



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

Boarding School

Oundle School

The Bursar`s Office

Church Street

Oundle

Peterborough

Cambs

PE8 4EE

2nd February 2004

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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

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

The role of CSCI is to:

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

Inspection Methods & Findings

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

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

Oundle School

Tel No:

01832 277120

Address

The Bursar's Office, Church Street, Oundle, Peterborough,
Cambs, PE8 4EE

Fax No:

01832 277123

Email Address

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

Oundle School

Name of Head

Dr RD Townsend

NCSC Classification

Boarding School

Type of school

Date of last boarding welfare inspection

Date of Inspection Visit		2nd February 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Mr Patrick Toner	080461
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	Mrs Hazel Hudson-Green	
Name of NCSC Inspector	3	Mrs Mary Tagon Miss Sika Schaad	
Name of NCSC Inspector	4	Mr David Jones Mrs Maria Johnson	
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):		Mrs Carol Evans	
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Was this inspection conducted alongside an ISI or OfSTED inspection as part of a Joint Whole School Inspection?			NO
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		MR ROBERT BRIGGS	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Boarding schools are subject to inspection by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) to determine whether the welfare of children (ie 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 Boarding 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.

Inspections are carried out by the NCSC, and in most cases the inspection team includes a specialist in boarding provision working, or with experience of working, in the boarding sector. Boarding welfare inspections by NCSC may also be carried out in conjunction with a full inspection of the school by the Independent Schools Inspectorate or OfSTED, so that the two inspections together constitute a Joint Whole School Inspection of the school. In such cases, a joint summary of main findings and recommendations from both inspections will also be available.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the NCSC in respect of Oundle School.

The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

- Inspection methods used
- Key findings and evidence
- Overall ratings in relation to the standards
- Recommended Action by the school
- Advisory recommendations on boarding welfare
- Summary of the findings
- Report of the lay assessor (where relevant)
- The Head's response and proposed action plan to address findings

INSPECTION VISITS

Inspections are undertaken in line with the agreed regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Children Act 1989 as amended, with additional visits as required.

The report represents the inspector's findings from the evidence found at the specified inspection dates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

Oundle School has a 450-year history and a cherished reputation in the provision of independent education with boarding. Over the years, the school has developed a comprehensive curriculum embracing all modern subjects, with particular prominence given to science, engineering and extra-curricular activities. The School has been co-educational since 1980. In addition to boarding provision the school offers day schooling for children aged 5-11. The school has a mixture of historic and modern boarding house provision, dispersed throughout the town of Oundle. There are approximately 850 borders accommodated in 14 separate boarding houses, each with a unique identity.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The school welcomes boarders from all backgrounds and provides individual support and guidance. It was clear that boarders identified strongly both with the school and their individual house. Boarders have opportunities for social integration and to develop their individual identities. Boarders are encouraged to question and develop critical analysis skills. There are extensive opportunities to support academic, sporting and social achievements and also to be of service in the community. There are a range of extra-curricular activities, which include CCF (Combined Cadet Force), D of E (Duke of Edinburgh Award) and foreign expeditions.

Boarders spoken to during the inspection process presented as secure individuals with a good understanding of the wider social agenda beyond the school. In discussions with individual inspectors and through the boarders' questionnaires, it was clearly demonstrated boarders had a strong affection for the school and appreciated the opportunities afforded to them by the boarding experience.

A number of parents completed the parental questionnaire, including some from abroad. In general their comments mirrored those of boarders and supported the efforts of the school, one or two questioned the relevance of inspection in the context of boarding provision.

The school has clear policies relating to substance/alcohol abuse and has developed a range of monitoring systems, including random testing, with appropriate action taken should a concern be identified.

In terms of staffing the school has a high retention rate. All staff spoken to during the inspection were professional in their approach and clearly held the welfare of boarders as their highest responsibility. Staff themselves clearly valued the interpersonal relationships they had with boarders and the opportunities for growth and development they witnessed in individuals.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

As detailed in the body of this report, the inspectors have made recommendations regarding the arrangements for child protection training and monitoring. Advice was also given to review the current arrangements for recording complaints. A particular concern raised by a number of boarders and staff in one house was addressed during the inspection. The boarders' questionnaire of the whole school proved a useful method of consulting a large number of boarders. The school may wish to consider some variation of this method and adapt it for internal individual house questionnaires.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This inspection was the first time the school has been inspected against the new National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and was the first opportunity to gain an overview of the school's management structure and support systems. The inspection team included a Boarding School Professional Inspector. The whole inspection process was carried out over a period of six days and included the sampling of meals during the early morning and evening routines. The inspectors are grateful to the school for the arrangements and support provided during the inspection.

The general standard of welfare provision for boarders is regarded as high with suitable systems in place for consultation with boarders. The individual standards evidenced in the report refer both to specific observations and the general feedback from inspectors of each house inspection. A number of common themes were identified and, where appropriate, are included in this report.

It is recognised that the school has undergone a process of change over several years and during this period the threshold for child protection training throughout the school has diminished, the school itself acknowledges this and is taking appropriate action. It is normal practice for lead responsibility for child protection to rest with either the headmaster or second master. Child Protection Officers at present are not integrated with the senior management monitoring structure, nor linked with HSMs/matrons, which creates potential for child protection issues to be missed.

A significant percentage of boarders are from abroad, between 10-15% over different year groups. In general the support and welfare consideration given to these boarders is of a high standard.

During the feedback session senior staff from the school made some constructive comments regarding the inappropriateness of the boarders' questionnaire and offered to develop a more targeted methodology. The lead inspector would welcome this and will pass any comments/suggestions as practical feedback from the inspection to the children's rights director.

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 Boarding 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	BS3	<p>The school should review the current child protection system to include a review of the security of records, including separate recording for boarders and day pupils.</p> <p>Change the NCSC/CSCI telephone number to 01604 887620.</p> <p>Provide boarding sector specific child protection training for child protection officers and arrange for appropriate child protection training for all welfare staff with access to boarders, including matrons, tutors, ancillary staff, prefects and school constable.</p> <p>A senior manager in the school should take the lead on child protection matters.</p> <p>The senior manager with child protection responsibility and child protection officers should develop suitable monitoring arrangements and provide regular management information to track discipline, bullying, child protection issues and any use of restraint.</p>	17/05/04
2	BS5	<p>The school should begin to record all complaints in a bound and numbered book.</p> <p>The headmaster or a senior member of staff should review the complaints record regularly.</p> <p>When recording complaints, consideration should be given as to whether the complaint constitutes a child protection issue requiring a child protection response.</p>	17/05/04

3	BS10	The school should take action to address the concerns raised by boarders in one house, which clearly demonstrated inappropriate discrepancies in the school's principles and practices of boarding. (National Minimum Standards 10.4)	17/05/04
4	BS34	The school should ensure that all induction training is completed as detailed in National Minimum Standards 34.4 The school should ensure that all staff with boarding duties receive a regular review of their performance by a more senior member of staff as detailed in National Minimum Standards 34.5 The school should ensure opportunities are provided for training and updating in boarding practice as detailed in National Minimum Standards 34.7	17/05/04

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

Identified below are advisory recommendations on welfare matters addressed in the main body of the report and based on the National Minimum Standards, made for consideration by the school.

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation

*Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. BS10 refers to Standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS**

The following Inspection Methods have been 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 and Individuals

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Services • Fire Service • Environmental Health • DfES • School Doctor • Independent Person or Counsellor • Chair of Governors 	YES
'Tracking' individual welfare arrangements	YES
Group discussion with boarders	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Group discussion with ancillary staff	YES
Group discussion with Gap students	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Boarders' survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Invitation to parents to comment	YES
Inspection of policy / practice documents	YES
Inspection of Records	YES
Visit to Sanatorium	YES
Visits to lodgings	NO
Individual interviews with pupil(s)	YES

Date of Inspection	02/02/04
Time of Inspection	0830
Duration of Inspection (hrs.)	270
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	27

Pre-inspection information and the Head's evaluative statement, provided by the school, have also been taken into account in preparing this report.

SCHOOL INFORMATION:

AGE RANGE OF BOARDING PUPILS FROM

11

 TO

18

NUMBER OF BOARDERS (FULL TIME + WEEKLY) AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

Boys	<table border="1"><tr><td>496</td></tr></table>	496
496		
Girls	<table border="1"><tr><td>330</td></tr></table>	330
330		
Total	<table border="1"><tr><td>826</td></tr></table>	826
826		
Number of separate Boarding Houses	<table border="1"><tr><td>14</td></tr></table>	14
14		

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 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)
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"9" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not applicable.

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

WELFARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.
- Boarders are protected from bullying.
- Boarders are protected from abuse.
- Use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate.
- Boarders' complaints are appropriately responded to.
- Boarders' health is promoted.
- Safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records.

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.4)

A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The school has a comprehensive statement of boarding principles and practice available to parents, staff and boarders. During discussions with staff, boarders and gap students, there was evidence to confirm the document was widely available and clearly understood. There is a system to periodically review and update information to ensure it remains relevant to current practice.

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.6)
The school should have an effective policy on countering bullying, which is known to parents, boarders and staff and which is implemented successfully in practice.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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As part of the inspection process all boarders were given the opportunity to complete the boarders' questionnaire. The completion rate was high including all boarders under 14. The overall percentage of boarders reporting level 1 or 2 bullying was approximately 10%, however, some houses reported no incidents of bullying.

Inspectors reported that in general the school has robust systems in place to counter bullying. Where incidents of bullying were reported there was evidence of thorough investigations taking place. In discussions with welfare staff (HSMs and matrons) it was apparent that all staff had received training in anti-bullying, were familiar with the policy and reinforced the school's approach to bullying through regular discussions with boarders and in individual tutorial time. In some houses the surveys completed suggested there may be a small level of bullying, however, no boarders raised concerns in their group discussions with inspectors.

The lead inspector had discussions with the senior managers in the school and a group of prefects, which covered the school's approach to bullying. It was clear from the discussions the school's policies were clearly understood and implemented. The communication systems within individual houses should ensure that any boarder raising a concern about individual bullying or on behalf of peers is brought to the attention of HSMs and the concerns are recorded, investigated and a resolution sought. Prefects were acutely aware of their pivotal role within the house supervision structure. All prefects were clear on their responsibilities for reporting any suspicions of bullying or indeed any welfare concern to HSMs.

PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS REPORTING NEVER OR HARDLY EVER BEING BULLIED	90	%
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Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.9)
The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on child protection and response to allegations or suspicions of abuse, which is consistent with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures, and is known to staff and, as appropriate, to older boarders in positions of responsibility.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
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During the inspection, the lead inspector met with the school's nominated child protection officers and reviewed the school's policies and procedures. A number of concerns arise from this and are detailed in the recommended actions section of the report. All matters relating to the concerns were discussed with the second master, Mr Briggs, during the course of the inspection and at the formal feedback session. The school fully acknowledged the shortfalls identified and has begun to identify appropriate training.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.7)

The school should have, and follow, a fair and appropriate policy on behaviour, discipline and use of punishments, known to boarders, staff and parents.

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

During the inspection the lead inspector reviewed the school's policy on behaviour, discipline and use of punishment, this included discussions with the Proctor, Dr Keeling, and a sample check of the sanctions records. During the house inspections, inspectors met with staff and boarders separately to discuss this aspect of care. In general, the feedback from boarders and staff was positive with the systems used acknowledged as fair and appropriate. There were positive comments received from the boarders' and parents' questionnaires.

During the course of the inspection a concern was raised by a member of the inspection team with the lead inspector relating to a particular culture/personality/management style in one house, as reported by boarders. The matter was discussed with the second master, Mr Briggs, when reported to the lead inspector. The lead inspector was pleased by the open approach and recognition of concern expressed by the school's senior management. The lead inspector understands this matter was being monitored by the school and the opportunity to discuss matters has helped the school to find a resolution.

During formal feedback, this school was advised to avoid any punishments, which may involve sleep deprivation (Standard 4.4). Also to review the quality of recording of actions taken and use of punishments, including standardising recording across the school.

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.7)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on responding to complaints from boarders and parents.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****2**

During the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed the current system for managing complaints. The lead inspector offered advice and guidance to ensure the system is subject to review, systematic recording and includes all relevant management information. All complaints must be recorded in a bound book, numbered and where appropriate cross-referenced to other key information. The complaints records should be monitored monthly with staff considering whether any complaint constitutes a child protection issue.

Number of complaints, if any, received by NCSC about the school during last 12 months:

0

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.3)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on countering major risks to health, including substance abuse.

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

During the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed the health and welfare arrangements in place for the whole school. There were discussions with the school doctor, senior nurses, school counsellor and independent visitors. During discussions with the school Proctor, Dr Keeling, there was an opportunity to review the school's policy towards suspected substance abuse and under-age drinking. The school adopts a firm line to ensure the well being of individuals and all boarders. There is a system of random drug testing and in discussions, boarders were fully aware of the consequences should they break the school rules.

The lead inspector met with the head of PSHE, which is Personal and Social Health Education. The lead inspector understands there is to be a review of the PSHE committee. It was widely understood there are competing demands on the time available to boarders regarding PSHE activities, academic activities and sports activities.

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.5)

Adequate records should be kept in relation to individual boarders' health and welfare needs and issues.

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

As expected, there were some variations in the systems in use in individual houses for recording health and welfare needs and issues. Inspectors reported some good examples of record keeping, which the school was advised to adopt across all houses to achieve a consistent approach.

A number of houses had minor errors, which inspectors advised on during individual house inspections. In general the system of record keeping was seen to be safe and effective. Matrons have strong communication links with the school's medical staff and seek advice where any concerns may arise. In some houses there was evidence of academic progress being prioritised in the general welfare records.

Inspectors advised that progress in general health and welfare development, e.g. attainment and progress in PSHE (personal and social health education), should be recorded as part of their general progress. The school has an effective admissions/health-screening programme, which ensures that any allergies/intolerances or medical interventions are identified for further consideration and support.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There is clear leadership of boarding in the school.
- Crises affecting boarders' welfare are effectively managed.
- The school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.
- Boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school.
- The operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.3)

There should be clear management and leadership of the practice and development of boarding in the school.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
<p>During the inspection, the lead inspector met with senior mistress, Mrs Page, and reviewed the school's professional development committee role. There is a clear leadership of boarding in the school. The lead inspector reviewed the induction pack and discussed the induction process with Mrs Page. The system was seen to be effective and actively supported the integration of new staff with the school's ethos.</p>		
<p>It was confirmed by inspectors that the arrangements in individual houses directly supported good boarding practice. The lead inspector met with the head of school and with a group of prefects to discuss the prefect's role in relation to boarders' welfare. The prefects had a thorough grasp of the tensions, which may arise while boarding and were able to describe incidences where they had intervened to support boarders. Prefects were seen as mature, welfare orientated and had a support system in place to discuss any concerns, which may arise. As stated elsewhere in the report, the school should look to establishing effective links between the nominated child protection officers and housemasters to ensure there is a common understanding of the importance of child protection issues. Advice was given to develop a system of management information monitoring including monthly reviews of house statistics relating to bullying, sanctions and any child protection issues.</p>		

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.3)		
The school should be capable of satisfactorily managing crises affecting boarders' welfare		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
<p>The school has a comprehensive crisis management plan and an effective safety policy, both of which are subject to review. The lead inspector met with senior school staff who held responsibilities in this area. During the discussions it became clear the system had been thoroughly thought through and communication between houses and those with overall responsibility was good.</p> <p>The school has a CCF (Combined Cadet Force) and a D of E (Duke of Edinburgh Award) element. The lead inspector met with the senior staff responsible for each range of activity. There were comprehensive risk assessment processes in place for each activity and in relation to CCF the school followed the directions of the Ministry of Defence to ensure safe practice and support for boarders.</p> <p>Each area of activity is subject to external monitoring on a regular basis. The lead inspector noted the high retention rates for both areas of activity and in particular the high rate of boarders achieving silver and gold awards at D of E activities, it was noted that girls tended to persevere more with these activities and tended to achieve gold awards.</p>		

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.5)		
The organisation of boarding houses or units should operate satisfactorily and provide appropriate protection and separation of boarders by age and gender.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>As discussed elsewhere, an issue arose which clearly demonstrated that the practices in one house were out of kilter with the other houses. This was clearly seen as unjust and unfair by boarders across all age ranges. The issues raised by boarders were consistent with the boarders' questionnaires completed.</p> <p>Apart from this one issue the school was seen to operate satisfactorily and provide appropriate protection for boarders. The inspectors are grateful to the boarders for raising this concern and enabling the school to take appropriate action.</p>		

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)		
There should be an appropriate range and choice of activities for boarders outside teaching time.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
<p>During the inspection, the lead inspector had an opportunity to gain an overview of the quality and range of activities available to boarders. There are extensive opportunities for boarders to engage in passive and active activities, both as individuals and in groups. The school actively supports individual and team achievements through a wide range of structured activities, including community options and active citizenship.</p> <p>The lead inspector is aware of the competing demands on boarders' time and suggests strongly that a balance is achieved between active pursuits and the need for periods of reflection/relaxation when boarders are under academic pressures to achieve.</p>		

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.2)

Boarders have opportunity to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The system of house masters/mistresses and the support from matrons and prefects enables boarders to raise concerns at an early and informal stage. The school should consider developing a process, which allows boarders to raise concerns formally without raising anxieties about potential outcomes. There was a good example of boarders' involvement in the development of a bullying policy in one house where the boarders produced a 10 point list of 'The Way We Would Like to Be', which seems appropriate for the whole school.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.7)

Any prefect system (or equivalent) should give prefects (or equivalent) appropriate specific duties and responsibilities, with adequate staff supervision and measures to counter possible abuses of the role.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

In general, the prefect role is seen as a positive contribution to the routines of the school. Prefects may contribute to fund-raising and organising events. There is a duty system for prefects, which supports tutors and contributes to the supervision of prep and bedtime routines. All sixth and upper sixth formers have some prefect responsibilities. Inspectors reported prefects as being mature and clearly orientated towards the welfare needs of boarders and fully supportive of the school's ethos. Prefects are guided by the prefect's handbook, which is subject to review.

The lead inspector had discussions with a group of prefects, during the discussions it became apparent they had little understanding of child protection issues and while discussing a child protection scenario, gave a range of responses, some of which were detrimental to child protection procedures. The lead inspector has raised this with the second master to ensure that future child protection training is cascaded to prefects.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.6)

Each boarder should have one or more members of staff to whom he or she can turn for personal guidance or with a personal problem.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

It was confirmed in the boarders' surveys, parental questionnaires and discussions with boarders that all boarders have access to a range of trusted staff throughout the school whom they may approach for guidance. The school has a school counsellor, pastoral listeners and a tutorial system, which directly supports this standard. The lead inspector had discussions with the school chaplain who confirmed his view that boarders are appropriately supported without being overly intruded upon.

WELFARE SUPPORT TO BOARDERS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders receive first aid and health care as necessary.
- Boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill.
- Boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems.
- Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination.
- Boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families.
- Boarders' possessions and money are protected.
- New boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in.
- Boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school.
- Risk assessment and school record keeping contribute to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive good quality catering provision.
- Boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals.
- Boarders are protected from the risk of fire.
- Boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands.
- The welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school.
- Boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high-risk activities.
- Boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.14)

Appropriate first aid and minor illness treatment are available to boarders at all times, with access to medical, dental and optical services as required.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

During the inspection, the lead inspector visited the school sanatorium and met with the school doctor and senior nurses. The school has exceptionally high standards in relation to medical, dental and optical services. There is a comprehensive system of psychological and emotional support available to boarders. The school counsellor and pastoral listeners had a clear understanding of their role and the need to establish confidentiality when listening to the concerns of boarders. The school doctor confirmed that psychotropic medication is only ever initiated following a specialist psychiatric/psychological assessment.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.3)

Boarders who are ill should be regularly checked and adequately looked after by a member of staff, and be able to summon staff assistance readily and rapidly when necessary.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The school has a good system for monitoring general health, minor ailments, eating disorders and sports injuries. The sanatorium has a senior nurse and seven other nurses who provide a 24/7 service. There are five double rooms, which allow for isolation by sex, age and medical condition. The school medical records and recording system were sample checked and seemed to be of a good standard.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

Significant health and personal problems of individual boarders should be identified and managed appropriately.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

During the inspection, the lead inspector had an opportunity to discuss a number of issues with the school doctor, which had been raised by the inspection team following visits to various houses. The lead inspector discussed in detail the information available relating to an incident of potential self-harm. The school doctor was able to provide the background information and the context of the incident, including the boarder's social history, presenting psychological health problems and the actions taken by house staff and senior management. The school had acted appropriately to safeguard the welfare of the boarder and other boarders. Inspectors reported a culture of sensitivity and appropriate concern by school welfare staff and good communication links with the school medical services.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.6)

Within the school, there is no inappropriate discrimination on grounds of gender, disability, race, religion, cultural background, linguistic background, sexual orientation, or academic or sporting ability. These factors are taken into account in the care of boarders, so that care is sensitive to different needs.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

In general the school was seen to operate a non-discriminating ethos. Inspectors reported in one house a concern raised by two boarders regarding their first language, racial origins and cultural norms of behaviour. This matter formed part of a general concern raised by inspectors about welfare practices in the house. The school was seen to take immediate action to address the issue. The school has an open approach and welcomes boarders from all backgrounds, where individual needs are identified and a support system put in place in a sensitive manner.

The school values academic and sporting ability, though recognises not all boarders have the same enthusiasm for team sports and therefore supports boarders in other areas of interest. The school has a pupil support unit, which supports boarders who may encounter language/learning difficulties. The lead inspector met with the undermaster, Mr Brittain, who has responsibility for the foreign boarders. The school has approximately 10-12% of foreign boarders, though at sixth form this is 15%. The school carries out a quick placement test to ensure that any new foreign boarder does not start with a significant disadvantage and receives appropriate support.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.6) Boarders are enabled to contact their parents and families in private.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Most boarders have mobile phones and email accounts and letter writing is encouraged. Boarders do not report any restrictions on contact with parents. In addition, house staff tend to keep regular contact with parents and reassure overseas parents in particular about continuing welfare and academic progress.		

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.3) Reasonable protection is provided for boarders' personal possessions and for any boarders' money or valuables looked after by the school.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school takes the protection of personal possessions seriously and all boarders are provided with lockable facilities. The inspector for one house in particular reported some evidence of stealing from two boarders who were not aware of the availability of lockable facilities and who both shared a room, which was not lockable. This reporting is in contrast to the feedback from other house inspections where inspectors found good systems of support in place. This one incident formed part of the general concerns about practice in the house, which again school was seen to respond to when made aware of the concerns.		

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.3) There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
It is recognised that a boarder's first experience is pivotal to future successful integration and identification with the school's values. Great emphasis is placed on developing nurturing relationships with matrons and housemasters. Boarders reported to inspectors their concern that individual tutorial time maybe compromised; the school should look to ensure this valuable aspect of relationship building is maintained.		

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.4) Any guardians appointed by the school should be subject to the same recruitment checks as staff, and their care of pupils should be monitored.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school does not appoint guardians. This remains the responsibility of parents.		

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.4) The Head, or a senior member of the school's staff, regularly monitors the school's records of risk assessments, punishments, complaints and accidents, to identify any issues requiring action.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
There are established reporting systems to ensure the school is aware of any issues arising from risk management, punishments, complaints and accidents. During the inspection the lead inspector advised on developing monitoring arrangements, which may overlap with the established systems.		

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8)		
Meals should be provided to boarders, which are adequate in quantity, quality and choice, and provision is made for special dietary, medical or religious needs.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The boarders' questionnaires revealed a mixed response to questions about the quality of meals. For example, four houses shared a common dining room/common food preparation. Some boarders reported the quality of food as poor, while others boarders reported the quality of the same food as very good. In fairness, the meals sampled with boarders by inspectors were of a good quality.</p> <p>The school has a system of consultation with boarders and for reporting boarders' concerns/aspirations to catering staff. There was clear evidence via sampling of healthy and nutritious meals being available and a range of suitable snacks at key times of the day. The school recognises that individuals' tastes may change and fads will occur throughout a boarder's time at the school, e.g. some boarders may become or cease to be vegetarian. The school provides suitable foods to meet special dietary, medical or religious needs.</p>		

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.5)		
Boarders have access to drinking water in both boarding and teaching areas, and to food or the means of preparing food at reasonable times in addition to main meals.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Fresh drinking water is available throughout the school. There are arrangements in individual houses for the preparation of snacks, which are available to boarders at all reasonable times. During the school day there are a number of breaks where hot and cold snacks are available. The lead inspector was impressed with the organisation and quality of snacks available in the cloisters area during the mid-morning break.</p>		

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5)		
Boarders and boarding staff should be aware of emergency evacuation procedures from boarding accommodation. The school should comply with recommendations of the Fire Service, and should regularly carry out and record risk assessments in relation to fire, together with fire drills and any routine tests recommended by the Fire Service.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Inspectors reported boarders had a good understanding of the fire precautions in each house and regular fire drills were carried out. In one house it was noted a fire exit was blocked by the location of a loft ladder, the school responded immediately when this was brought to their attention. Inspectors noted there was no system in place to determine who would be in individual boarding houses during the day. The school should look to developing a system, which overcomes this shortfall.</p>		

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3) Schools where there are unusual or especially onerous demands on boarders ensure that these are appropriate to the boarders concerned and do not unacceptably affect boarders' welfare.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school is acutely aware of the demands on boarders' time and where possible, build into the school routines opportunities for relaxation, reflection and to be alone. Younger boarders in particular receive additional support and guidance. Inspectors reported senior boarders as being mature and able to structure their daily routines to ensure there was no detrimental effect to their individual welfare.		

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.2) The welfare of any children accommodated at the school, other than pupils, is protected.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school does not accommodate any children other than boarders.		

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6) Identifiably high-risk activities provided for boarders should be competently supervised and accompanied by adequate and appropriate safety measures.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
The lead inspector was impressed with the risk management systems in place and the general attitude of those staff with responsibility for high-risk activities. As stated elsewhere, all military and outdoor pursuit activities are undertaken by qualified staff and subject to external monitoring.		

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.5) Boarders have access to information about events in the world outside the school, and access to local facilities, which is appropriate to their age.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Newspapers and periodicals are available in each house. Boarders are encouraged and supported to be familiar with news and current affairs programmes. The school has an extensive library with easy access to a range of media, including internet access, all internet access is child-safe.		
The school is at the heart of the local community and boarding houses are located along the main streets. Boarders experience 'life in Oundle' on a daily basis as they move about the campus. The school positively promotes community service and a number of boarders directly support community care activities.		

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are adequately supervised by staff.
- Staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site.
- Boarders are adequately supervised at night.
- Boarders are looked after by staff with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.
- There are sound relationships between staff and boarders.
- Boarders' personal privacy is respected.
- There is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders.
- Boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures and there is supervision of all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.7)

The staff supervising boarders outside teaching time should be sufficient in number and deployment for the age, number and needs of boarders, and the locations and activities involved.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Each house has a number of adults and prefects available to ensure there is effective supervision. Tutors, HSMs and matrons are deployed at key times and provide a framework of support and supervision. Staffing ratios are maintained during all organised activities, based on a risk assessment framework.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

Boarders temporarily away from the school site remain under the overall responsibility of a duty member of staff, and are able to contact a member of staff in an emergency.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

There are established procedures in place for out of school activities which, ensure that a senior member of the expedition/activity remains accountable for boarders and staff welfare. The lead inspector discussed the arrangements for particular activities with a senior member of staff, all aspects of emergency planning were of a good standard.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.5) Staff should be present, and accessible to boarders as necessary, in each boarding house at night.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
There is a range of trusted staff available in each house throughout the night. There is a duty system in each house, which ensures an adult with delegated responsibilities is available and accessible to boarders.		

Standard 34 (34.1 - 34.7) All staff with boarding duties have job descriptions reflecting those duties, receive induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receive regular review of their boarding practice, with opportunities for continuing training in boarding.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>The findings of the inspectors were variable; in some houses staff had completed full induction process and had clear job descriptions reflecting their duties. There were regular reviews/supervision of boarding practice and additional training provided.</p> <p>Inspectors reported some concerns in houses where new staff had not completed induction training, in particular child protection training, and there was a lack of clarity regarding the line management of matrons and supervision of tutors. In addition, there was no evidence of supervision for domestic staff who have direct access to boarders.</p> <p>In discussions with the second master, the lead inspector suggested the school should review this aspect of the standards and build on the good practice already established in some houses. It is recognised that the school has made substantial efforts in decentralising responsibilities/accountabilities to each house. The school should ensure, however, that its core practices support the National Minimum Standards and reflect common policies and procedures across the whole school.</p>		

Standard 35 (35.1 - 35.4) All staff with boarding duties are provided with up to date written guidance on the school's boarding policies and practice.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
There is a whole school staff handbook available to boarding staff both in hard copy and electronically. The lead inspector drew attention to the complaints procedure, which seemed to relate to boarders rather than staff in the staff book companion. The school has agreed to review this matter.		

Standard 36 (36.1 - 36.4)**There are sound staff/boarder relationships.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

In general, inspectors confirmed there were sound staff/boarder relationships. The school is aware of the concerns expressed already about staff/boarder relationships in one house and has taken appropriate action. Boarders in general identify strongly with the school's ethos and value the support of trusted adults.

As one would expect in a school with 14 houses, there were varying degrees of satisfaction with staff boarder relationships between houses. Boarders' surveys are one method of gaining the views of the whole school and in one house survey 30% of the boarders reported the new housemaster as being very difficult to approach and unnecessarily restrictive. However, this was not borne out in the interviews the inspectors had with boarders. The vast majority of questionnaires confirmed there were appropriate relationships and expectations of behaviour between staff and boarders. The sixth and upper sixth form boarders in particular were able to appreciate the need for structure and established routines and felt at ease with their relationships with staff.

Standard 37 (37.1 - 37.2)**Staff supervision of boarders should avoid intruding unnecessarily on boarders' privacy.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

It was confirmed through boarders' questionnaires and the inspector's discussions with groups of boarders that the school's policy with regard to respecting privacy is upheld. Minor issues were discussed with individual housemasters during the inspection process, e.g. in one house the third year dormitory had no curtain, however, having been acknowledged as a concern about privacy the housemaster is taking action.

Standard 38 (38.1 - 38.10)**Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with boarders (as defined in the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000) includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (enhanced as appropriate), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The lead inspector met with a number of senior staff with overlapping responsibilities for recruitment and induction. The school has an effective system and ensures that all references are taken up, gaps in employment are explored in detail and all statutory checks are completed prior to newly appointed staff having direct access to boarders.

Standard 39 (39.1 - 39.4)

The school does not allow any member of staff (including ancillary staff, sessional/contract staff and volunteers) to work unsupervised with boarders unless that member of staff has been satisfactorily checked with the Criminal Records Bureau.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The school's recruitment and induction policy and procedure ensures that all staff are properly cleared through the Criminal Records Bureau before being able to supervise boarders.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation.
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion.
- Boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.
- Boarders have satisfactory provision to study.
- Boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities.
- Boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day.
- Boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas.
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.
- Boarders are suitably accommodated when ill.
- Boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered.
- Boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school.
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits.

Standard 40 (40.1 - 40.8)

Boarding Houses (including dormitories and living areas) and other accommodation provided for boarders should be appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, suitably furnished, accessible to any boarders with disabilities, and adequately maintained.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The school has a comprehensive system to respond to maintenance repair and refurbishment. The lead inspector visited the Wharf and met with the Clerk of Works, Mr Potter, who was able to evidence the procedures for responding to any maintenance issues.

Inspectors' feedback from house inspections confirmed that in general, standards in the school are high, particularly where new accommodation has been provided. Some boarders did express concern to inspectors about the size of individual beds. This matter was discussed by the lead inspector with Mr Tyldesley, Estates Bursar, for resolution. The school commissions a particular style of bed, which is robust and suitable for boarders.

Standard 41 (41.1 - 41.8)

Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of those boarders designated to use it, and protected by access by the public.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The school sees the security of boarder accommodation as high priority and is piloting a system to increase safe access to houses. The system is in place in two houses at present and the school has set a review date to consider its effectiveness. The current system in use in other houses was seen to be effective. In addition, the school constable may monitor houses during the evening period.

Standard 42 (42.1 - 42.14) Sleeping accommodation is suitably furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of boarders accommodated, with appropriate separation between genders, age groups and from accommodation for adults.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school provides suitable accommodation for all age groups with appropriate separation by gender. Adult accommodation is separate from boarders and not accessible to them. In the older year groups' accommodation tends to be in shared rooms rather than dormitories, with a number of individual rooms available in the new accommodation blocks.		

Standard 43 (43.1 - 43.2) Suitable facilities for both organised and private study are available to boarders.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
In each boarding house there are suitable arrangements for private study. Boarders were seen to respect the function of prep areas and give due consideration to others trying to study. In each boarding house there are social spaces, which allow for group study or social events/meetings.		

Standard 44 (44.1 - 44.10) Adequate toilet and washing facilities are readily accessible to boarders, with appropriate privacy.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school provides adequate toilet and washing facilities, which are readily accessible to boarders. The school has a mixture of old and new buildings and has a planned programme of upgrading. Where inspectors made comments in individual house inspections, the housemasters were already aware of the issues raised and upgrading of showers and toilet facilities was already in hand.		

Standard 45 (45.1 - 45.3) Suitable changing provision is provided for use by day.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
There are suitable arrangements in place where boarders may need to change, e.g. for sports activities during the day, which does not necessitate using their bedrooms. There are arrangements in place to ensure changing facilities are not used by boarders of different gender/significant age difference or adults simultaneously.		

Standard 46 (46.1 - 46.6) Boarders have access to a range and choice of safe recreational areas, both indoors and outdoors.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
The school has an extensive range of recreational facilities available to boarders. During the inspection, the lead inspector visited the armoury and reviewed the arrangements in place for safe practice. All outdoor recreational facilities are risk assessed and where appropriate safety staff are deployed, e.g. during sports activities there are suitable first aid arrangements at the site.		

Standard 47 (47.1 - 47.9)

Indoor and outdoor areas used by, or accessible to, boarders should be free from reasonably avoidable safety hazards.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

During the inspection, the lead inspector met with the school's health and safety officers, estates bursar, clerk of works and maintenance staff. The lead inspector visited the maintenance workshops and held discussions regarding the system for refurbishment, repair and renewal. The school has a proactive approach to hazard identification/reduction. The school has an extensive support workforce, which includes carpenters, plumbers, electricians, painters and decorators and groundsmen. There is an effective system for accessing the support workforce, which ensures that the overall physical standards of the school remain high.

Standard 48 (48.1 - 48.4)

Suitable accommodation should be available for the separate care of boarders who are ill.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The school has suitable arrangements for the separate care of boarders who are ill. Short illness may be managed within the house system or referral to the sanatorium. Early assessment and medical intervention ensures that boarders are referred to primary healthcare services in a timely manner.

Standard 49 (49.1 - 49.3)

Adequate laundry provision is made for boarders' clothing and bedding.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The school has suitable arrangements for laundry, including an external contract for clean linen. Where boarders require a quick turn around of personal laundry, this is facilitated through the matron's role. Older boarders may take responsibility for their own clothing as appropriate.

Standard 50 (50.1 - 50.2)

Boarders are able to obtain minor necessary personal and stationery items while accommodated at school.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

There are suitable arrangements in place to ensure all boarders have access to stationery and any personal requisites. The school in large part encompasses the town of Oundle and there is a range of suitable high street outlets.

Standard 51 (51.1 - 51.11)

Any lodgings arranged by the school to accommodate pupils provide satisfactory accommodation and supervision, are checked by the school before use, and are monitored by the school during use.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The school does not operate lodgings. All boarders are accommodates in school property.

Standard 52 (52.1 - 52.8)

Any off-site short-stay accommodation arranged by the school for any of its boarders provides satisfactory accommodation and supervision, is checked by the school before use (although this may not be feasible when accommodation is in private households), and is monitored by the school during use.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The school has suitable arrangements to ensure any short stay accommodation used is satisfactory.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Empty box for Lay Assessor's Summary.

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____

Date _____

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 2nd February 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments were received from the Head	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head's comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 the 28-day date of the covering letter, 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"/>
Action plan was received at the point of publication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action plan covers all the recommended actions in a timely fashion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action plan did not cover all the recommended actions and required further discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head has declined to provide an action plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: <enter details here>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

D.3.1 I Dr R D Townsend of Oundle 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 _____

Provider's comments and Action Plan are available at the Area Office where these have been submitted.