



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Whinfell School

**110 Windermere Road
Kendal
Cumbria
LA9 5EZ**

Lead Inspector
Mrs Anne Bannister

Announced Inspection
19th October 2005 09:30

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	Whinfell School
Address	110 Windermere Road Kendal Cumbria LA9 5EZ
Telephone number	01539 723322
Fax number	
Email address	
Provider Web address	www.whinfellschool.co.uk
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Whinfell School Ltd
Name of Head	Mr R D Tyson
Name of Head of Care	Mr J. McGlynn
Age range of residential pupils	11-19
Date of last welfare inspection	7 th July 04

Brief Description of the School:

Whinfell School is an independent residential school for 10 boys between the ages of 11-19. It provides education and care for boys with autistic spectrum disorder and behavioural difficulties associated with language and communication. The school operates 38 weeks per year and closes on alternate weekends, allowing pupils to spend time with their families or carers.

The school is situated on the edge of Kendal town centre and young people have access to all the facilities this presents. The school is sited in a large Victorian semi-detached house. The residential accommodation on the main site consists of 4 single and a large double bedroom all with hand washing facilities. There are separate bathing and showering facilities. The large dining room doubles up as a games room and accommodates a pool table. There is a comfortable and homely lounge to the front of the house. A separate house on the other side of Kendal provides high quality accommodation for 4 young people aged 16-19 years.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection was announced and started at 9.30am. It took place over two days. The inspector met with the two young people resident at the school to allow them the opportunity to raise issues identifying what they felt the school did well and what they felt should be changed. Questionnaires were sent to placing authorities and parents/ carers to seek their views. Records were examined and meetings took place with key managers and care staff.

What the school does well:

The school provided a small, well-maintained, homely environment in which very vulnerable young people received their education. The school had a very child centred approach to young people, assessing their individual needs and ensuring that targets for each young person were appropriately individualised. The care staff team worked hard to maintain a consistent approach in their dealing with young people. There were systems in place to ensure that young peoples opinions, and those of their families and significant others, were sought over key decisions effecting their daily life. Staff were skilled in the manner in which they were observed to promote positive behaviours by using praise and commendation to encourage appropriate social interaction.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school had addressed most of the recommendations of the July 2005 inspection and all of the recommendations of the pharmacy inspection in September 2005. In order to provide continued education and care the school had opened a post 16 unit. The school had made a significant investment in training was on line to achieve a fully qualified care staff team by the end of the year.

What they could do better:

The school should ensure that the significant work being undertaken by care staff is documented in the care section of each young persons individual care and education plan and addresses all areas specified in standard 17.5 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential special Schools. Recruitment practices should evidence all the requirements of standard 27.2 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential special Schools. The school should ensure that there is evidence that all new care staff receive fortnightly supervision for the first two terms of their appointment.

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.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

14 and 15

Promotion of good health is taken seriously and young people's welfare is safeguarded by the homes policies and procedures for administering medicines.

Young people are provided with meals that are nutritious, well prepared and they are encouraged to follow a healthy diet.

EVIDENCE:

Discussions with staff and some documented evidence indicated that young people's identified health needs were being addressed. Staff were able to detail whether they, or parents, were ensuring eye tests and dental treatment were being undertaken. This was, however, not always adequately documented.

The school had responded to the recommendations of the pharmacy inspection in September 2005 and appropriate systems were in place to ensure the safe storage and administration of medicines. Staff administering medicines had received appropriate training and staff routinely received patient advice on the medicines young people were prescribed. One young person appeared not to have had his medication reviewed for some considerable time, due mainly to inadequate communication regarding shared care between his home authority and the local health authority. There was evidence on file to indicate that the school had done all it could to try to address this issue.

The school had ensured that all staff held first aid qualifications to ensure that there was always an appropriately trained first aider at each site.

Menus viewed, and discussions with the catering manager indicated that the school ensured that healthy living was routinely promoted. The young person in the post 16 unit was being assisted; both through curriculum teaching and practical support from care staff, to develop his skills in shopping for and preparing nutritious meals.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

3,4,5,6,7,8,10,26 and 27

The relationships between staff and young people are good and create a supportive and nurturing atmosphere in which young people feel secure and comfortable. Arrangements for complaints and dealing with bullying are handled well and ensure that young people feel listened to and protected. The behaviour management systems in place work well and reward young people for positive behaviours.

EVIDENCE:

The young people's guide explained in user-friendly language how young people could complain if they were unhappy. It made it clear to them that as well as talking to staff within the school they could contact other people who did not work there but who were concerned about their welfare.

All staff spoken to had a good understanding of child protection procedures and a rolling programme of child protection training for all staff had been put into place to ensure that they had and maintained the skills to protect young people from abuse. Notifications of significant events relating to the protection of young people had been appropriately made.

A positive approach to managing young people's behaviour was central to the school's practice, with all staff being trained in the Team Teach technique of behaviour management. When physical interventions had been necessary there was clear evidence that both the young person and the staff involved had been given the opportunity to reflect on the event and to consider more positive ways of dealing with frustrations. Senior management monitored and analysed patterns of physical intervention on a half termly basis.

There was a written policy and information for young people promoting the school's anti bullying policy. A risk assessment was in place indicating the times and places bullying was most likely to occur and strategies were in place to address them.

There was clear guidance for staff in relation to young peoples rights to privacy and confidentiality, which all staff were routinely observed to put into practice.

A detailed risk assessment of the building had been undertaken and suitable safety measures were in place to ensure that the school provided young people with safe and secure accommodation. Fire drills and checks of equipment were carried out within required timescales. Checks of electrical equipment and the boiler were appropriately undertaken.

Although staff recruitment files indicated that the checks and references, which must be in place to safeguard young people, had been put into place there were no interview notes on file. The CRB checks had not been kept to enable the inspector to confirm that any disclosures, which may have been returned, had been appropriately followed through.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

12,13 and 22

Young people's involvement in education was actively promoted and encouraged. Young people were encouraged to take an active part in leisure activities. Young people routinely received individual support, physically, educationally and socially.

EVIDENCE:

All young people had individual care and education plans in place. These set out the educational targets for each young person. Teaching and care staff worked together to identify ways of encouraging each young person's educational and social achievements. However, the manner in which care staff contributed to young people's educational progress was not clearly indicated in their care plan.

A range of leisure activities were available to young people, however, the fact that young people's leisure interests were being catered for was not clearly indicated in their care plan.

The inspector observed young people receiving individualised support from staff members throughout the inspection. There was evidence that some staff had undertaken specific training in accordance with one young person's cultural needs. Each young person was allocated a key worker who they met with on a regular basis, and who liaised with other school staff, family and other professionals to ensure that young people's care needs were being appropriately addressed. Young people also had a reflection time at the end of the school day where they could consider their behaviours and achievements.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

2,9,11,17 and 20

Young people are able to move into and leave the school in a planned and caring manner. The school had systems in place for reviewing plans and targets that they are in the process of reviewing to ensure the requirements of standard 17.5 are adequately recorded. Good systems are in place to ensure young people maintained contact with their families and friends.

EVIDENCE:

Young people had a variety of ways to ensure that they influence the decisions about their lives. These included key worker sessions, which helped them prepare for and express their opinions in reviews, house meetings and daily reflection time.

Staff were observed to manage individual behaviours in a positive and kindly manner and the young people spoke positively about the support staff gave them.

Young people had their needs assessed and written individual care and education plans (ICEP's) detail how these will be met whilst they are at the school. The care part of the ICEP did not adequately provide a record of the significant work being undertaken by care staff to meet young people's assessed needs. This is a requirement of standard 17.5 and cross-references

with issues raised about inadequately documented evidence made in previous sections of this report.

All young people remained in regular contact with their families in line with their care plans and key workers ensured that the families were regularly updated on their progress. During school holidays either the head of care or head teacher provide telephone support to the young people and their families.

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):

16,21,23,24 and 25

The school has systems in place to ensure that young people are able to wear their own clothing throughout the day. Young people are encouraged to make their own choices about the purchase of personal requisites. The school provide a high standard of accommodation for young people.

EVIDENCE:

The young people resident at the time of the inspection returned home to their families on alternate weekends. Young people brought their own clothing from home. Records showed that young people received a weekly pocket money allowance, which enabled them to buy personal items and requisites.

The living accommodation was well decorated and furnished throughout both the main school and the post 16 unit, and provided a high standard of accommodation for young people. There were sufficient baths, showers and toilets for the young people. All bathrooms were lockable and ensured young peoples privacy.

The recently opened post 16 unit, separate from the main site, and on the opposite side of Kendal provided accommodation for up to 4 young people. Young people on the unit undertake the AQA award in Promoting Independence. There was 1 young person resident during the inspection and

care staff were working with his family, using both verbal, pictorial and written records of his developing skills to ensure he continued to build on these skills when on home leave.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

1,18,19,28,29,30,31,32 and 33

The school is well-managed and run efficiently- providing a safe and stable environment for the young people living there. The head of care is well supported by the head teacher in providing clear leadership throughout the school. Care staff demonstrate an awareness of their roles and responsibilities that ensures young people's assessed needs are being met.

EVIDENCE:

The school provided comprehensive details about the education and care it provided. A user friendly guide for young people and a separate guide for parents/carers advised of what it would be like to attend and live at the school. Senior managers and all other staff were very committed to providing high quality education and care for young people.

All matters that relate to general school records were seen during the course of the inspection. Accurate records of young people and staff were maintained and significant or important events were recorded on young people's files.

The school had implemented an annual appraisal scheme that ensured that all staff had personal development plans, that enables them to meet young peoples assessed needs. The school had achieved a 74% qualified care staff team and anticipated that all staff would have completed their NVQ level 3 training by the end of December.

Staff were benefiting from regular, frequent supervision. Informal daily support was a frequent occurrence and all staff spoken to felt well supported by their manager. However, new staff had not received formal supervision each fortnight for the first 2 terms as indicated in standard 30.2 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential special Schools. Staff moral was high, resulting in an enthusiastic workforce who were observed to work positively with young people to improve their quality of life.

Staff meetings were held each week and minutes seen by the inspector showed that consistency of practice and care of young people were routinely discussed.

Records showed that regular monitoring of the school and its operation had been carried out by the head of care and through independent monitoring visits by the organisation. This ensured that a healthy, safe and protective environment for young people was maintained.

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	3

STAYING SAFE	
Standard No	Score
3	3
4	3
5	3
6	3
7	3
8	3
10	3
26	3
27	2

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

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
Standard No	Score
2	3
9	4
11	3
17	2
20	3

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

MANAGEMENT	
Standard No	Score
1	3
18	3
19	3
28	3
29	3
30	2
31	3
32	3
33	3

No

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the proprietor meets the 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	17	The care component of the individual care and education plans should be revised to ensure that they clearly state the objectives; how they are to be achieved and by whom, for care staff under each heading as specified under standard 17.5 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential special Schools.	01/02/06
2	27	CRB records should be maintained until the Commission for Social Care Inspection next inspects.	01/12/05
3	27	The school should ensure that its recruitment procedures address the issues detailed in standard 27.2 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools.	01/12/05
3	30	New staff should receive formal supervision as indicated in standard 30.2 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools.	01/12/05

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