



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

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

Marland School

Petersmarland

Torrington

Devon

EX38 8QQ

17 - 19 June 2003

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

Marland School

Address

Petersmarland, Torrington, Devon, EX38 8QQ

Tel No:

01805 601324

Fax No: 01805 601298**Email Address:**admin@marland.devon.sch.
uk**Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school**

Education Dept Devon County Council

Name of Head

Mr Alaister Bates

NCSC Classification

Residential Special School

Type of schoolResidential Special
School**Date of last boarding welfare inspection:**

Date and Time of Inspection Visit		17 June 2003 10:30 am	ID Code
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Romana Young	105157
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	Derek Curtis	
Name of NCSC Inspector	3		
Name of NCSC Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):			
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)		Not applicable	
Name of any Signer or Interpreter			

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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 Marland 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

This report is a public document.

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

Marland School opened in 1967 and operated as an independent residential special school for boys with emotional and behavioural difficulties, until September 1998, when the ownership and management of the school was taken over by the local authority, Devon County Council. The school takes up to 36 boys, aged 11 to 16 years, from the South West of England, mainly from the local and unitary authorities of Devon, Cornwall Torbay and Plymouth. Students attend on a termly boarding basis. All students have a statement of special educational needs for emotional and behavioural difficulties, including moderate learning difficulties or specific learning difficulties. Marland School is Devon County Council's only termly boarding school for boys with emotional and behavioural difficulties and aims to admit students whose assessed needs require longer periods of boarding, including weekends.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

All parents who replied to the parent questionnaire survey were extremely satisfied with the way the school is run and with the help and care that is being provided for their child. Relationships and contact between home and school are excellent. Parents view the school as an excellent resource with caring, competent and professional staff. One parent described the staff, accommodation and meals at the school as “superb”. Parents were very complimentary about the school and staff and very pleased with the progress that their son had made on all levels – personally, academically and socially.

The school provides students with clear boundaries and a structured environment which helps them to focus on and understand the consequences of their behaviour and which rewards success in a concrete and positive way.

There is good communication and cooperation between teaching and care staff teams. The senior management team give good support and guidance to staff. Boarding accommodation is comfortable and well maintained.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

19 out of 21 students who completed the pupil questionnaire, agreed that the school is a good or “ok” place to live. Things that pupils think should be changed about the school included making the school co-educational, being allowed to go home more, stay up later and increased pocket money.

Further consultation with the students about privacy issues in the shower cubicles should be undertaken to ensure that all issues raised during the inspection have been addressed.

The responses to the pupil questionnaires and discussion with young people show that, although the school has an anti-bullying policy and measures in place, and staff are alert and actively intervene bullying is still an issue for a significant number of students and further work needs to be done on developing further measures to reduce this.

The process of recording of the checks undertaken during the recruitment process needs to be reviewed to ensure that it can be verified that the required checks on staff have been satisfactorily completed.

All staff should have training in the prevention and recognition of child abuse, how to deal with disclosures or suspicions of abuse and the school’s child protection procedures.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This report is the first by the National Care Standards Commission under the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools and therefore serves as an audit of the home against the new requirements, identifying developments needed to meet the new requirements within a reasonable period of time. Any more urgent issues are identified in the report.

The school has a highly committed staff team, ably and professionally managed by the head teacher and senior management team, providing a valued and valuable service to the young people attending the school and their families. The standard of care and commitment to meeting the young people's needs in an individualised way was commendable. All staff were working in a collaborative manner to meet individual needs.

Responses in the pupil survey show that, although living away from home is not their ideal choice, most students feel that attending the school is benefiting them educationally and socially and allows them access to a wider range of sporting and other activities.

The inspectors would like to thank the young people, the staff and the head teacher for their warm welcome, co-operation and assistance during the inspection.

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.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Identified below are the actions recommended on issues addressed in the main body of the report in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders adequately in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.

No	Standard*	Recommended Action
1	33	The governing body should arrange for one of their number, or a representative, to visit the school once every half term, and complete a report on the conduct of the school for the governing body which covers the matters set out in Standard 33.3. A copy of the report should be provided to the head of the school within two weeks of the visit and a record kept of action taken by the school on recommendations or issues of concern raised in such reports.

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	RSS 5	The head of the school should ensure there is training for all staff, including ancillary staff, agency staff and volunteers, in the prevention and recognition of abuse, dealing with disclosures or suspicions of abuse and the school's child protection procedures.
2	RSS 4	The school should ensure that serious complaints against the school or the staff of the school are notified to the National Care Standards Commission and that children and parents are told how they can make a complaint directly to the National Care Standards Commission.
3	RSS 19	The school should ensure that the personnel file for each member of staff contains the information and documentation listed in Standard 19.2.
4	RSS 14	The school should ensure that qualified medical, pharmaceutical or nursing advice is sought and followed, in a written protocol on the provision of non-prescription "household" medicines to children.
5	RSS 30	The school should ensure that all staff and others working in the school receive one to one supervision from a senior member of staff each half term.
6	RSS 18	The school should ensure that written records are signed and dated and the name of the signatory clearly identified.

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

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS**

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

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

Checks with other Organisations

• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	NO
• Environmental Health	NO
• DfES	NO
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person	NO
• Chair of Governors	NO

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	NO
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	NO
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	17/06/03
Time of Inspection	10:30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	25
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	3

Pre-inspection information and the Head's Self evaluation Form, provided by the school, have also been taken into account in preparing this report

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Age Range of Boarding Pupils **From** **To**

NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

BOYS

GIRLS

TOTAL

Number of separate Boarding Houses

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the 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.

STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils.

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

The school has a written Statement of Purpose, which accurately describes what the school sets out to do for those children it accommodates, and the manner in which care is provided. The Statement can be made up of other documents, e.g., Letter of Approved Arrangements and school prospectus, which are required to include specific information.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The statement of purpose is contained within the school's statement of aims, prospectus and policy documents (prospectus, students' information leaflet and policy documents were seen). The school's statement of purpose is reviewed annually by the Governing body (see pre-inspection questionnaire).

Staff were clear about the aims and purpose of the school (evidenced from discussion with staff and staff questionnaire survey responses). Staff confirmed that they are consulted about policy and procedures changes and developments and given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with this documentation. The head teacher informed the inspector that information about the school's aims and purpose is given to new staff as part of the appointment procedures and parents and placing authorities are given a copy of the school's prospectus prior to any admissions.

The inspector was informed that a copy of the prospectus is sent to parents/carers and the young person prior to interview so questions can be raised. On admission, the young person is given an induction pack by his keyworker or the parent liaison.

Ten parent survey questionnaires were returned – all parents replied that that they had been given a leaflet or some other written information telling them what they need to know about the school.

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

Their key worker seeks individual young people's opinions and views about key decisions which are likely to affect their daily life and future during the regular individual sessions. Key workers also work with individual young people before the bi-annual reviews to ensure that they have the opportunity to express their views in the review process. Young people attend reviews. Young people's opinions are also sought during lounge and whole school meetings. Most parents who responded to the parent questionnaire survey agreed that they are consulted about how their child should be cared for in the school. Some parents said that they have been asked for their opinion about the way the school is running, for example, at the AGM, but others disagreed with this. Responses to the pupil questionnaire survey showed that approximately two-thirds of pupils agreed that staff do ask or sometimes ask for their opinion about the school.

The school has made arrangements in the past to support individual needs in relation to religion and language. (Evidenced from the pre-inspection questionnaire and discussion with staff and young people).

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

All parents who responded to the parent survey, except one who was unsure, indicated that they could see their child in private when they visit the school.

In discussion with care staff, the inspector found that staff know how to deal with and share information which they are given in confidence when necessary for child protection.

Young people are able to use the telephone in privacy.

Staff are given guidance, on searching children's rooms or possessions.

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?****2**

The inspector discussed with the head teacher that there should be a system in place to notify the National Care Standards Commission office in Exeter about any serious complaints against the school or the staff of the school and students should be told how they can make a complaint directly to the National Care Standards Commission (see National Minimum Standard 4.7 – 4.8).

In the pupil questionnaire survey, two-thirds of the students said that they knew how to make a complaint if they needed to. There is a suggestions box system in place for students to make a written complaint or comments if they wish. The head teacher said that he empties the box and deals with any suggestions or complaints each day.

The majority of the students said that they have not been told how they can make a complaint to the inspectors if they wanted to.

Discussion with staff and responses from the staff questionnaire survey show that all staff need to be made aware of the outside agencies they can contact if they have any complaints or concerns about the way children are being cared for at the school, as well as the internal arrangements.

Eight of the ten parents who returned the parent survey questionnaire said that they have received a leaflet or some other written information from the school about how to make a complaint. They also said that they have been told how they can make a complaint to an inspector if they need to. All parents said that they have never had to make a complaint about the school.

Number of complaints about care at the school recorded over last 12 months:

2

Number of above complaints substantiated:

1

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?

2

The head teacher informed the inspector that the local Social Services Department is in agreement with the school's child protection policy and procedures (see pre-inspection questionnaire).

The school's prospectus makes reference to the school's child protection procedures.

The school has a named child protection officer (parent liaison) who has undertaken a two day child protection training course run by the local authority Social Services Department for school child protection coordinators - (evidenced from interview with parent liaison).

The head teacher stated that care staff receive child protection awareness training during induction which also covers reporting concerns and confidentiality issues (see pre-inspection questionnaire). Group interview with five care staff confirmed that all have undertaken NSPCC foundation child protection training.

However, ancillary staff have not had any child protection training (see NMS 5.8). The head teacher and vice principal (care) informed the inspector that it is planned that all staff will undertake in-service training on child protection within the next academic year.

The school and staff have routine links with other agencies concerned with child protection, for example, placing authorities, and do not work in isolation from them.

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
<p>Incident report forms are used to report bullying incidents. One young person said that the “bullying policy” was the best thing about the school.</p> <p>Out of the 21 pupil questionnaires completed, seven students commented that what they didn’t like about living at the school was bullying. In answer to the question “are you being bullied at the school at the moment?” replies were - 10 % “yes, most of the time”, 19% “yes, often”, 24% “sometimes”, 14% “hardly ever” and 33% “not at all”. These responses indicate that bullying behaviour is, to some degree, experienced by around half of students at the school. In the questionnaires, young people described bullying they have experienced as “name calling” (8/21); “physical bullying” (3/21) and bullying about “hair colour” (1/21). One young person said in the pupil questionnaire that “the bullying” is the thing that he doesn’t like about living at the school.</p> <p>The inspector observed that measures to counteract bullying were in place and that staff took reports of incidents of bullying behaviour very seriously and were proactive in monitoring situations where they thought bullying might occur. However, the school recognises that improvements are needed in this area and some measures are currently being undertaken, for example reviewing and developing the written policy to include reporting requirements and increased staff awareness of the potential for bullying of individuals or vigilance in areas or situations where bullying may occur.</p>		
Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied		47 %

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
<p>The inspector discussed with the head teacher the new system to promptly notify the National Care Standards Commission of events detailed in NMS 7.2 and 7.6 which is being put into place.</p> <p>The school has a system in place to make the required notification under the Protection of Children Act through Devon County Council.</p> <p>Incidents are recorded on day sheets.</p> <p>Eight of the ten parents who returned the parent questionnaires said that staff are good at letting them know about things that happen with their child but one parent said that staff were “not always” good at this.</p>		
NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO NCSC DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:		
• conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children		0
• serious harm to a child		0
• serious illness or accident of a child		0
• serious incident requiring police to be called		0

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)		
The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>There is a set procedure for staff to follow when a young person is found to be absent without authority. Parents/carers, police and the placing authority are informed. The parent liaison officer is responsible for contacting parents/carers and relevant agencies if young person refuses to return to the school.</p> <p>The written records of all incidents of absence without authority for the past year were checked – it was noted that one of these reports lacked detail.</p>		
Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:		5

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

One pupil said in the pupil questionnaire that the “staff and teaching” are the things he likes best about living at the school.

In a parent questionnaire, one parent commented that “the positive attitude towards pupils” is the best thing about the school and that staff treat pupils with respect. Another said that staff are supportive “in every way.”

The inspector observed staff caring for the young people in a calm, caring, positive and professional manner at all times. Relationships between the adults and the young people were observed to be firm but relaxed. Discussion with staff and observation confirmed that staff know and understand the needs of individual young people well. Staff work hard to establish good communication with the young people and their families. Staff were observed praising young people for their achievements and helping individuals to focus positively on behaviour targets and goals.

It was clear from observation of and discussions with staff and pupils that safe, consistent and understandable boundaries for young people, in relation to acceptable behaviour, are set in all areas of the school. These boundaries are underpinned by the merit/points system used throughout the school, and expectations of behaviour for both staff and children were clearly understood.

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 uses a structured and comprehensive points system as a tool to manage behaviour. School and care staff complete a points form for each student at various times each day. A code is used to describe positive and negative behaviours and points are awarded or deducted according to the individual's behaviour at that time. The weekly points total determines the colour band the individual young person is in, which in turn determines the choice of activities available to him. Individual/personal targets are set with the young person's keyworker when the young person's care plan is discussed in "supervision" sessions. These targets are reviewed at approximately 6-monthly intervals. Progress towards achieving these targets is discussed at key group sessions on a regular basis. There is also a "red dot" sanction system in operation – the member of staff giving the "red dot" completes a form detailing the reason why the red dot is being given and a copy of this is given to the young person. The head of care informed the inspector that the use of the "red dot" system is monitored to ensure that it is used fairly and in accordance with the school's policy. It was clear from the pupil survey responses and discussions with the students that they were aware of and understood the sanctions/merit system used in the school. In the pupil survey, two-thirds of the students responded that staff were "usually ok", "quite fair" or "very fair" when they punish young people; one quarter responded that staff were "quite unfair" and the remaining two pupils who responded said that staff were "very unfair" when they punish young people. Students said that sanctions used included "red dots", restricted groups/activities, being sent to the office or to bed early or a reduction in pocket money. Half of the students said that staff do discuss behaviour and punishments with young people. Throughout the inspection visit, the inspector observed care staff and teaching staff discussing clearly with students, individually and in groups, the likely consequences of their behaviour and praising and positively reinforcing desired behaviour. The "Team Teach" method of physical intervention is used if physical restraint is required to ensure safety of an individual or others. In the pupil survey, approximately two-thirds of the students said that they have never been restrained. Responses from students who said that they had been restrained indicated that restraint was being used for appropriate reasons, for example, to prevent someone getting hurt. One response about where a restraint took place was discussed with the head teacher. Restraints log seen. Responses from the parent survey show that parents agree with the structured approach and discipline system used in the school and view it as very helpful for their child's progress.

QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Referrals to the school are made through the Devon County Council Special Educational Needs section. The county panel of head teachers of the local authority's special schools for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties considers all applications for placements to match needs and resources.

The school has a detailed admissions procedure. The inspector was told that, before an admission is agreed, the head teacher and senior staff will consider the match of the individual's needs with what the school can offer and with the needs of the current pupils; the current age range within the school and parental support and cooperation. Young people have a pupil-guided tour of the school when they attend the initial interview and are also asked separately from parents/carers if they think they would like to attend the school. Expectations of what boarding at the school can offer the young person are discussed with the young person and his parents/carers at the second meeting. The parents/carers admissions pack includes general consent forms to be completed. When an offer of a placement is made, the parent liaison officer and key worker undertake an introductory home visit if deemed necessary or appropriate. Extended family members are also welcome to visit the school, for example, grandparents of a boy due to be admitted are planning to visit the school at the weekend. Parents/carers usually accompany their son to the school on his first day to meet the allocated key worker and be shown his bedroom. Key workers ensure that each new student is given an induction pack and help them process the information over a period of time. New students are also assigned another experienced student as a "buddy" to help them settle into the school.

Pupil questionnaire responses and discussions with students confirmed this process.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

The school operates with small class sizes – on average five pupils per class – and 1:1 support is given mainly by senior care staff where required. One parent commented that the “small class sizes and outside activities” are the best things about the school.

The care staff contribute to and attend the bi-annual reviews, alongside a senior member of teaching staff. It was clear that teaching and care staff communicate well and that the points system helps them work together to identify means of encouraging each young person’s personal, social and educational development.

Children have access to books and other educational aids to assist with their education outside class time.

In the pupil questionnaires, students commented that the best thing that has happened to them whilst living at the school is the improvement in their learning and the help they have received from staff with this.

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 has a regular daily routine - some students commented, in the pupil questionnaire survey, that they liked the school routine and found it helpful. Students have two periods of free time after tea with a structured evening group activity in between. The choice of activities available to an individual is determined by weekly points he has achieved and therefore the colour group the individual has attained.

Students spend some weekends at home during term-time. Additional “bonus” weekends at home can be earned dependent on behaviour.

Parents/carers are asked to sign general consent to activities form.

In the pupil questionnaire survey, almost three –quarters of the pupils stated that the “groups”, activities or “trips” are the things they like best about living at the school.

One young person commented in the pupil questionnaire that “learning to swim” was the best thing that’s happened to him whilst living at the school. Other activities that the students said they enjoyed were going to the woods, fossil hunting, using computers, archery, ice skating and taking part in a range of sporting activities, for example, playing for the school football team.

Responses in the parent questionnaire survey show that parents view the opportunity for their child to take part in a wide range of activities as a very positive aspect of attendance at the school.

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

Students are registered with the local health centre and most are registered with the school dental and optician services. No nurses are employed at the school.

Health care appointments were noted in the daily log.

A written record of non-prescribed medicines administered is kept and checked by the medical coordinator/head of care. However, the school needs to secure and follow qualified medical, pharmaceutical or nursing advice in a written protocol on the provision of non-prescription "household" medication to children.

Prescribed medication records are maintained by the medical coordinator/parent liaison – individual sheets should be used.

Ventolin inhaler is kept in first aid box on the advice of the school doctor.

A senior residential care officer (RO) is nominated to ensure that first aid boxes are adequately stocked.

The staff development coordinator told the inspector that the majority of teaching, care and office staff have undertaken at least a one-day emergency first aid course. Five care staff confirmed to the inspector that they all hold first aid certificates.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)

Children are provided with adequate quantities of suitably prepared wholesome and nutritious food, having regard to their needs and wishes, and have the opportunity to learn to prepare their own meals. Where appropriate special dietary needs due to health, religious persuasion, racial origin or cultural background are met, including the choice of a vegetarian meal for children who wish it.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The inspector took several meals with the students including breakfast and lunches. Meal times are social occasions with the teachers and care staff sitting at the tables with the students, engaging in and encouraging dialogue. Staff were observed encouraging good table manners and appropriate behaviour through role modelling, praise and gentle reminders. Staff were also observed encouraging individual students to eat balanced meals. Limited choices were on offer but the food was plentiful, wholesome, nutritious and well presented.

In the pupil survey, approximately three-quarters of the students said that the food at the school is "very good" or "usually good". One third of the students said, in the survey questionnaire, that the food was one of the things that they liked best about living at the school.

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

Students wear their own clothing outside school time and are able to keep their clothing and personal requisites for their own exclusive use.

The school provides the young people with a basic pocket money allowance according to age. Students can earn additional pocket money through the points system or by undertaking additional chores.

Young people can spend their pocket money at weekends in Barnstaple or Bideford if they wish or they can choose to save their points to be converted into pocket money to take home at the end of term.

In the pupil questionnaire survey, 86% of students said that they are able to choose how to spend their own money.

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

One parent said in the parent questionnaire that "the way each boy's needs are looked at when deciding their individual care plan" was one of the best things about the school. Nine out of ten parents who responded to the parent questionnaire survey said that they attend meetings about their child and most said that they are listened to. All parents thought that the school was caring well for their child.

Staff who responded to the questionnaire survey all said that up-to-date placement plans are available to them for every child they work with.

Individual care risk assessments are undertaken by the Team Teach coordinator. A sample of the comprehensive individual risk assessment was seen which included the assessment of risks to the individual and others through any known or previous behaviour patterns - for example, verbal and/or physical aggression or alcohol or substance abuse - and any individual risk factors from medical, social and/or emotional needs - for example, self-harming behaviour or bullying. A separate individual off-site risk assessment is also undertaken which records likely behaviour patterns, management strategies and staffing/supervision level required.

Care staff are required to record with a signature and date that they have read these.

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?**

2

The inspector found during file checks of young persons files, entries in some records were not dated or signed and that some were recorded in pencil – for example an advocacy sheet for a review was not dated and signed.

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?**

2

Two staff files were checked – there was no evidence of qualifications, contract of employment or interview notes on one file and no references yet received for the new member of the care staff whose file was checked. The school administrator informed the inspector that she had been following this up. This new member of staff had completed a CRB form for an enhanced check but the check was not processed by the CRB. The administrator told the inspector that she checks the original qualification certificates for new staff and would, in future, employ a system which recorded which qualification certificates had been seen. The inspector was informed that any gaps in an applicant's employment history are checked at the short-listing stage.

Accident records are kept.

A record of visitors is kept.

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

One young person said that “homesickness” is the worst thing that’s happened to him whilst living at the school. Living away from home was an issue raised by 38% of the students in the pupil survey but it was also widely acknowledged by the students that attending the school was helpful to them in improving their academic and other achievements. Some students felt that they should be allowed to go home more at weekends.

All parents who responded to the parent questionnaire survey said that they are actively encouraged to visit the school and that staff are very friendly and welcoming, offering refreshments and in one case help with transport to and from the bus stop.

One parent commented that they are able to phone their son as often as they feel they need to and that staff are supportive of the contact and “really helpful”. However, one parent commented that there only being one telephone line sometimes made it difficult for them to speak to their son when they wished to. The inspector has been informed that a second telephone line has been installed.

Another parent expressed a worry about the adverse effect on their son when a lack of transport sometimes meant that they were not able to collect their son for weekend home leave.

The head teacher stated that any restrictions on contact or communication with family for any young person have been agreed by the young person’s placing authority.

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

This does not apply at present.

The Connexions career advice service is involved in Year 9 transition reviews where issues about leaving care and school begin to be considered. The school liaises with the local authority’s Social Services Department about the Pathway Plan.

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

Each student has at least one one-to-one session with their appointed key worker each half-term. Students can ask to change their key worker but the vice principal (care) said that this was rarely requested.

Comments from parents in the parent questionnaire survey about how well they think the school is caring for their child include "I am always able to contact (my son's) key worker on set nights to discuss any issues/problems relating to (my son); " staff always find time to discuss concerns and are frank and honest with opinions (and) offer suggestions to help at home too"; "we are very grateful to Marland School for giving our son the care and understanding he has needed to do so very well"; " I have always found all the staff very helpful and caring in every way they can".

A qualified family therapist from the local health authority is available to provide an individual or family counselling service to individual students and families where this need is identified in the child's placement plan and the placing authority or parent have agreed to this. (see pre-inspection questionnaire).

In the pupil questionnaire survey, 81% of students replied that staff give them good advice about keeping safe and out of danger.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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In the pupil survey questionnaire, students said that the best things about the school's buildings and grounds are the space available outside and the outdoor facilities, such as the two football pitches, skate yard and woods.

There are no young people with physical disabilities attending the school.

The school premises are not used for functions or activities that compromise or have an adverse effect on the care or privacy of the young people in the school.

A closed circuit camera used in the playground to ensure the safety of the pupils as there is a public right of way at the side of the school.

CCTV cameras are used in the upstairs corridor – one young person told the inspector that it made him feel more secure to have the cameras in the corridor as they were there for the young people's safety and to prevent thefts.

An alarm is used on one door – assessed as required in the individual risk assessment.

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**

All bedrooms are double or single except for three which have three beds in them – the vice principal (care) says that it is only occasionally that three young people would share a room. Students can choose to have a single room but the vice principal (care) said that most prefer to share. If any problems with sharing arise, then the student can request a change.

The inspector observed that all bedrooms had sufficient and suitable beds and bedding, although one young person commented to the inspector that his bed was too small. This was discussed with the head teacher and vice principal (care). Several of the students commented positively about the bedrooms in the pupil questionnaires.

The inspector was informed that the young people can use their own bedding and personalise their bedrooms if they wish. The inspector noted that this was the case in some of the bedrooms and that all the bedrooms were in good decorative order with good quality carpeting and curtains. All bedrooms have a window for natural light, seating and heating. Each young person has a lockable under-bed storage box.

There is a telephone in the upstairs hall on which young people can receive calls. There is a private telephone box downstairs from which students can make and receive private calls. In discussion, young people told the inspector that students can use their own mobile phones if they so wish. In the pupil questionnaire, most students said that they do not get any choices about furniture and how the school's bedrooms are decorated but almost one-third said that they do or sometimes do.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)

The school has sufficient baths, showers and toilets, all of good standard and suitable to meet the needs of the children. The school has appropriate changing and washing facilities for incontinent children where necessary.

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

In the pupil questionnaire survey, 43% of students said there was enough privacy when using the toilets, showers or bathrooms but 48% said there was not. Two students did not make any comment. Comments about lack of privacy from students related to the shower cubicles - concerns were expressed about the gaps at the top and bottom of the shower stalls, female members of staff entering the shower areas, reflections, and towels being taken away. The inspector discussed these concerns with the head teacher and the vice principal (care) – most of these concerns have already been addressed.

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

On-site and off-site individual risk assessments and activities risk assessments are undertaken – evidenced by inspection of records and individual and group discussion with staff.

There are written guidelines for the use of school transport and the inspector was informed that only Devon County Council approved drivers are used.

Staff are given written guidance in a “dos and don’ts” list.

In a group discussion, care staff confirmed that fire drills are regularly held at different times and that some have had training in the use of fire extinguishers.

Fire alarms are checked weekly. Electrical equipment is checked.

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Staff vacancies are advertised locally and through the Devon County Council job bulletin and web-site. A shortlist of candidates is drawn up from application forms received. Short-listed candidates are formally interviewed by a panel which includes the head teacher, vice principal (care) and parent liaison. Short – listed candidates are given an opportunity to visit the school for lunch and observe first-hand how the school operates. The vice principal (care) is responsible for staff induction. The parent liaison has responsibility for personal development and training working with the staff development coordinator.

Two staff files were checked – there was no interview notes on one file and no references yet received for the new member of the care staff whose file was checked. The school administrator informed the inspector that she had been following this up. This new member of staff had completed a CRB form for an enhanced check but the check was not processed by the CRB. This member of staff confirmed that they have not been left on their own with children. The administrator told the inspector that she checks the original qualification certificates for new staff and would, in future, employ a system which recorded which qualification certificates had been seen. The inspector was informed that any gaps in an applicant's employment history are checked at the short-listing stage.

Total number of care staff:

12

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**

In the parent questionnaires, all parents said that they thought that there are enough staff at the school to care for their child. Most parents commented that the staff “do an excellent job”.

Two members of staff sleep-in. The head teacher or one of the vice-principals provide on-call support to staff in the evenings and at weekends.

Staffing levels during the inspection visit were observed to be adequate and in discussion, care staff said that staffing levels are adequate in general.

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**

In the parent questionnaire survey, parents commented very positively on the quality of the staff at the school and the standard of care provided.

Four staff questionnaires were returned from care staff – all stated that they have received in-service training within the past twelve months, for example “Team Teach” training. Two of these staff said that they had been supported to undertake professional training whilst at the school – for example, NVQ level 3, First Aid, Child Protection, off site activity safety management and various sporting activities. Two said that they had not had the opportunity to undertake professional training and one linked this to a lack of available funds.

Induction programme detailed to the inspector was confirmed through discussion with a newly appointed member of staff.

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**

Four staff questionnaires were returned from care staff – all agreed that they are well supported in their work through supervision, training and team meetings.

However, domestic staff do not have 1:1 supervision.

The vice principal (care) has an annual performance management review with the head teacher to review objectives and set targets but the frequency of one-to-one supervision sessions does not meet NMS 30.2.

The school has a no smoking policy.

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

There are clear management structures within the school. The senior management team provides very clear and committed leadership to the staff.

In discussion, the head teacher said that the school would meet the minimum ration of 80% of care staff having completed NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People (or equivalent). The school is currently in discussion with Devon County Council about funding of NVQ level 4 requirements.

All staff who returned a staff questionnaire agreed that the school relates well with other professionals.

The staff rotas include time for supervision, staff meetings and handover sessions, planning and record keeping, spending time interacting with individual children and reviews. A care staff meeting, chaired by the vice principal (care) is held every Friday morning. This is followed by the weekend team meeting. The vice principal (care) or a senior member of staff chairs a handover briefing meeting for care staff each week day at 4 p.m.

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

35 %

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?**

3

The school is owned and funded by Devon County Council.

The head or senior members of staff, delegated by the head teacher to do so, monitor records to identify any patterns or issues requiring action, for example, separate records are kept of accidents and near misses involving students and members of staff - the core group of senior management check the records to identify any particular patterns or problem areas for which a particular risk management strategy might be needed.

The head teacher reports to the governing body on the number of accidents which have occurred as part of the overall monitoring of the management of the school.

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?**

1

Currently, there is no system of half termly visiting of the school by a governor, or a representative of the governing body, or written report on the conduct of the school produced as required under National Minimum Standards 33.1 – 33.5

The head teacher told the inspector that copies of any inspection reports by the National Care Standards Commission will be made available by the school to all members of staff, children resident at the school, parents and on request to placing authorities of existing children or those considering placing a child.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Not applicable.

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____

Date _____

Lead Inspector Romana Young **Signature** _____

Date 10 March 2004

Public reports

It should be noted that all NCSC inspection reports are public documents.

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 17 – 19 June 2003 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

We welcome this report and acknowledge its reference to the high quality care available to all boys at Marland School. The Governing Body also agree that it is a fair assessment and will monitor the "Recommended Actions" and "Advisory Recommendations". Arrangements are being put into place to meet these.

We do have an issue with "Advisory Recommendation" no. 5 which suggests all staff have one-to-one supervision each half-term. We feel this is excessive and may not be very productive. The leadership group will consider this point during the summer term. We are also confused by "AR" no. 6 because we are unsure which records it refers to – was it a pupil's or a member of staff's? – where were they located? Please advise.

A number of inaccuracies have been identified on your draft and hopefully these will be addressed.

We felt the inspection itself was very positive and we had a very good relationship with Romana Young, who was thorough and fair in her role. The major criticism about this report is the length of time it has taken to be produced. We were inspected during the week of June 17th 03 and received the draft report on January 17th 04. Had Don Burton (Vice Principal – Care) not made enquiries we may not have received it until even later. I am sure you will agree this totally unacceptable.

N. Steven Parker

Action taken by the NCSC in response to Head's comments:

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the Head

YES

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

YES

Head's comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

Note:

In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector and the Head both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 13th March, 2204 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	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Action plan was received at the point of publication	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Action plan covers all the recommended actions in a timely fashion	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Action plan did not cover all the recommended actions and required further discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Head has declined to provide an action plan	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Other: <enter details here>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO

Public reports

It should be noted that all NCSC inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to NCSC offices.

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

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

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

Or

D.3.2 I _____ of Marland School 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 _____

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