people. The atmosphere during mealtimes was considered to be relaxed and social.

**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

Pupils were observed to be treated as individuals in all aspects of boarding. They were able to personalise rooms, which included bringing in their own duvet covers, audio equipment. They also brought in their own clothing and personal requisites. The school kept a supply of toiletries for children who had forgotten their own.

The school kept some pocket money for each child. Pocket money records demonstrated that these funds were administered appropriately.

## 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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Individualised care planning is currently in the development stages. The action plan provided by the school indicates that these should be completed by Easter 2004. This seems an achievable aim in the view of the inspectors.

It is noteworthy that those care plans viewed by the inspectors were comprehensive with realistic targets covering a wide range of issues. The care plans were completed by the multi-disciplinary team, which include the on-site therapists and care staff.

It was felt that it would be beneficial if the boarders signed and dated their care plan targets, which give them the feeling of ownership and working with staff.

**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 has case files, which would soon contain all elements of 18.2. They otherwise complied with the standard.

**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

A range of records were sampled during the inspection, this included accident records, menus, duty rotas and diaries of events. All were up-to-date and well presented, in keeping with the National Minimum Standards

**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 school positively encouraged and enabled young people to keep in contact with their families. To assist this process, the school used a home/school book, which provided two-way information. All children interviewed agreed that this was the case. Questionnaires received from parents also verified this, with 100% of respondents stating that the school welcomed them and that they attended meetings regarding their children.

The inspectors noted that several parents called during the evening. The location of the telephones allowed for privacy. Most boarders have their own mobile telephones and said that they could use them at reasonable times.

**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

There was evidence that there is substantial preparation for pupils leaving the school. There is discussion during annual reviews and should there be a need to put initiatives in place to enhance this process then they would be available. It was felt that this process could be improved by the care planning and primary care targets, which will soon be in place for all pupils.

**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 supports the individual needs of children well. This is partly accomplished by having clear boundaries and expectations about children's behaviour.

Staff interaction with pupils demonstrated an understanding and awareness of the pupils individual needs. Communication was at a level, which could be understood by the pupils without being patronising. It was felt by the inspectors that the care-planning programme might have improved this.

The school doctor was also the independent person for the school. The inspectors met with the doctor and felt that she had a considered and thorough understanding of her two roles. The roles were considered to be complimentary rather than in opposition. Pupils were able to ask to see the doctor without having to inform anyone as to why. This ensured their confidentiality and privacy. The school doctor held a weekly surgery at the school, but could also be available at other times to pupils should it be necessary.

## 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?	2
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In general the inspectors felt that the school size and layout was in keeping with the statement of purpose, in meeting the needs of the pupils.

There was an action plan in place from the last inspection and much of the work had been undertaken or was due to be in the near future. One area that does remain outstanding is the provision of adequate outside lighting in the main driveway and car park. Inspectors felt that in addition the lighting around St Aloyious should be reviewed.

Some pupils felt that it would be a good idea to consider lighting the outside play areas, thus making them more available during the winter months. Pupils were encouraged to take this idea to the School Council.

The modernised units were of an adequate standard. In some areas there was still some need for modernisation, namely the shower units in St Anthony's.

Access to the units at night needs to be monitored more closely due to the danger of unwanted intruders.

Consideration should be given to wall mounted lights by each pupil's bedside.

**Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)**

The school provides adequate good quality and well-maintained accommodation for boarding pupils, which is consistent with their needs.

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

3

The lounge areas were welcoming, warm and well furnished. There was plenty of equipment, games and books. There was good visual information and décor by the young people themselves. The bedrooms were of a similar standard and were individualised.

Despite the general wear and tear on the premises, they were of a reasonable standard.

In some areas there was no study space, though prep is done at school and the range of this client groups needs does not necessitate a study area.

**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?**

2

There was sufficient numbers of bathrooms and toilets in accordance with the National Minimum Standard.

As previously highlighted St. Anthony's showers do not have a lock on the doors, and only have a curtain. These are due to be modernised later this year.

**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?**

3

Generally the school implemented safe practice in health and safety matters.

There was clear notification of fire escape routes and evidence of regular fire drills. Pupils interviewed were very aware of the fire evacuation procedures; this may have been in part due to a recent small fire, which had lead to an evacuation.

The Visitors book was viewed and was clearly used effectively.

It is a recommendation as standard 24, that outside lighting and security is reviewed.

## STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

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

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

2

School recruitment records were sampled. They largely contained all appropriate information including written references, application forms, courses attended, job descriptions.

Criminal Records Bureau checks were not present on all files. They must be completed at the enhanced level on all staff (including existing staff). Staff who do not currently have the appropriate checks should not have substantial, unsupervised access to children prior to the satisfactory CRB check being received.

It is recommended that written references should be followed up with telephone contact. The school were going to put this into place for all new recruits immediately.

**Total number of care staff:**

26

**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.

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

3

The staffing levels on the day of inspection were considered good and met the needs of the pupils present. The school kept clear records of staffing and actual hours worked. Projected rotas were also available well in advance.

Since the last inspection staffing has been reviewed on the units. This has allowed for better staff/children ratio. There are now always two members of staff on duty, three on occasions and on certain units. One member of staff sleeps in on each unit, plus a nurse sleeps in on the premises. The head of care and head teacher on call are easily available.

**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

There was a strong commitment to training from the management team. There are the regular inset training days where topics such as 'Team Teach' and child protection are covered.

Staff are also able to attend relevant off site courses such as counselling. Although staff felt that this had recently been restricted, as the emphasis inevitably had to be on them achieving the goal of NVQ III in Caring for Children. The school is on target for achieving the 80% target of staff being trained by 2005. The head of care is currently undertaking her NVQ IV.

**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

Staff receive supervision once every half term, this is recorded. Care staff had the option of whom they wanted to be supervised by. Appraisals are completed.

It is recommend that head of care should receive supervision in line with the National Minimum Standards and should receive an annual appraisal

## 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 inspectors felt that the school was run efficiently and managed well. Staff felt that line managers operated on an open door policy and were always available. They felt valued as part of the staff group. This can perhaps be verified by the fact that over the last year there have been no staff vacancies amongst the care group. Inspectors observed this positive supportive management style.

The inspectors felt that there was a real commitment to improving the service for pupils who attend the school. The management team have made immense improvements since the last inspection. Much of this work has been undertaken, and introduced by the head of care who the inspectors feel deserves particular recognition.

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

19 %

### Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

The National Care Standards Commission 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?

9

This standard was not applicable for this inspection.

**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

There was evidence of involvement of the board of governors throughout the school. The chair of governors demonstrated a strong commitment to the development of the school and of the care it provided to its pupils.

Arrangements had recently been made for one of the governors to visit the school on a half termly basis. It is encouraging that this has been undertaken, however it is the view of the inspectors that the format and remit of the visit should be expanded.

**PART C**

**LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY**

**(where applicable)**

[Empty box for Lay Assessor's Summary]

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

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Lead Inspector** \_\_\_\_\_ **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 <enter date(s) of inspection here> and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

**Action taken by the NCSC 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

NA

**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 \_\_\_\_\_, 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

NA

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

NA

Other: <enter details here>

NA

**D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT**

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

**D.3.1 I \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ 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.**