



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

## RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

### **St Dominic`s School**

**Hambledon  
Godalming  
Surrey  
GU8 4DX**

*Lead Inspector*  
**John Chivers**

*Key Announced Inspection*  
**15<sup>th</sup> and 16th June 2006      10:00**

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

<b>Reader Information</b>	
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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Residential Special Schools*. They can be found at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk) or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

*Every Child Matters*, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life.

Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above.

# SERVICE INFORMATION

<b>Name of school</b>	St Dominic`s School
<b>Address</b>	Hambledon Godalming Surrey GU8 4DX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01428 684693
<b>Fax number</b>	01428 685018
<b>Email address</b>	dawn.brown@stdominicsschal.org.uk
<b>Provider Web address</b>	
<b>Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school</b>	Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary
<b>Name of Head</b>	Mrs S Russan
<b>Name of Head of Care</b>	Ms V Elull
<b>Age range of residential pupils</b>	8 – 16 years.
<b>Date of last welfare inspection</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> December 05

## **Brief Description of the School:**

St Dominic's was established in 1929 and was founded by the 'Order of the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, who are currently trustees and governors.

The Christian ethos has been maintained to the present day.

The school accepts pupils' from all denominations and backgrounds.

St Dominic's is a non-maintained weekly boarding and day school for boys and girls (aged 8-16 years) of average intelligence but with special needs. These may include impaired physical health, learning difficulties, speech and language and communication difficulties. Pupils may also be emotionally vulnerable or have motor planning, co-ordination and perceptual difficulties.

The boarding pupils are accommodated in five separate boarding houses separated by gender and age range.

The range of therapeutic support available to pupils enables them to access a curriculum at an appropriate level and maximise each pupil's potential for achievement.

The school's management are to review the boarding and staff arrangements at the school in September 06.

# SUMMARY

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

The inspection was announced and was undertaken on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> June 06. The duration of the inspection over the two-day period was 17 hours. As part of the inspection process the school completed the CSCI pre-inspection questionnaire and written comments were received from a number of parents. Discussion was held with the Consultant Principal, Head of Care and formal group interviews conducted with staff and pupils'. Samples of the schools policies, procedures and records were inspected and a tour of the premises was undertaken. All of the nineteen 'key' standards were assessed at this key inspection and in addition a number of 'non-key' standards were also assessed.

It is important to note that a new 'Consultant' Principal has been appointed for a twelve-month period and her main task is to totally review and develop the service including the boarding and staffing arrangements. The appointment of Consultant Principal has been made following two-temporary/short term Headship appointments.

The findings at this inspection are variable.

The school continues to offer a good standard of pastoral care to the pupils' who are looked after by a committed and caring staff team.

There was evidence of positive relationships between staff and pupils' with evidence of interaction and engagement evident. Staff were aware of and knowledgeable regarding pupils' backgrounds and placement/care plans and written feedback from parents of pupils' was very favourable regarding care staff input.

Whilst a number of policies and procedures were in place, some must be expanded to cover all of the details set in the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools.

Records were generally well kept; however some omissions and shortfalls were identified.

The school has regard for health and safety matters, although some areas must be 'tightened' in order to comply with health and safety and 'COSHH' Regulations.

The school has regard for Pupils' Protection issues and ensures that any incidents are reported to the Surrey County Council Child Protection Team and the Police for external investigation.

The recruitment and vetting procedures regarding boarding staff are sound. However, it was noted that the new Consultant Head Teacher's personal file was held at the organisation's head office and therefore was not available for vetting/inspection. The Consultant Principal was asked to contact the organisation's head office and arrange to have the file forwarded to the school and made available for inspection within a few days after the inspection. It was agreed that the school would contact the CSCI Surrey Local Office when the file was received. Despite the inspector reminding the school of this request, at

the time of completing this report, the file has yet to be presented. This is a significant shortfall and the file must be evidenced to the CSCI.

Staff training and supervision is on going and annual appraisals occur.

However, due to the recent staffing difficulties the Head of Care stated that not all appraisals have been completed. It is intended this will be addressed when the school appoints more staff.

Whilst some boarding areas were of a good standard, homely and comfortable other areas had significant shortfalls and had fallen below standard.

It was noted that staff morale at this inspection had fallen and staff voiced their concerns and anxieties at the forthcoming changes. Pupils' also expressed their concern for staff and this was further referred to in the parent's questionnaires.

There is a significant increase in the number of recommendations at this inspection and this was conveyed to the Consultant Principal and Head of Care at the close of the inspection.

Despite the increase in the number of recommendations made at this inspection the overall outcomes for care practice and quality of relationships regarding the pupils' remains **good**.

## **What the school does well:**

The school continues to provide a good standard of care to pupils' with staff remaining committed to the pupil's welfare. Relationships between staff and pupils' were positive with pupils' responding favourably to the approach and interaction by staff. Staff and pupils' were clear that the school has regard for equal opportunity and diversity issues and no discriminatory attitudes or practices were evident.

The school will strengthen its management and service provision when the new developments are complete and this will enhance the existing areas of good practice.

## **What has improved since the last inspection?**

There has been a significant increase in the number of recommendations set at this inspection. However, the standard of care and commitment to the pupils' remains of a good standard.

It is acknowledged that the school is currently in a state of 'flux' and anxieties exist across the whole school. When the developments are complete it is expected that the new ethos and systems will promote the service to a higher standard.

### **What they could do better:**

It is important that the school address the recommendations set at this inspection and monitor its management and practices in order that shortfalls do not re-occur.

It is further important that anxieties felt across the school are effectively managed and reduced in order to 'stabilise' service provision, boost staff morale, maintain and improve existing good practice and promote areas where shortfalls currently exist.

Please contact the Head for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from [enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk) or by contacting your local CSCI office.



# **DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS**

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# Being Healthy

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted.(NMS 14)
- Children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs.(NMS 15)

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

14 and 15.

Quality in this outcome area is **adequate**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to the school.

The school has regard for health and medical matters concerning pupils' and ensures that pupils' have a healthy diet. However, some shortfalls were identified under Standard 14.

## EVIDENCE:

The school has many policies and procedures relating to health promotion such as an Alcohol and Substance Misuse policy dated 2003. This policy is to be reviewed in September 2006 along with all other school policies; therefore no recommendations are made at this time. The anti-smoking policy and medication policy were not inspected in depth, as these will form part of the review in September 2006.

The school has an infection control policy, which was undated. This policy made no reference to how infection control should be implemented regarding laundry services. This element is seen as essential and the school is advised to review this policy as soon as possible and include such information.

The school is strongly advised to bring all the health promotion policies and procedures together to form a comprehensive guide to how pupil's health is to be promoted by the school.

The school had a good system of identification of pupil's emotional and mental health needs and employed a range of professionals, such as Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Nurses to meet these needs on a daily basis. There was also evidence that where support from other health professionals such as the Pupils' and Young People's Mental Health Team was required this support was requested.

Please also refer to comments made under Standard 11 regarding Admissions and Leaving.

There was evidence that where a pupils' was to be admitted who has a particular health need any training regarding this matter is provided to take place prior to the pupils' being admitted. There was also verification that where a pupils' had a particular health need the school worked in co-operation with health care plans made by other health professionals.

The information provided from the school surgery confirmed that detail contained in Standard 14.6 was included in plans for pupil's health. There was also written evidence, such as information provided to reviews and home/school communication books, that liaison takes place with the pupil's parents regarding health matters. The surgery had a health plan for each pupil's but this was not shared, where relevant, with care staff. Please refer to information in Standard 6 Care planning and Placement plan.

The school has a medication administration policy, which was not inspected on this occasion. Changes to the medication administration arrangements at the school had occurred two weeks prior to the site visit. Care staff now undertook all medication administration outside of school hours. During school hour's medication continued to be administered from the school surgery by the school nurse.

Training for all staff who agreed to administer medication had been provided. The school nurse was also involved in supporting staff by being on site at times when medication is to be administered. As with any major change in a system there remain matters, which need to be resolved. In due course a review of the changes must be conducted to ensure that the new system is satisfactory and meets the needs of pupils' that require medication.

The nurse confirmed that when they had commenced employment their registration with the Nursing Midwifery Council had been checked, but could not confirm that further checks had been completed. The nurse confirmed that they completed the necessary annual training for their qualification to be current.

The management will be advised to ensure that regular checks of nurses' qualifications are taking place.

Records of medication administration were well organised and clear. Where homely remedies are in use detail of the dose must be evident. A list of homely remedies is agreed with the school's General Practitioner and the pupil's parents but information regarding the dose of any medication was not recorded. Action should be taken to remedy this matter.

Medication storage was inspected in one boarding unit, St Anthony's, this was satisfactory providing both storage for medication needing to be refrigerated

and kept in an appropriate medicines cabinet. Refrigerator temperatures were being maintained.

There is bed space in the school surgery for pupils to stay if they feel ill. The school nurse stated that whenever possible a pupils' would be asked to go home if they were ill and the surgery bed was only used during the school day to enable support to be provided to the pupils'.

Accident records were kept in separate files for pupils and staff. The school monitored these but there was no data available from this analysis. The management team is advised to consider whether the manner in which accident forms are completed and stored complies with The Data Protection Act 1998, as the above information indicates this would not be compliant. In addition the school has issued various departments with accident record pads this has resulted in log numbers being the same e.g. there were two records on file numbered 21. A system which assists in identifying which department has submitted the accident form would be beneficial and provide the school with a clear monitoring system for all accidents. However, there was evidence that where incidents occurred action was taken to minimise risks and specific data was used to inform such decisions. For example, regarding assaults by pupils' on staff.

Standard 15 (Catering) was not inspected in depth. One inspector took a main lunchtime meal with the pupils' at the first of three sittings and both inspectors ate the evening supper meal provided for those pupils' living in boarding units in the main house.

Observations of meal preparation in the boarding house were also completed. There were an array of main meals on offer and most of these were home cooked. Staff confirmed they usually involved pupils in meal preparation and choice, often asking them to bring in the recipe for their favourite meal at home, which the pupils' then assisted in cooking. The kitchen area was clean and tidy. Staff further confirmed they kept refrigerator and freezer temperatures and used a probe to test the temperature of cooked foods. In addition all staff were able to verify they had attended food hygiene courses and were aware of the date by when these needed to be updated.

Meals were found to be social occasions. Pupils' behaviour during mealtimes was satisfactory.

The seating arrangements in the dining room were found to be in need of review. As pupils passed chairs they knocked into people remaining seated, as the space between the tables is very limited. A review of the seating arrangements was therefore discussed with the school management and a review of these was under way prior to the completion of the site visit. Therefore no recommendation is made regarding this matter.

The school is also using the 'Jamie Oliver pack' for schools to encourage healthy eating.

# Staying Safe

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled.(NMS 3)
- Children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration.(NMS 4)
- The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.(NMS 5)
- Children are protected from bullying by others.(NMS 6)
- 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.(NMS 7)
- Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return.(NMS 8)
- Children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour.(NMS 10)
- Children live in schools that provide physical safety and security.(NMS 26)
- There is careful selection and vetting of all staff, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers.(NMS 27)

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 27

Quality in this outcome area is **adequate**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to the school.

Whilst the school has regard for the Standards and areas inspected in this section, a number of shortfalls and omissions were identified.

## EVIDENCE:

There was guidance and information regarding privacy and confidentiality and pupil's confirmed the types of issues that staff would not be able to keep confidential. Records are kept securely and where any records were used these were returned to a secure area overnight and when not in use.

There are some rooms within the school, which could be used for private interviews, such as the meeting room in the main building. No pupils' raised concerns about there being insufficient space for privacy. Some comment was made that at times staff did not always knock before entering rather undertaking these actions simultaneously.

Please also refer to comments made in Standard 24 regarding the premises.

Staff confirmed the school had a search policy and that they referred to this when necessary. Policies and procedures were said to be available in the boarding houses. This was not checked at the site visit.

Staff gave a good understanding of how they would need to deal with information, such as pupils' protection concerns. However, it is concerning to note that pupils' and young people gave examples of where they had either overheard or been told information about staffs' private circumstances which was inappropriate and raised questions regarding the boundaries of privacy employed by staff. In light of the above the school management team is asked to review how a satisfactory standard of privacy is accomplished within the school.

The school has a complaint policy and procedure. In addition there is a simplified version available for the pupils'.

The school has a 'whistle blowing' policy.

The school's complaint book was available. The complaint book evidenced that the school had received no complaints since the last inspection. The CSCI however received an anonymous concern via telephone on 7<sup>th</sup> June 06 regarding the school's new staffing structure and staff development plan. The anonymous caller was concerned that a number of staff had left the school and thought the school to be inadequately staffed at times.

It was noted during the site visit that six staff had left the school during the restructuring period and whilst new appointments had been made and those staff were waiting to commence duties, shortfalls in staffing had been covered by 'agency' staff. The Head of Care stated that there were occasions when agency staff did not report for duty or permanent staff reported sick at short notice and therefore the staffing levels in some boarding houses were reduced at those times. The Head of Care stated that two new staff are to commence duties in September 06 and further appointments will be made in the near future and until then, agency staff will continue to be used.

Pupils' interviewed raised concerns regarding the school's proposed staffing arrangements and that due to the past and current staffing levels there were not as many activities available as in the past. Pupils' informed the inspectors that they felt anxious about the impending changes. The pupils' also raised

concerns regarding the future of existing staff and the circumstances of 'change' that they alleged caused other staff to leave. The views of the pupils' were conveyed to the Consultant Principal and the Head of Care during inspection feedback.

The school has an internal policy and procedure regarding Pupils' Protection. The policy was updated in January 06. In addition the school also holds the revised (2005) Surrey County Council Multi-Agency Pupils' Protection procedures.

The Head of Care is the designated Pupils' Protection Liaison Officer for the school. The Head of Care stated that the responsibilities of Pupils' Protection liaison work was taken over by the then 'Acting' Head teacher for a period and then designated back to her by the new Consultant Head Teacher in January 06.

The school's Pupils' Protection incident files were available. The files held detailed information regarding two incidents, which were reported to the appropriate authorities and evidenced investigation and outcomes. Pupils' interviewed stated they had no concerns regarding how staff treat them.

It was evidenced that staff have either received or are due to attend Pupils' Protection training between September 05 and July 06. Staff interviewed confirmed the Pupils' Protection training arrangements.

The school has an anti-bullying policy and procedure. This is contained within the school's Behaviour Management policy. The anti-bullying policy is detailed; however it needs to be expanded consistent to Standard 6.4 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools to state what guidance/support would be provided to those who 'bully' others. A recommendation will be made regarding this.

There was a noticeable increase in discussion with the pupils' regarding the amount of alleged 'bullying' behaviour experienced by some pupils in the school. It is not clear if this is related to the general anxiety experienced due to proposed changes. Nevertheless these views were immediately conveyed the Consultant Principal and Head of Care for their consideration and investigation.

It was thought by the Head of Care that some incidents may be as a result of relationship difficulties and 'winding each other up' regarding interaction between certain pupils'.

No incidents of bullying or intimidating behaviour were evident during daytime or evening observations of the pupils.

The school has a policy and procedure regarding pupils becoming 'Absent Without Authority'. The policy is detailed; however it needs to be expanded consistent with Standard 8.3 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools to include the cancellation arrangements when a pupil has returned following absconding. A recommendation will be made regarding this.



The Head of Care stated that no pupils have absconded from the school.

The school has a 'Behaviour Management' policy. The policy is dated March 05 and has twelve headings including sections on sanctions and physical intervention/restraint. The policy also includes a 'Team Teach' flow chart. The Behaviour Management policy is scheduled for review in the near future. The school's sanction logs were available. The sanction logs evidenced the number of sanctions administered in the boarding house's were: (Seniors 7.) (St Benedict's 1.) (St Gerard's 15.) (St Anthony's 13.) and (St Aloysius 8.) The sample of sanctions inspected evidenced that only permitted sanctions are used. It was noted that whilst recording was generally consistent an occasional omission occurred in that the date of the sanction was not always recorded and where a pupil had refused to comment on the sanction imposed, this was not always stated. It is important that staff are reminded to record such details on all occasions. A recommendation will be made regarding this. The school has a health and safety policy statement, which includes information regarding all other health and safety policies the school maintains. It would be beneficial to provide the information in a health and safety manual.

The school had many good examples of health and safety management, which includes a good array of systems and appliances available in the school. These are mainly held in the maintenance office in the school grounds. Several members of staff have responsibility for differing areas of fire safety eg, one person for ensuring fire drills are completed, another for fire maintenance records. This has led to information being kept in different departments and no overall view of fire safety being 'centrally' held.

Fire training records were well organised and logs kept assisted the management in identifying those staff that required training. Records of tests of fire appliances, emergency lighting and weekly fire tests were available. In addition the school employs a private company to assess the fire safety needs of the school on an annual basis. Any issues identified in the fire report from this company in 2004 were met by 2005. The maintenance manager had evidence that no further recommendations had been made. The school is advised to look at how fire safety legislation is complied with and develop a fire policy, which complies with guidance from the fire authority.

There was evidence that the school obtained data hazard warning sheets as required by The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations. However, it was not evident that these were readily available to staff, which is necessary, in order that should an incident occur these can be used as reference. The management is advised to ensure that substances controlled by COSHH regulations are managed in accordance with those regulations.

Staff in charge of aspects of health and safety showed a strong regard for ensuring safe systems were in place for those areas they had responsibility for. However, the member of staff who had responsibility for overseeing the

implementation of the school's health and safety strategies, policies and procedures was not available. In September 2006 a site manager is being employed. This will enable one person to take a clear overview of how health and safety is managed.

Security of the premises has been developed over the last two years following a burglary at the school. New electric gates have been fitted to the main entrance and door alarms have been fitted to all doors within the school. The Consultant Principal stated that there is on call support available to night staff should they be concerned about intruders being on site. Staff reported they did not feel safe using the staff car park late at night, as there is minimal lighting in this area. A recommendation that the school review the lighting arrangements in the car park will be made.

Samples of staff personal files were inspected. The home's recruitment and vetting procedures were evidenced, as sound and Criminal Record Bureau checks were evident. Two 'Agency' staff files were also inspected. There was written confirmation from the Recruitment Agency that staff had received satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau checks and two satisfactory references. The personal file of the Consultant Principal was not complete and the inspector requested that evidence of vetting consistent with Standard 27.2 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools be presented to the CSCI from the School Trust's Head Office. The School will contact the CSCI Surrey Local Office when the details have been received. It is important that all required information is kept on staff files and are made available for inspection. A recommendation will be made regarding this matter.

# Enjoying and Achieving

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- The school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school.(NMS 12)
- Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community.(NMS 13)
- Children receive individual support when they need it.(NMS 22)

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

12, 13 and 22.

Quality in this outcome area is **good**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to the school.

The care staff have regard for supporting individual pupils in care, education and learning and will resume the full range of activities when staffing levels increase. Some alleged shortfalls in liaison between education and care staff need to be explored.

## EVIDENCE:

There are some links between care and educational staff such as two 'handover' periods each day, morning and evening. However, staff reported that the standard of handover was not always satisfactory, sometimes important information regarding a pupils' behaviour during the day did not get passed on to them, and sometimes this occurred through other means rather than the structure of these meetings. Some teaching assistants work in the evenings on boarding units and the school has plans to increase further the links between education and care in the coming year. This development is seen in the interests of pupils so as to provide and enable the school to better provide its aim of a 24-hour curriculum.

Placement plans do not reference in any detail how the staff can support the pupils' in reaching their educational goals. Please also refer to comments made in relation to Standard 17 'Care planning and placement plan' within this report.

Homework is completed after school as part of the school day. The Consultant Principal said they found this assisted pupils in completing any homework set in a structured manner.

Some boarding houses had study facilities and some did not. The Head of Care confirmed that in boarding houses for older pupils these facilities were available in all bedrooms.

There was limited access to educational materials in the boarding houses, such as some educational games and daily newspapers or magazines to encourage pupils to read. The school library had been disbanded and where the local library facilities had been used in the past lack of staffing was said to have impinged on pupils continuing this activity.

The school continues to provide a range of sedentary and active pursuits. However, pupils' and staff stated that the activity programme had been reduced due to the current staffing circumstances. The Consultant Principal and Head of Care stated that a full programme of activities would be reintroduced when staffing levels have increased.

The school GP is the independent person for pupils; they were however not interviewed on this occasion. Pupils reported they knew who this person was and how to access them. The person's photographs were on display around the school with information about how they can be contacted. The GP holds a weekly surgery at the school and the Head of Care confirmed that she made herself available at other times should this be necessary.

The school employs both occupational therapists and speech and language therapists to work at the school with both pupils and staff. The services of a psychologist are also supplied through a contract with the local National Health Service. The school employs counsellors for pupils and staff to access. The records of the checks required to be kept, as listed in Standard 22.12 were not inspected but the Consultant Principal confirmed these were kept in line with the information contained in the standard. As records of employment were inspected under Regulation 27 and found to be satisfactory this is accepted. Please also refer to comments made under Standard 14 Health and intimate care regarding links with external health professionals.

There was good evidence that the school offered and provided services to pupils who had experienced a traumatic incident, and or required specialist support to meet any identified need.

## **Making a Positive Contribution**

### **The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- Children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run. No child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views.(NMS 2)
- Children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect.(NMS 9)
- Children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes.(NMS 11)
- Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school.(NMS 17)
- 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.(NMS 20)

### **JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):**

2,11,17 and 20.

Quality in this outcome area is **good**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to the school.

The school has regard for meeting the above standards; however some shortfalls were evident.

### **EVIDENCE:**

The school is revising its care planning approach in September 2006 and is proposing changes, which will better co-ordinate the range of departments within the school who provide services to an individual. This will assist in demonstrating how the school works in a holistic and co-operative manner to meet a pupil's needs. No recommendation will be made regarding this matter as the school had already identified and planned to put in place.

Care plans kept by staff on the boarding houses were minimal and in some cases these did not fully reflect information provided in assessments. The Head of Care confirmed the information was used informally to make assessments and support need. Care plans must provide full detail.

In addition the school must ensure that before a pupils' is admitted care staff have a written plan which indicates an assessment of their needs has been made including an appropriate risk assessment or plan of how those needs will be met.

The use of risk assessments within the school's documentation is recommended to be reviewed and expanded in relation to pupils' care.

The key worker system is in a period of change and staff confirmed in recent months this has been in less evident use than previously.

Pupils' stated in discussion that they were aware of their plans and confirmed they took part in reviews.

There was good evidence that staff took part in statutory reviews and contributed to decisions made.

A member of the education staff held responsibility for overseeing how the school met 'looked after pupils' needs. Links with a pupil's social worker are maintained and consideration is given to particular needs they might have. The member of staff stated they had undertaken personal study to ensure they were familiar with processes and research concerning the needs of looked after pupils'. However, it would be beneficial for the person responsible for looked after pupils' to have attended training regarding this subject.

There is a pupils' council which meets on average every two months. Other pupils' votes pupils' representatives onto the council. Within some records there is evidence that topics for discussion at the next meeting have been sent out to representatives before the meeting to gain pupils' views. This practice provided structure to how representatives were to gain pupil's views and is advised to be used more frequently. Minutes of the pupils' council meetings also showed that actions/ issues from the last meeting were not recorded as having been reviewed. In addition it was not always clear why the matter had been discussed.

The school is therefore advised to consider the above statements and make changes to the school council to ensure that the systems in place encourage and support pupil's' views. It was positive to note the Consultant Principal arranged to attend a council meeting soon after their appointment.

The Consultant Principal confirmed that pupils' had been involved in recent staff recruitment and their views had been sought.

An example of how pupil's' views had influenced change at the school was a mufti day, which took place every Friday.

The Consultant Principal also provided evidence of surveys they had completed regarding pupils' and parents' views of aspects of the school. Suggestion leaflets were available in the school and the Head of Care stated that there is an intention to make these more user friendly, such as the addition of pictures.

Within the statement of purpose and other documentation the rights for pupils' to practice their own religion is confirmed. The Consultant Principal and Head of Care could give examples of how they had supported pupils in maintaining their faiths. The school curriculum also provides study of differing faiths.

It was reported that there is an expectation that all pupils will attend mass at the school in addition to following their own religion. However it was later 'adamantly' confirmed by the 'Chair of Governors' that this was not the case and that there was no requirement that children of other denominations should attend mass.

The school's policies and procedures mostly support independence skills being developed. For example in the oldest pupils' boarding house pupils are expected to assist in day-to-day tasks such as cooking. In other houses this is encouraged, especially when one to one support is being given. Some further development should be given to how independence skills for older pupils are promoted especially in the area of self-medication. Pupils did not hold any medication other than inhalers and for a pupils' that is 16 years there should be a plan of how they could be assisted to manage their medication themselves. Please also refer to comments made in Standard 14 Health Care.

Pay phones are available in boarding houses and these are cited in private booths. Contact addresses and telephone numbers of 'Pupils' line' and other helpline and advice services and organisations are displayed in the booths. Some pupils' also have mobile phones, which they can use out of classroom/lesson time.

The school only has weekly boarders, therefore pupils' return home each weekend. There was some confusion regarding who has responsibility for 'contact' liaison arrangements. During discussion with the care staff they stated that the pupils' classroom 'tutors' are responsible for contact with parents and significant others. However, when this topic was raised during inspection feedback with the Consultant Principal and Head of Care they were clear that it was the 'key' worker and care staff's responsibility. It is important that agreement is reached and that all staff are aware and clear as to who has responsibility in this area. A recommendation will be made regarding this matter.

The school had introduced a thorough assessment of pupils' who were being considered for admission to the school, which included a review of whether the pupils' needs could be met by each department within the school. The results of this assessment were then put in writing to the parents and placing authority. The assessments reviewed were detailed and professional. There

was an omission on the form of whether the residential provision could meet the pupil's needs. The Consultant Principal confirmed that this was usually included.

The Consultant Principal also confirmed the school made it very clear to placing authorities that unless all the necessary paperwork was received by the school prior to the pupil's start date they would not be able to attend school on that day.

At this inspection the standard of care provided to pupils leaving the school was not assessed. Based on information gained above it is believed that this would be handled with equal care.



# Achieving Economic Wellbeing

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children can 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.(NMS 16)
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.(NMS 21)
- Children live in well designed and pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.(NMS 23)
- Children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.(NMS 24)
- Children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity.(NMS 25)

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

23, 24 and 25.

Quality in this outcome area is **poor**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to the school.

Whilst some boarding areas are of a good standard and are homely, others are below the standard required and must be reviewed and upgraded.

## EVIDENCE:

There was no evidence that any requirements from other authorities such as the fire service were outstanding. The premises were used solely for school use and no other group accessed the buildings. There were links with local services and pupil's attended community groups.

The Consultant Principal had started a programme of refurbishment, which had commenced in the girls' boarding house with bedrooms being refitted with new beds and mattresses wardrobes and carpets. One bathroom on this unit had been refurbished. The standard of décor in the rest of this house was reasonable but the provision of fittings in the dining area was in need of attention being old and worn. The lounge area was in an acceptable condition and homely.

The Consultant Principal confirmed that £25,000 had been set aside within this year's budget for improving the standard of facilities provided. This was considered to be necessary as there were areas in an unacceptable state of repair and the standard of provision did not always create a homely residential environment. However, it should be noted that several areas were homely and comfortable.

The privacy afforded by the layout of boys boarding units in the main building was not always satisfactory. There are entrances and exits that are generally used by school staff to reach the administration offices of the school. The Head of Care confirmed that the entrances should not be used after four o'clock but in practice staff did continue to use the entrances. Staff accessing the administration areas of the building by traversing boarding units was noted throughout the inspection.

As the issues surrounding pupils' protection referrals relate to pupils lacking an understanding of privacy this is seen as an important issue for the school to resolve. In addition pupil's and staff reported that theft of possessions was an issue at the school but data regarding the number of incidents was not fully available as staff confirmed this was not always reported in this manner.

Lockers with locks were available for all pupil's but these were not always located in the pupil's' bedrooms. This is especially necessary where consideration must be given to whether pupils should be self-medicating.

The school must take action to consider what immediate action can be taken to improve privacy and further consider what long term plans can be made to make improvements, which will improve the standards of accommodation to a level which meets the standards detailed in Standard 24 in every boarding house/unit within the school.

The standard of accommodation has been graded as unsatisfactory and where areas require refurbishment this is immediate.

The standard of bathroom accommodation varied and where this had been fully refurbished was satisfactory providing an appropriate level of privacy and facilities.

As before the Head teacher confirmed a programme of refurbishment is to be completed. A full review must be undertaken of all bathrooms within the school to ensure they meet the necessary standard, as there were instances in the sample of bathrooms inspected where repairs needed to be made. For example, in the girls' boarding house the bathroom where the bath is located had peeling paint and the bath itself had two places where the enamel was damaged.



# Management

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils.(NMS 1)
- Children's needs, development and progress is recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions.(NMS 18)
- There are adequate records of both the staff and child groups of the school.(NMS 19)
- Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.(NMS 28)
- Children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs.(NMS 29)
- Children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare.(NMS 30)
- Children receive the care and services they need from competent staff.(NMS 31)
- Children and staff enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools.(NMS 32)
- The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school.(NMS 33)

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

1, 28, 29, 31 and 32.

Quality in this outcome area is **good**. This judgement is made using available evidence including a visit to the school.

Despite the recent and on-going changes the school is well managed and has regard for the pastoral care and welfare of the pupil's. New developments will enhance existing good practice and improve areas where shortfalls are evident.

## EVIDENCE:

The school's Statement of Purpose and Prospectus was available. The Statement had been amended on several occasions to reflect the temporary changes in the school's management over the last two years. The Consultant Principal and the Head of Care stated that a new Statement of Purpose and Prospectus would be drawn up in September 06 to reflect the new developments and changes at the school. It would be important for the school to include in the new documentation; the number of day and boarding pupil's

at the school and that pupils who are accepted for placement would attend 'Mass' regardless of their religious denomination. A recommendation will be made regarding this.

Currently the school has fourteen permanent staff inclusive of the Head of Care and Deputy Head of Care. In addition there are nine sessional workers, who work varying hours. It was noted that six staff have left the school since the last inspection and it was reported that agency and sessional staff are covering any shortfalls in the duty roster. It was also reported that two new staff are due to commence duties in September 06 and further appointments will be made in the near future.

The existing staff are an established team and most have substantial experience in working with pupils with learning difficulties. In discussion, staff voiced their anxieties regarding the restructuring of the staffing establishment and thought this was mainly responsible for the number of staff departures over recent months. The staff stated that morale within the care staff team was currently low.

Staff stated that they would remain committed to the welfare of the pupil's through this difficult time.

Staff were observed to relate positively with the pupil's and join in games of football with them following the 'England World Cup Match on television. Those not playing football watched the match with staff and appeared to enjoy supporting the activity.

Currently the staff team, inclusive of sessional workers comprises of fifteen female and seven male workers. The ethnicity of the staff team includes two black workers, the remainder being white.

The staff duty roster was available. The roster gave a clear account of staff on duty and duty times worked.

There is one member of staff on 'sleep in' duty in each boarding house and the Head of Care is also resident and available when requested. In addition there are two waking night staff on site.

Currently two staff hold the NVQ level 3 qualification and six other staff are due to complete NVQ level 3 training in the summer of this year. In addition a further six staff are to commence NVQ level 3 training in September 06. This was evidenced by documentation and correspondences from the College staff are to attend.

There was evidence of a staff-training programme for the period between September 05 and July 06. Training courses attended included: child protection, health and safety, fire safety, risk assessment, first aid, food hygiene, epipen, recording, medication administration, (via the Pharmacy) advanced team teach and Duke of Edinburgh award training. A range of other topics including equal opportunities training is covered as part of the NVQ level 3 courses attended.

The Head of Care holds the NVQ level 4 (management) qualification.

Boarding house staff meetings occur on a regular basis and full care staff meetings are held each half term. Written minutes of meetings were in evidence.

There was recorded evidence of annual staff appraisals taking place; however the Head of Care stated that not all appraisals had been completed due to the recent staffing shortage, though these will be completed in the near future.

There was evidence of the Consultant Principal and the Head of Care undertaking internal monitoring, and sampling of records inspected evidenced their signatures as part of the monitoring process.

There was further evidence of internal quality assurance and consultation via results of pupil's and parents questionnaires.

The school has a 'Residential Development' plan. This clearly sets out aims and objectives for the future and covers ten major areas for development.

# SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools have been met and uses the following scale.

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

“X” in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion

“N/A” in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

<b>BEING HEALTHY</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>14</b>	2
<b>15</b>	3

<b>STAYING SAFE</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>3</b>	2
<b>4</b>	3
<b>5</b>	3
<b>6</b>	2
<b>7</b>	X
<b>8</b>	2
<b>10</b>	2
<b>26</b>	2
<b>27</b>	2

<b>ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>12</b>	2
<b>13</b>	X
<b>22</b>	3

<b>MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>2</b>	3
<b>9</b>	X
<b>11</b>	3
<b>17</b>	2
<b>20</b>	2

<b>ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>16</b>	X
<b>21</b>	X
<b>23</b>	2
<b>24</b>	1
<b>25</b>	1

<b>MANAGEMENT</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>1</b>	2
<b>18</b>	X
<b>19</b>	X
<b>28</b>	3
<b>29</b>	3
<b>30</b>	X
<b>31</b>	3
<b>32</b>	3
<b>33</b>	X

No.

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the proprietor meets the Pupils' Act 1989, Inspection of Schools and Colleges Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards.

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1	RS14	That the school expand its infection control policy regarding how infection control should be implemented regarding its laundry services.	10/08/06
2	RS14	That all health promotion policies are drawn together.	10/08/06
3	RS14	That regular checks on Nurses' qualifications and pin numbers take place.	10/08/06
4	RS14	That the dosage of homely remedies is recorded when administered.	10/08/06
5	RS14	That the school ensures that accident records are kept in accordance with Data Protection.	10/08/06
6	RS3	That the school remind all staff regarding knocking on bedroom doors prior to entering.	10/08/06
7	RS3	That staff do not reveal their employment circumstances to pupils'.	10/08/06
8	RS6	That the school expand its anti-bullying policy consistent with Standard 6.4 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools.	10/08/06
9	RS8	That the school expand its missing persons procedure consistent with 8.3 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools.	10/08/06
10	RS10	That the dates of sanctions administered are entered in all cases and that if a pupil' refuses to	10/08/06



		sign the sanctions record this is recorded.	
11	RS26	That the school develop a fire policy.	10/07/06
12	RS26	That substances controlled by COSHH are managed in accordance with those Regulations.	10/07/06
13	RS26	That the school review the lighting arrangements in the staff car park.	10/09/06
14	RS27	That the Consultant Principal's recruitment file is made available for inspection.	30/06/06
15	RS17	That care plans reflect how care staff support pupil's educational goals.	10/08/06
16	RS17	That placement plans hold all details required by Standard 17.5 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools.	10/09/06
17	RS17	That the use of risk assessments within the school's documentation is reviewed and expanded in relation to pupil's care.	10/09/06
18	RS20	That clarity is established regarding tutors or care staff that have responsibility for 'contact' arrangements for pupils'.	10/08/06
19	RS24	That lockable facilities are placed in pupil's bedrooms rather than being located elsewhere regarding pupils' who 'self administer' medication.	10/08/06
20	RS24	That a review and upgrading, where appropriate of the boarding areas including toilet and bathing facilities takes place.	01/11/06
21	RS1	That when the school's Statement of Purpose is revised it includes the numbers and ages of boarders.	30/09/06
22	RS10	That a bound and numbered book is commenced for recording incidents of restraint and that the period of time restraint was used for is entered in the record.	10/08/06

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