



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Marland School

**Marland School
Petersmarland
Torrington
Devon
EX38 8QQ**

Lead Inspector
Derek Curtis

Announced Inspection
6th November 2006 09:00

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

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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 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

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

Name of school	Marland School
Address	Marland School Petersmarland Torrington Devon EX38 8QQ
Telephone number	01805 601324
Fax number	
Email address	admin@marland.devon.sch.uk
Provider Web address	http://www.marland.devon.sch.uk
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Devon County Council Education Dept.
Name of Head	Mr Keith Bennett
Name of Head of Care	Mr Don Burton
Age range of residential pupils	11-16 years
Date of last welfare inspection	15 th November 2005

Brief Description of the School:

Marland School is a termly, residential, local authority maintained Community Special School, for secondary age male pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs for behavioural, emotional and/or social difficulties.

The school has places for up to 40 boarding pupils. Pupils are from across Devon and admissions to the school are undertaken on a planned basis only.

The school is a two-storey, adapted and extended building, situated in its own extensive grounds, in a rural locality. There are outdoor sports facilities on-site. In addition to these, the school also has its own private wood, 1-2 miles away, which is also used for outdoor activities.

The main administrative areas, teaching areas, main kitchen, dining rooms, lounge areas and staff facilities are on the ground floor. Boarders' bedrooms, staff sleeping-in rooms, main toilet and bathing, medical and laundry facilities, the independent living flat and other office space are on the upper floor.

Junior, intermediate and senior age groups have their own lounge/common room areas, each furnished with a television, video/DVD player, comfortable chairs and personal lockers. A fourth lounge, upstairs, is equipped with computer game consoles. Bedroom areas are also divided into junior, intermediate and senior sections. Students' bedrooms are double or single except for three triple rooms.

Meals are prepared by the catering staff on-site and are taken in two dining areas.

The school employs 48 staff, on a full or part-time basis; of which just under 30% are residential care staff.

SUMMARY

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

This inspection was carried out over three days by two inspectors. The inspection did not cover early morning call but on one evening the inspectors stayed until the younger pupils had gone to bed. The pupil survey was undertaken in class time on the morning of the first day with the help of class teachers. For reasons, not quite understood by the inspectors, the school was far from settled on the first day. However, firm action by the Principal, effective and imaginative use of the school's behaviour management system and good teamwork (additional hours worked by senior managers and staff) the school returned to normal for the remaining days of the inspection. It was not felt appropriate to carry out an inspection of the premises with pupils on this occasion but most areas of the school were visited during the course of the three days. Many members of staff were interviewed and all the required records were available for scrutiny. The inspectors are most grateful to the Principal, the school staff and not least the pupils most of whom, in the end, became helpful and cooperative.

What the school does well:

The school is well managed and provides a continuity of good quality residential care and education to the pupils in a reasonable environment. It has sensible expectations of the pupils who, by and large, respond positively. The pupils enjoy an attractive diet that is prepared by an enthusiastic 'in house' team. The care staff are well trained, committed, provide good role models to the pupils and appear to have a good team spirit. The school is safety conscious with a good programme for risk assessments of all activities. Communication with parents is effective and, according to the returns from the questionnaire, appreciated by the parents.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Whilst there were no recommendations at the last inspection the school has taken note of the comment in the report that all staff should receive regular

training in child protection and related issues. The school has continued with its programme of refurbishment thus giving the pupils a more up to date environment.

What they could do better:

Senior staff should monitor the records of the distribution of medicines to pupils. The frequency of the use of the 'quiet room' as a means of calming pupils should be reviewed. The inspectors are of the opinion that the work of the care team is not reflected in the review reports and that more attention should be paid to the social progress of the pupils, especially in the cases of those who are about to move into further education or the world of employment. The inspectors were informed that the care staff manual was in need of updating and this should be completed as soon as possible.

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 or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

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)

The Commission considers Standard 14 the key standard to be inspected.

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

Quality in this outcome area is good

We looked at Standards 14 and 15

EVIDENCE:

The school actively promotes the health care of each pupil and the staff have a good understanding of the pupils' health needs. The Pastoral Support Manager informed the inspector that the school doctor, with whom most pupils are registered, visits on a regular basis and carries out a thorough health check on every pupil each term. The pupils' health details, as recorded by the care staff, should be updated and reviewed regularly. The Pastoral Support Manager has the responsibility of distributing prescribed medicines and 'household' remedies to the pupils. Attention was drawn to standard 14.18 that states that 'the school has secured, and follows, qualified medical, pharmaceutical or nursing advice in a written protocol on the provision of non-prescription 'household' medicines to children' The school continues to use a 'measured dosage' system direct from the pharmacist to obtain medicines for pupils. The method of storage, distribution and disposal of medicines in school was satisfactory; however a senior member of staff should monitor these records. Dental and ophthalmic appointments are made as and when required.

The inspector was told that all staff have regular training in first aid. Records in relation to accidents and illnesses of pupils were made available for inspection. There is no dedicated accommodation for pupils who may be unwell; it is

therefore usual for parents to be requested to take children home for all but relatively minor ailments.

Interviews with kitchen staff and inspection of recent menus confirmed the importance the school lays on healthy eating and presenting an attractive diet to pupils and staff. For breakfast there was a choice of cereals, toast and eggs, with bacon on some mornings; a choice of hot or cold dishes at lunchtime and likewise for the evening meal. A light informal supper is taken before bedtime. The inspectors enjoyed the meals they had with the pupils in various dining rooms. The duty staff team make every effort to encourage good manners at meal times so that they may be enjoyed as social occasions; quiet conversation is the aim - often achieved. The cooks bring hot food to the dining tables. Staff members who sit at the tables serve with the help of older pupils who also take turns to lay up and clear away. It was noticed that the pupils ate very well, second helpings were usually available, and that there was very little waste at the end of the meals, which attests to the care taken in menu planning. The inspectors were told that the school was in the process of applying for the 'Healthy Schools Award'. The school has access to a dietician in cases where pupils require special diets.

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)

The Commission considers Standards 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Quality in this outcome area is good

We looked at Standards 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 26 and 27

EVIDENCE:

There are policies and procedures, known and understood by staff, in place in relation to privacy and confidentiality. Education and Care records are securely maintained in the offices of their respective departments. There was good liaison between education and care staff. The staff follow the custom of knocking before entering bedrooms and show respect to the pupils – for the most part this is reciprocated. There is a telephone booth on the ground floor and a hooded telephone in the upstairs corridor, which, although not providing total privacy, was seen to be much in use during the inspection. Many pupils have mobile 'phones which they may use in the evenings and at weekends. All parents who responded to the questionnaire bar one, felt that the arrangements for visiting gave adequate privacy.

The returned parental questionnaires and the inspectors' conversations with pupils indicated that pupils and most parents understood the procedure should they wish to make a complaint. The records of complaints received showed that complaints were dealt with swiftly with covering letters sent to parents in cases of formal complaints. The complaints procedure is set out in the Schools Prospectus and in the Pupils' Booklet.

All staff have received basic training in child protection, the most recent training session held in October 2006. Members of the Senior Team undertake a more in depth course. A modicum of child protection training is part of the extensive 10-week induction programme for all new staff. All the staff spoken to knew what to do if a pupil disclosed an incident or if they were worried about a particular pupil.

The pupil questionnaires and the inspectors' chats with them showed that whilst bullying is an important issue in the school (40% of the respondents said they were bullied, 48% said that they were not bullied and 12% did not know) people felt it was being handled well by the school. The anti-bullying policies, set out in the prospectus and in the pupil's booklets, are clear and the whole matter is part and parcel of the educative process and the behaviour management system used throughout the whole school.

The process of reporting incidents of significance to the relevant agencies is good as is the procedure for managing pupils who may leave the school without permission. The parents, placing authorities and the police are informed in accordance with a set protocol. All such incidents are fully recorded with correspondence to parents and local authorities where serious breaches of discipline have occurred.

Discipline in the school is based on good relationships between the staff and the pupils supported by the 'Team Teach' method of de-escalation and behaviour management. Three senior managers are qualified to teach this method in the school. The school is commended for including the Premises Manager in the Team Teach training sessions. All the staff understand that physical intervention is the last course of action and only following on from

concerted attempts at de-escalating any given instance. All such incidents are carefully recorded and monitored by the designated senior RCW (Behaviour Support) and then by the Principal and a visiting Governor. Positive behaviour is acknowledged by praise and further rewarded by a merit system, which leads to enhanced pocket money. The school uses a 'quiet room' in which pupils may cool off under the supervision of staff nearby but not necessarily in the room. The quiet room is also monitored by CCTV. The quiet room is purposefully bare of stimulation or furniture and is only used as a last resort when other methods have failed to calm the pupil, nevertheless, the inspectors are of the opinion that its use should be reviewed and the use of the room should always be logged.

The school is safety conscious and has satisfactory Health and Safety policies in place. The inspectors were told that the water tanks were cleaned yearly and that water taps used by pupils throughout the building were flushed through after each holiday period. The Premises Manager confirmed that the temperature of hot water used by pupils is governed at the point of discharge. There are risk assessments to cover all areas of the school and all activities undertaken by pupils; each pupil has a personal risk assessment. The Premises Manager is working hard to catch on the PATT requirements for portable appliances including those items brought to the school by pupils. Records indicate that regular fire drills are carried out and the testing and recording of the fire precautions was up to date.

The staff records held by the school were found to be in order. The actual evidence of checks with Criminal Records are held at County Hall but the reference number of each check and the date of issue is held by the school. The Principal confirmed that notes taken during recent staff interviews were retained.

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)

The Commission considers Standards 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Quality in this outcome area is good

We looked at Standards 12, 13 and 22

EVIDENCE:

On the basis of inspectors' discussions with staff from various disciplines it became clear that there was a good team spirit within the school and that everyone was working for the benefit of the pupils. The good links between the education and care teams was especially evident. Some care staff are also employed as teaching assistants in the classroom and some teachers take football on Saturdays, which enhances the notion of a whole school approach to care and education. There were books, videos and games in the lounges for the pupils to use. The school plans to set up a semi-independent unit to encourage older pupils to be more independent.

A good range of activities is offered to the pupils, somewhat restricted in the winter evenings, but inspectors were impressed that one group went out crab fishing after school – and it was early winter! Yard or field football seems to grab the interest of the whole school and the computer room is open most evenings. Many pupils said that the activities were the best things about the school. The person responsible for risk assessment confirmed that the school

would use only bona fide organisations with qualified instructors approved by the County Council.

The staff group, at all levels, were seen to be approachable and supportive of the pupils. The staff group are commended on their extensive knowledge of the needs of the pupils. The school is able to call upon a wide range of additional services according to the varying needs of the pupils; but all staff stated that the mental health services for children were the most difficult to access. The Principal confirmed that this indeed was the case and that the school had tried many times to obtain support for certain pupils whom it was thought might benefit from the mental health service without success.

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)

The Commission considers Standards 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Quality in this outcome area is good

We looked at Standards 2, 9, 11, 17 and 20

EVIDENCE:

The school seeks to obtain the views of the pupils and their families through internal and external surveys, the school council and by direct contact with individual pupils and their parents. The inspectors were told that parents often contacted the pupil's key worker direct about every day matters of concern. The survey conducted during the inspection indicated that the majority of pupils thought that they were able to 'have their say' over issues within the school.

As intimated in the preamble of this report relationships between staff and some of the pupils on the first day of the inspection were somewhat stretched.

It is to the credit of the whole team that the school had settled by the time the inspectors returned for the second and third day when good reciprocal relationships were seen throughout the school. Expectations of good behaviour are high and, in the usual run of things, the pupils respond positively. Positive behaviour is recognised by staff in the awarding of points that in turn result in an increase of pocket money. The inspectors were impressed with the high level of knowledge the members of the teaching and caring teams had of the individual needs of each pupil.

The procedures for admitting pupils to the school are well documented and lead to a sensitive introduction into life in the school taking into account the personal information gathered prior to admission. The pupils are encouraged to complete an 'about me' form that assists staff to understand the foibles of each one and to relate to them in a meaningful way.

The care plans sampled were seen to be up to date with achievable goals that were modified in accordance with the pupil's performance. The pupil's key worker under the guidance of the Deputy Principal (Care) monitors the care plan. All the required information was found in one of the three files on each pupil. The inspectors suggested that it might be useful if the key information were recorded on one 'at a glance' front sheet. Review reports provided by the school provided an accurate breakdown of each pupil's performance but the inspectors noted that the care reports seemed to have been subsumed into the body of the report in such a way that did not indicate the pupil's social progress nor did it reflect the considerable input of the care team.

The school encourages contact between the pupils and their parents unless this has been determined otherwise at a review meeting. Distance continues to be a problem for some parents; nevertheless the school makes every effort to assist where possible. According to the questionnaire sent to parents the parents who do visit the school are received very well although one felt there was insufficient privacy. Three telephones, a payphone in a booth on the ground floor, a cordless phone also on the ground floor that provides roving privacy for incoming calls, and the another under a soundproof hood on the landing upstairs also for incoming calls. Interestingly the one on the landing appears to have the most use. Many pupils have their own mobile 'phone that can be used within set times of the day. The inspectors were not sure if the extensive programme of staff training included '*working with children and their families*' (Standard 20.6)

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):

Quality in this outcome area is good.

We looked at Standards 16, 21, 23, 24 and 25

EVIDENCE:

The pupils wear a sensible school uniform in lesson time and change into their own clothing for evening activities. The clothing is well looked after and the pupils are encouraged to keep themselves tidy at all times. The pupils' weekly personal allowance (pocket money), administered by the Deputy Principal (Care), can be enhanced through the reward system used throughout the school. Although the system appeared rigorous there was no policy for the administration of the pupil's personal allowance or its internal auditing.

The school has a very positive approach to pupils coming towards the end of their stay. Links with the wider community and the world of work is managed by 'Connexions' about whom the pupils had many positive comments to make. Some older pupils attend a local Community College as part of their introduction to further education. The Principal has exciting plans to create an independent training area on the first floor, which, if brought to fruition, will

provide a first class facility for selected senior pupils coming to the end of their stay at the school.

The school, set in the countryside, relies on its own transport. The buildings have been adapted to meet the needs of the current pupils. In its existing form it would not be suitable for pupils who use wheelchairs but is probably good fun for the present pupils if somewhat difficult for staff to manage. In addition to the plan to create the above-mentioned independent training suite the inspectors understood that it is hoped to provide additional single bedrooms. The Maintenance Team work hard to keep the building in good shape and the rolling programme of refurbishment and decoration is gradually bringing a more up to date appearance to the living areas of the school. The school does have some surveillance and alarm systems in use but the inspectors did not think that these devices imposed overly much on the pupils' privacy bearing the need to keep them safe.

The lavatories and ablution areas are sufficient for the numbers of pupils accommodated and are subject to the programme of refurbishment - the inspectors were told that the devices controlling the temperature of the water used by the pupils were regularly tested. The Head pointed out that he was not happy with a couple of lavatory cubicles that opened straight onto the landing and hoped that these could be altered in the future.

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)

The Commission considers Standards 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.

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

The Quality in this outcome area is good

We looked at Standards 1, 18, 19, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32

EVIDENCE:

The statement of purpose is set out in the school's prospectus. It is clear, informative and illustrated by photographs of pupils engaged in various activities. The statement is reviewed by the School Governors every year.

The pupil's personal files contained the required information. The inspectors suggested that it might be useful for each file to have a 'at a glance' front sheet that would encapsulate all the vital information in one place. The key workers were complimented on the tidiness and efficiency of the files for which they were responsible.

The general records in relation to the welfare of pupils, the current methods of recruiting and vetting staff were all satisfactory. (The Principal confirmed that any notes made during interviews were retained.) The duty rosters, school diaries and records of accidents were up to date. Staffing levels were in accordance with the statement of purpose and appeared to be appropriate for the pupils accommodated at the time of inspection – the staff being willing to undertake extra duties as necessary, also covering the duties of colleagues who may be unwell or away from the school for additional training.

The members of staff spoken to confirmed that they were encouraged and supported in relation to training – this was borne out by the goodly ratio of qualified staff in the school. Recently recruited members of the team spoke highly of the school's induction process, training and continuing supervision. The inspectors were told that the staff handbook was in need of updating. The staff-training programme was discussed with the Deputy Principal (Education) who manages the training needs of all staff. Team Leaders are trained in supervision skills and the staff confirmed that they were subject to annual appraisal. All staff had been part of a job evaluation process just prior to the inspection. The Deputy Principal (Care) and three Senior Care Staff have the Registered Managers Award and three more Senior Staff were working towards this award.

The school is well managed. There are clear lines of responsibility and accountability. The leadership of the various departments is positive. Information distribution within the school and beyond is effective. The Senior Leadership Team provides an out of hours cover that is appreciated by the staff team. The Principal undertakes the internal monitoring and the Chair of Governors and colleagues are responsible for reporting to the Governing Body. The inspectors were informed that it is difficult to recruit Governors for the school thus the work load was heavy for those on the Board at the time of inspection.

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

BEING HEALTHY	
Standard No	Score
14	3
15	4

STAYING SAFE	
Standard No	Score
3	3
4	3
5	3
6	3
7	3
8	3
10	3
26	3
27	3

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
Standard No	Score
12	4
13	4
22	3

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
Standard No	Score
2	3
9	3
11	3
17	3
20	3

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
Standard No	Score
16	3
21	4
23	3
24	3
25	3

MANAGEMENT	
Standard No	Score
1	3
18	3
19	3
28	3
29	3
30	3
31	3
32	3
33	3

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 Children 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	Senior Staff should monitor the records of the prescribed and non-prescription medication given to pupils.	
2	RS10	The school should review the frequency of the use of the quiet room as a means of calming pupils.	
3	RS12	The school should place greater emphasis on the social and emotional progress of the pupils in their review reports.	
4	RS30	The school should up date the manual for care staff.	
5	RS33	The school should continue to seek appropriate persons to fill the role of Governor.	

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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