



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

Boarding School

Bishops Stortford College

10 Maze Green Road

Bishops Stortford

Hertfordshire

CM23 2PJ

5th, 25th and 26th 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

Bishops Stortford College

Address

10 Maze Green Road, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire,
CM23 2PJ

Tel No:

01279 838575

Fax No:

01279 836570

Email Address

www.bishops-stortford-college.herts.sch.uk

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

Mr John Trotman

Name of Head

Mr John Trotman

NCSC Classification

Boarding School

Type of school

Independent

Date of last boarding welfare inspection

28. 09. 1998.

Date of Inspection Visit		5 th 25 th and 26 th February 2004		ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		9:00 am		
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Jan Sheppard (5 th 25 th 26 th February)	076666	
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	Pippa Quinn (25 th and 26 th February)		
Name of NCSC Inspector	3	Tom Cooper (5 th and 25 th February)		
Name of NCSC Inspector	4			
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):		None present		
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.		None present		
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 John G Trotman Headmaster and Mr Chris Woodhouse Deputy Head/ Head of Boarding		

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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 (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 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 Bishops Stortford College.

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.

Bishops Stortford College offers an education to both boys and girls aged from 4 to 18 years on a boarding and day basis. This report is concerned with the welfare of the boarding pupils only.

The school is situated on the edge of Bishops Stortford where it occupies a green site of some 130 acres. The original buildings, which are Victorian, include the chapel and three of the four boarding houses. Boarding is offered for 7 to 18 year olds, currently there are some 187 boarders living in four houses. Boarding is offered on a full time, day and the increasingly popular, flexi basis. The senior girls are accommodated in a new building, Young House, which was purpose designed and is fully wheelchair accessible. The two houses for senior boys, Robert Pearce and School House, are older buildings that have been renovated to provide adequate boarding facilities. Grimwade House also an older building accommodates the junior boarders.

Administrative and service buildings, classrooms, the library and the dining hall are situated at various locations around the campus. There are extensive sports areas in the grounds with pitches and courts for a wide variety of both summer and winter activities. A newly built swimming pool of very modern design complements the others sports hall accommodation. All these facilities are interspersed with mature well maintained gardens complete with a variety of sculptures and other interesting garden design features, which provide a number of sitting areas where students may relax.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The pastoral care system at Bishops Stortford College appears to be functioning well, the students told the inspectors, and it was stated in the pre-inspection questionnaires, that they enjoyed boarding as they could be with their friends and that the staff were very kind and helpful. A friendly and welcoming atmosphere was noted in the boarding houses, which were, all in their different ways, very homely. It was noticeable that the boarders showed good ownership and a very responsible attitude towards the good maintenance of their boarding accommodation and the fabric of the buildings. The schools approach to the inspection was open and honest; the pupils were encouraged to speak to the inspectors individually and the issues they raised corresponded with comments in the questionnaires. Almost all the boarders completed a pre-inspection questionnaire and it was evident that they were clearly well used to being consulted in giving their opinions and having them listened to.

The students confirmed that bullying is not an issue in the school and that if concerns are raised that they are dealt with.

Child protection procedures are a major element of staff induction and training .The older students, the GAP students and ancillary staff also receive awareness training about child protection.

The school has adequate sanatorium facilities, which are staffed by two nurses working to the schools doctor who visits regularly to treat and monitor the pupils health.

Parents who returned the Questionnaire sent out by the National Care Standards Commission spoke highly of the school its staff team and the care that was afforded to their children.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The areas of school life that could be improved for pupils have already been identified by the school and are being addressed. These include the continued improvement to the catering arrangements and the improvement in the boys boarding house provision which is currently in older buildings.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This initial inspection under the National Minimum Standards was an extremely positive one. The school demonstrated an acute awareness of the welfare needs of the pupils and strives to balance them carefully taking into account minority needs as well as those of the larger groups.

All the staff knew about the standards and together with the deputy Head /head of boarding had done a lot of detailed work in preparing documentation required for this inspection. When the inspectors met with the staff team they all had evidence to demonstrate how the standards were being met. A flexible attitude with a “can-do” approach was demonstrated by the staff who clearly worked well together as a team and were very dedicated to their work. The school has a programme of refurbishment and rebuilding to ensure that the physical environment for both pupils and staff is continually being improved.

The inspectors would like to thank the Headmaster and his team for their hospitality and for the careful comprehensive arrangements that had been put into place to enable this inspection to run so smoothly. The students were polite helpful and honest and the staff were incredibly helpful and went out of their way to accommodate the inspectors despite the disruption to the routine of lessons and activities that the inspection inevitably caused. The inspectors thoroughly enjoyed their visit to the school and look forward to seeing the ongoing improvements that will be made to the environment and to the running of the school.

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	
		There were none	

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	BS26	The school is advised to give extra attention to the Fire Risks associated with the wedging open of fire doors and the possible lack of cover of fire bells in some dormitory areas.
2	BS22	The school may wish to prepare a document highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of Guardians and circulate this to parents who need to appoint a guardian for their child, in an advisory capacity.

*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	NA
Individual interviews with pupil(s)	YES

Date of Inspection	05/02/04
Time of Inspection	9.00
Duration of Inspection (hrs.)	61
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	6

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

**FRO
M**

8

TO

18

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

Boys	114
Girls	70
Total	184
Number of separate Boarding Houses	4

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)
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"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's principles and practice concerning boarding are covered in the new Prospectus and in the boarding pamphlet entitled "The Best of Both Worlds". These newly revised documents were sent to all parents in October 2003 and are also available on the schools website for current and prospective parents. The information is also incorporated into the new booklet, "Principles of Boarding Practice 2004" available on the notice boards in the staff rooms and in the boarding houses for the perusal of staff and pupils. Details of the schools policies and practice documents are published in the student diaries. All students are expected to carry their diary, which is newly issued to them at the beginning of each academic year. All the principles and practice documents are subject to regular review and revision.

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?	4
<p>There is a comprehensive anti- bullying policy in place, which recognises the various forms which bullying may take. This Policy is outlined in the student diaries and this with the Anti-Bullying Statement is available in written form for the staff and parents and can also be accessed on the web. The school carries out surveys of the pupils concerning bullying .The deputy head reported that the last of these revealed a low level of concern amongst the students and these related to verbal rather than to physical abuse. During the inspection many of the students spoke openly and without any prompting to the inspectors about this subject and indicated that they regarded stamping out any bullying that may occur as a role for them and not just a matter to be left for the staff to deal with alone. There is a formal procedure of support available to all parties who have been involved in a bullying incident which includes help from House masters/mistresses, the Chaplain, the Counsellor, Prefects Monitors and all the teaching staff.</p> <p>The pre-inspection questionnaires reflected that the students knew who to talk to if they had concerns and identified that bullying is not a major issue with in the school.</p>		
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS REPORTING NEVER OR HARDLY EVER BEING BULLIED	96	%

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?**

3

The school has the appropriate policies and procedures concerning child protection which were developed in accordance with the DH and DfES publication “ Working together to Safeguard Children” and with the Hertfordshire County Council Child Protection Committee Procedures. This policy is available in the Boarding Handbook and was revised and updated earlier in 2004. All staff have received training about this policy and the procedures that they are required to follow. The teaching staff undertook a whole day training session run by the Hertfordshire County Councils Children, School and Families Department in April 2003 and the Maintenance, Ancillary and Domestic staff received training and special documentation in a meeting held earlier in the year (2004). The school has two named and designated members of staff, one for the junior and the other for the senior school, to whom concerns about any child protection issues should be addressed. These designated persons have received training appropriate for this role. All students entering the upper 6th form receive training on this subject as part of their 2 days Leadership Training Course. Prefects and GAP students are also made aware of their special responsibilities to the child protection officers if they have any suspicions or concerns. There have been no incidents of abuse concerning boarding students and two alleged incidents concerning day students, which were appropriately handled and investigated by the school and Social Services Department, were discussed with the inspectors. During group discussions with the inspectors several staff commented how beneficial they had found their training day and how they now felt confident as to the procedures they should follow if abuse was found or suspected.

The schools policy for Missing Pupils was known to the staff and is published in the Handbook of Boarding. The written record relating to one pupil (incident November 2003) was discussed with the inspectors and seen to have been correctly carried out.

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?**

4

The schools policy on behaviour, discipline and use of punishments is published and placed on the house notice boards and is available on the web site. It is planned that this will also be incorporated into the students diaries for the next academic year. A rewards and sanctions policy is in place and this seemed to be well known to the students and a system of challenge is in place should they feel unfairly treated. Several pupils were seen to receive rewards during the junior school assembly attended by one inspector. Two junior pupils complained to the inspector that the punishments given for “silly little mistakes” were, they thought, sometimes too harsh although both agreed that a system of sanctions was needed for “ really bad things”. The inspectors observed that the expectations of behaviour and discipline were made clear by all the staff and especially by the House Masters and Mistresses and that responsibility for the good standard of behaviour observed was owned by all the students what ever their ages. The prefects responsibilities in respect of discipline are stated in the Handbook of Boarding Practice. A punishment book is held in each house and the records scrutinised in one house were seen to be kept with appropriate detail. The school has a policy on Physical Restraint, which is published in the Policies Handbook. There have been no incidents of physical restraint since the last inspection.

Throughout this inspection the ownership of the students to the maintenance of their collective good behaviour and their responsibility in maintaining the good physical standards of the school was most noticeable and is to be commended.

In the junior house one pupil said “ this is a very nice house and we have to try hard to keep it so and in the senior boys common room during group discussion with the inspectors one student commented that he recognised how lucky he was to be-able to have all the opportunities that the school had to offer and it was his responsibility to behave well to maintain this

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?**

3

The schools Complaints policy is published in the Policies Handbook, which is available to the students and their parents and is on the web site. This clearly states how the complaint will be dealt with. Parents and students are encouraged to contact a member of staff first and the Head said that this is usually what happens. This proactive approach by the school ensures that concerns are dealt with at an early stage and this prevents the issue escalating. Information concerning the N.C.S.C. and how to contact them was seen to be advertised on the House notice boards.

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

The schools policies on Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking are in the policies handbook and are also available in the students diaries. Education concerning these is given to all students during their personal social and health education (PSHE) course undertaken during years 9 and 10. In addition the school has links with other agencies that provide visiting expert speakers to give extra training to underline these courses.

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

Comprehensive health records are kept in the Medical Centre with other need to know medical information kept in the Housemaster's or Housemistress' office in a secure filing system so that it can be quickly accessed at any time if required. This medical information is initially sought from the parent when the student enters the school and is then regularly updated. This includes details of the students consenting adult and contact and emergency number details. A medical file is kept in the staff common room where information concerning special medical needs or notable conditions is kept. Again the purpose of this is to enable ready access. Details of students allergies are available in the staff rooms and in the dining halls and Epipens are kept in the dining hall, Junior school and medical centre. Many of the senior students with strong allergies will carry their own pens with them. The staff commented that the diverse number of locations where this information is kept, and the duplication of it, has been developed to meet the need for quick and easy access to it from all points of the campus.

Information concerning students personal matters are held securely by the Headmaster and House master/mistresses and are disseminated strictly on a need to know basis only.

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?

3

The inspectors observed that there was strong leadership and clearly defined communication pathways for the management and leadership of the boarding service in this school. The Deputy Headmaster is also head of boarding and he meets daily with the Head (sometimes more than once a day) to discuss any boarding issues. A three weekly formal meeting between the house masters/ mistresses, the Head and Deputy Head is held and in addition these have daily contact at breakfast and tea-times which ensures that breaking issues can be dealt with promptly. The Headmaster meets regularly with the Chair of Governors and also makes a full report on any boarding issues to the Governors for their meeting each term. A fuller report is made to the Local Committee of the Governing Council at their termly meeting, so that they are in a position to monitor welfare provision within the school. The senior boarding staff are well experienced teachers (graduates with PGCE qualifications) who are also very experienced in the management and practice of boarding welfare. Individual staff have been working in this field for some thirteen, fifteen and twenty years. Several of the less experienced and younger staff are currently training with the Boarding Schools Association for a qualification in boarding welfare.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.3)

The school should be capable of satisfactorily managing crises affecting boarders' welfare

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Outline Crises Management document that is compiled and published from the Bursar's office is distributed to all the senior staff on a need to know basis. All major foreseeable incidents have been identified with appropriate responses, who should be where, who is to do what and guidance in dealing with the media. The welfare of the pupils is the major determining factor in the schools response to a crisis.

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?**

3

The school has four boarding houses comprising one mixed house for the junior school pupils 7-13 years and three senior school houses, two male and one female, for 13 to 18 year olds. All four were visited during this inspection and were observed each to have their individual character but that all were homely and had welcoming environments which were owned and valued by the students as their own place with which they strongly identified. The junior house and the houses for the boys are older buildings, which have been renovated to their present purpose and provide dormitories, some single rooms, bath and shower rooms, small kitchens and a variety of common and sitting room areas. The girls house is a new purpose designed building which provides the same facilities. All the boarding houses were clean, well appointed with attractive soft furnishings and a good range of user-friendly furniture and were seen to be well maintained. Investment, improvements and repair is ongoing throughout all the boarding houses in order as was explained to the inspector to provide the best possible accommodation for the students. None of the students spoken with were unhappy with their dormitory or bedroom accommodation although the responses from one or two of the parents expressed their disquiet as to the discrepancy in the appearance of the new purpose built girls house with the much older renovated boys house that has a much more old fashioned appearance. However the boys in this house spoken with as a group, without exception, said that they did not want their house modernised and made less communal for they liked it as it was. Sleeping areas, recreational areas and toilet and bathroom provision is provided in the senior houses so as to give reasonable separation for the boarders of significantly different ages. The junior house, a completely separate building, also provides a similar level of separation.

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?**

3

Organised extra-curricular activities take place during every afternoon (these are included as 'Activities' in the timetable twice a week, but this does not include Games, which takes place on 4 afternoons per week. In addition to this, there are Activities between 5.00 pm and 6.00 pm every day). All the students spoke very positively about these facilities and activities. Several flexi boarders told the inspectors that they choose to board on certain days so that they could avail themselves of particular activities. Others grumbled that their new swimming pool was not available for their use for all of the times that they would have liked while several pupils met the inspector at 7am having completed their early morning swimming activity known as the "80 club". Pupils are also involved with activities for the Duke of Edinburgh awards, inter House and inter School quizzes, Debates and raising money for a variety of Charities. Weekend activities are organised particularly for the group of students who are not able to take the home visiting weekends to see their families. The internet facilities that are available to the students have the necessary safeguards to counter the risks associated with access to inappropriate material.

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**

A number of opportunities exist for the boarders to have input into the way that their boarding houses and the boarding service is run. All the Houses have regular student meetings, surveys and questionnaires are undertaken, (most recently done in November 2003), and various committees and project groups, the Dining Hall committee and the Theatre rep groups were mentioned as giving good opportunity for the students to have their say. Staff explained that it was following suggestions made by the students that a number of recent changes had been authorised including the 6th form access to the town during the lunch periods and the rules relating to swim wear.

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**

The school demonstrated a strong ethos towards enabling all the students to take on extra responsibilities and leadership roles. A leadership training course is taken by students during year 8, the end of junior school, and again before entering the 6th form. A system of Prefects, Heads of House and Monitors is in operation. The heads of House and Monitors are appointed following interviews by the Housemasters/ Housemistresses whilst the Headmaster interviews and appoints the Prefects. There are clearly defined job descriptions for all of these roles, which do not substitute inappropriately for the staff. Appropriate training and an induction is given to students who are new to their role, this includes tuition as to how to recognise and respond to any bullying or abusive behaviour. Any sanctions given by prefects have to be recorded and the reason for them discussed with a member of staff. The prefects and the Head Boy and Girl have a weekly meeting with the Head and Deputy Headmaster.

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

There is an established network in place to support pupils with matters of personal guidance and problems this network being both formal and informal. All pupils have their House Master/Mistress to turn to, also the Juniors have a form teacher and each pupil above year 9 also has a personal tutor. Pupils meet with their personal tutors once or twice a week. The school Chaplain is also available as are the school counsellor and an independent listener. Information as to how to contact these was seen to be advertised on the house and common room notice boards. Students asked by the inspectors all seemed quite clear to whom they could turn. In the junior house it was observed that matron was a very significant helper and confidant to the younger pupils. It was noticeable that most pupils asked also said that they would discuss with their parents or an older sibling as well. This statement perhaps reflecting the strong family ties that the school encourages. Most of the boarders do so either weekly or on a flexi arrangement and over forty percent of the pupils have siblings also at the school.

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?

3

All the pupils are registered with the school Doctor and a surgery is held in the school twice a week although other appointments are available at short notice if needed. A choice of male and female Doctor is available. Two nurses are employed in the medical centre and they consult with the school Doctor for professional guidance. A Dentist is available for regular and emergency appointments and a range of Optical services are available in the local town. Junior pupils are always accompanied when being seen by the Doctor or Dentist but senior pupils are given a choice. A member of staff will always accompany any pupil who needs to visit A&E. Medicines held for and administered to students were seen to be properly stored and recorded. An appropriate risk assessment and procedure is in place for any pupil who self administers their own medication, (usually only sixth form pupils do so). They would be provided with an appropriately secure facility in which to keep their medicines. There is a clear procedure for dealing with accidents to pupils along with guidance for managing other emergencies such as asthma attacks or seizures. Homely medicines have been defined by the school and the Doctor, there are just three products so defined, and records are kept when these are given out.

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

Boarders who are ill are cared for in the medical centre by the nurses where they received continuous twenty-four hour supervision. Parents are always informed as a matter of priority if their child becomes ill and it is increasingly the practice that many children who live in the vicinity choose to go home to be cared for if they become ill. Boarders are able to summon attention during the night from staff that sleeps in the houses, housemasters, housemistresses, and a call bell system are available in the junior house dormitory.

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

There is a robust system for supporting pupils with specific health needs. This procedure is established through maintaining close links with parents and the doctor to implement agreed health care plans and where appropriate through consultation with the student also. At the time of this inspection there were no pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs and neither were there any reports of bedwetting. The school has two appropriately qualified teachers who support pupils where specific learning difficulties are identified with individual lessons or other support that is seen to be appropriate to meet their individual needs. The school has guidelines for the care of asthmatic pupils, some of whom will carry inhalers, and also for the administration and use of Epipens for those with severe allergies. Pupils with these conditions are allowed to be off- games where their health condition indicates the need for this. This decision is made by the House parent in consultation with the pupil and maybe their parent and doctor. All pupils but especially the boarders are supported sensitively through times of personal stress by the House parents or staff of their choosing. The school has good professional working relations with other services e.g. social work, psychology etc. who will be brought in to meet specific pupil need. One of the House Mistresses is currently researching a Bereavement Policy that will be introduced by the school.

During this inspection a very sensitive and caring approach was seen to be available to two sibling pupils in the junior house who had experienced a recent family loss and upheaval. The pupil spoke to the inspector of the kindness being shown to her by the House Mistress and how they together were helping to support her older sibling. " I couldn't manage with out Mrs. X at the moment. I can talk to her, " was the comment made to the inspector.

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**

The school has a policy and ethos that ensures that equal opportunities are promoted for all its students. Boarding contains a diverse mix of different races, religions and linguistic backgrounds. There are policies for Race Relations, Disability and Equal Opportunities, which are available for students and their parents. New borders from ethnic minority groups or those who have parents living in distant places are given special help and support with the settling in processes at the school. A reception is organised for Overseas Pupils during the first week of the school year, which serves as a point for information gathering as well as a social event. A staff member has been assigned to give support to the group of Chinese students who may not be able to go home or to spend time with their guardians during the weekend leave periods. They join together as a group in one of the boarding houses go on special outings and enjoy cooking their own food and just spending time together with their fellow country people.

Special diets are catered for by the kitchen staff and students were not singled out because of their individual needs and preferences. In fact their dietary diversity was being used as a way of introducing new dishes and special food theme nights, which were clearly appreciated by all the students.

Specific help is available from a specialist teacher for pupils for whom English is their second language. Pupils are prepared for the appropriate qualification the IGCSE examination, which will enable them to qualify for a British university.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.6)**Boarders are enabled to contact their parents and families in private.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

All the boarding houses have a payphone where students can make private phone calls. Students opinions differed as to how private these phones really were and several complaints were voiced about the position of the payphone attached to the girls house, which was said to be very cold and not conducive to making friendly phone calls. The pay phone in the Junior House was said to be very well used by the younger boarders to maintain frequent contact with their families. During the inspection one pupil explained to the inspector that she needed to phone her grandmother to discuss her essay. Most of the boarders in the senior school have their own personal mobile phones.

Email facilities are available in the ICT centre and the Head said that the school is looking for a safe way to extend this provision to the individual boarding houses as well a method that will ensure that adequate monitoring and supervision can be given is being researched. Letters written by pupils are not censored. The school maintains very regular contact with parents and guardians via a system of information letters sent regularly several times each term. Questionnaires received from relatives by the inspector confirmed that they were kept very frequently informed on a regular basis. Parents and Guardians are free to visit the school and many do so quite regularly. Telephone numbers for Help lines outside of the schools auspices are available in the student Diaries.

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

Each pupil is provided with a lockable space in their room for the safe keeping of their property. Bedrooms for the senior pupils are lockable. In the junior house each pupil has a locker. There are suitable arrangements in place for the safekeeping of cash and other valuables in the boarding houses and appropriate records were seen to be kept. A House Bank system is operated with records kept in every house. Matron and the House Master has access to a safe for valuables for which a log-in and log-out system operates.

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

The school has a policy and procedure for the proper introduction of new boarders into the school. An introductory Handbook is sent to all new pupils and their parents before they arrive in which the daily and introductory routines are outlined. All new boarders are given a "shadow" pupil to assist them during this settling in period. A Tea Party is organised for new pupils and their parents before the start of the first term, which provides an opportunity for the parents to ask questions get to know the staff and for the staff to get to know the parent and to learn something of the pupils background.

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?**

2

The school does not appoint guardians. Parents are responsible for the arrangements of Guardians if needed for their children. The Headmaster discussed with the Inspectors some areas of concern as to the quality of the service some guardians were providing that had recently come to his attention. The school may wish to prepare a document highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of guardians and circulate this to parents in an advisory capacity.

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

The Bursar who is the Health and Safety Officer for the school has responsibility for monitoring the schools record of risk assessments and accidents Punishments are monitored by the House Master /Mistresses working with the master who has the Lead responsibility for discipline within the school. Any unusual concentration of punishments is investigated by him. Complaints are monitored by the Headmaster. The school has a Health and Safety Committee that meets every term and is chaired by the Bursar. This group reviews and updates the risk assessments and considers what lessons should be learnt following any accidents that have occurred in the school. An annual audit visit is made of the schools health and safety procedures by Health and Safety Consultants who are bought in by the Bursar. During this inspection an Environmental Security Audit was also taking place. The Security Officers, who all wore distinctive uniforms with appropriate badges, were reported to be very impressed at the number of occasions they were challenged by the pupils and asked if they had permission to be within the private area of the school. This they felt demonstrated the very good awareness that the pupils had of the need for security of the school buildings and of the need for their own personal security.

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

Boarders meals are provided in the schools large dining hall where staff and pupils eat together. At lunch times when over 1000 meals are taken each day, meals are staggered by pupil year groups but it was seen that there was sufficient space available so that there did not have to be any undue pressure to vacate the dining room. A very wide choice of hot and cold food is provided for each meal encompassing every dietary requirement. Almost without exception all the pupils consulted said that since the recent appointment of a new catering manager that the meals had much improved and that they felt that their comments and requests were now being listened to. The Dining Hall committee that is made up of representatives from the school regularly canvasses the views of pupils and others, and liaison with Junior Boarders on this issue is undertaken by the Housemistress, who discusses this with pupils and with the Bursar regularly. The weekly menus were seen to be displayed in the dining hall and are on the web site. These menus are formulated following a healthy eating format. The school engages a Catering Consultant who makes regular inspections of the kitchens and food provision. During the course of this inspection several meals were taken in the dining room by the inspectors. These were found to be appetising meals and to be served at the right temperature. The dining areas and the cutlery were found to be clean.

In the individual Boarding Houses small kitchens are available where students can make drinks and snacks and appropriate provisions were seen to be replenished daily .The students even those in the junior house that only use these under supervision, clearly appreciated having such facilities available to them.

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

Drinking water is available 24 hours a day in all of the boarding houses and from three other drinking fountains sited around the campus. The small kitchens in the boarding houses also provide water and are equipped with cookers and microwave ovens, fridges, toaster, kettles and some houses also have a sandwich maker. Bread, milk, biscuits, pastries and fruit are regularly provided for these areas, which were seen to be clean and tidy. It was noted that especially in the senior houses there is an expectation that the pupils maintain the good order and cleanliness in these areas. A wide variety of jams and spreads were seen to be available as well as a selection of drinks to meet the individual tastes and requirements of the students. Tuck boxes are permitted after prep (6.45 pm) and a tuck shop opens on Saturday nights. A general Tuck Shop and a Sixth Form Tuck Shop are open 6 days per week in the Senior School.

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?**

2

The procedure to be implemented in the case of fire is posted prominently in each boarding house, and fire drills are carried out regularly at least one per term per house. A recent drill carried out at night in one of the boys houses had failed to rouse one sleeping student. To prevent a re-occurrence the school had sought advice from a Fire Consultant who makes annual fire inspections of the premises, which he knows well. Louder bells in different positions are being fitted to try to combat this problem and re-awareness training for all pupils had taken place. Records of fire drills and the roll call at each are held, and fire safety equipment is tested. The inspectors noted that in some of the boarding houses many of the fire doors were held open by wedges during the day when staff were present. Staff explained that this practice had been sanctioned by the visiting fire consultant as appropriate during the day times only, but no written verification of this was available for inspection although risk assessments are completed for this area. Because the Hertfordshire Fire Service has not made an inspection of the fire precaution arrangements in the boarding areas for many years the school has employed their own Fire Consultant who makes regular inspections and responds to requests for advice and gives fire awareness talks to staff and students. The students of all ages appeared to have a very keen awareness of the risk of fire. In the junior boarding house one young pupil explained in great detail to the inspector what her routine would be in the event of a fire during the night. Several of the older male students in another of the boarding houses explained how the house Master was always reminding them that their building because of its age and construction could be very susceptible to fire.

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 boarders spoken with did not consider that there were any onerous demands made of them. While some emphasis is placed on sporting and other recreational activities pupils were quite clear that the choice was theirs. If a sports fixture meant that a pupil arrived home late for a meal then the House Mistress prepared something specially for them. This was clearly a very popular occurrence for some of the students who commented very favourably on the delicious meals provided by one House Mistress.

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?**

9

This standard is not applicable.

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?**

3

The school requires appropriate risk assessments for any high risk activities, and parental permission has to be given before pupils can take part. Such activities usually occur off site at specialist centres, which have their own risk assessments and safety procedures. Such activities include paint balling, wall climbing and go-karting. Safety equipment if needed is provided by these organisations.

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

Daily newspapers and televisions were seen to be available in all of the boarding houses. Newspapers are in the library and the internet is also available to enable students to maintain a good awareness of world events. Local community facilities are also available to the pupils. These are reviewed for their age appropriateness and any associated risks are assessed. Senior pupils leaving the campus must sign out and the new Town Leave arrangements for 6th formers are clearly stated in the Handbook of boarding Practices.

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
<p>There are sufficient staff numbers of both sexes on duty to support the boarders after school is over. This facilitates a range of activities as older and younger boarders have a variety of interests and tastes. There is appropriately experienced staff on duty on a rota basis in the boarding houses where pupils have easy access to them during the evenings, at weekends and for the limited number of pupils that have to remain in school during the "exeat" weekends also. Matrons, House Masters/ Mistresses and gap students cover these duties. Observation in the Junior house during the evening showed that the pupils were receiving considerable individual attention from the staff in a very caring and warm environment. The pupils appeared to be relaxed and happy and confirmed that they liked boarding very much and had chosen to board themselves rather than being directed to do so by a parent. The flexi-boarding routine seemed to be very much appreciated " I get to spend some nights with my friends and have opportunity to do the sports activity that I like, yet I still have all my things and friends at home ". "It gives my parents some space too " were comments made to the inspector by junior pupils.</p>		

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

Boarders who have to leave the campus have to have permission, sign out and give a planned time for their return. All trips for boarders are supervised with the requisite number of staff and are risk assessed prior to leaving the school site. The Bursar as Health and Safety Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring that the minimum standards recommended by the DFES guidance is followed. He and the member of staff leading the trip work out the plans, which then have to be ratified by the Headmaster. All paperwork relating to each individual trip has to be completed before the trip begins. The staff handbook sets out the steps which staff members must take to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils in their care during school trips and outings, including emergency arrangements and the regulations for the use of the school mini bus. GAP students are used only for the Junior house and they are never left unsupervised by a member of staff. Older students who may make journeys in their own cars are only allowed to take fellow students as their passengers with the express written permission of that students parent and also with the permission of the school.

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

House Masters / Mistresses are resident in all of the boarding houses. A resident assistant is also present and in the junior house the Matron is also available. The boarders confirmed that they knew how to contact the staff at night. An evening roll call is taken of all the pupils every evening and a room check is also made.

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?**

3

All the staff with boarding duties have job descriptions with duties pertinent to the particular house and the age group of the students where they are placed. Spouses also have job description, which will again vary from house to house and to also take account of the personal and family circumstances of each individual. Ancillary staff are under the control of the bursar but those spoken with during this inspection clearly had a very close identification with their particular house and its pupils. Ancillary staff who are not employed by the school are usually only used during the school holidays when they do not have any unsupervised contact with the pupils. All staff, that is teaching ancillary and GAP students, receive training in child protection either as part of their induction training or during separately arranged training seminars. A staff appraisal system is operated by the Headmaster.

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

All the boarding staff have copies of the handbook of Boarding Practice as well as the appropriate house handbook. The staff handbook comprehensively sets out the schools expectations of staff and their responsibilities in respect of the care and welfare of pupils. It also clearly sets out the disciplinary policy and procedure in relation to staff misdemeanour.

Standard 36 (36.1 - 36.4)

There are sound staff/boarder relationships.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Responses received from the pupils in the completed questionnaires demonstrated the generally very good relationships that exist between them and staff members. This was confirmed also during individual discussions with most pupils. However the very specific areas of disquiet raised by boarders in one house were discussed with the senior staff and the Headmaster at the feed back session after the inspection. Pupils generally regarded the staff as being fair and even handed in their approach to punishment although a small minority considered that punishments were sometimes given unfairly.

Standard 37 (37.1 - 37.2)

Staff supervision of boarders should avoid intruding unnecessarily on boarders' privacy.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The boarding staff are expected to respect the privacy of the boarder at all times. Doors are knocked before entering and the staff in the senior houses are of the same sex as the pupil. In the junior house there is age appropriate supervision of showering bathing washing etc by the matrons to ensure safety and hygiene.

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 records and discussions with staff demonstrated that the school has a vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders. All new appointments are subject to a CRB check and successful applicants where the school may be waiting for this check would not be given unsupervised access to boarders. Staff recruitment processes are recorded and these records are kept. Written references are verified, usually by a telephone call. GAP students only work in the junior school and their recruitment is carried out by the Head of the Junior school. References are taken up and where these students are recruited from abroad information concerning their previous good conduct is obtained if at all possible. Neither of the existing Gap students who came directly from their schools in Australia and New Zealand appear to have been CRB checked. The taxi firms used by the school have had their drivers CRB checked. The school does not arrange guardians. No agency staff have unsupervised 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

All members of ancillary and teaching staff are subject to CRB checks and to the schools policy and training on protecting children from abuse. CRB checks for partners and other adult family members living on the campus are also made. Visitors are kept under discreet surveillance so that they may not have unsupervised access to pupils in their accommodation. The school would not send any pupil on a taxi journey unless they know that the taxi firm has CRB checked its drivers and the school has advised the pupils parents to ensure that they do not authorise taxi journeys carried out by unchecked drivers. There are currently no adults living in the Boarding Houses who are not employed by the school.

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

Boarding accommodation at the school is provided in four houses. One is a new purpose built house and the others are much older buildings. All the properties are well maintained appropriately decorated and furnished and offer the pupils the same range of facilities. But depending on the age and design of the building these facilities do look very different. One of the houses for boys, which is next in line for refurbishment, did look old fashioned and this was commented on by several parents who contrasted the appearance of this house to that provided for the girls. However the boys all said that they liked the house the way it was and that they very much hoped that any renovations would not destroy the good community feel that the present building has. Comments from the pupils concerning heating and ventilation were generally favourable although new lights in one area were very much disliked as being too strong and giving too much glare. Pupils appeared to be and said that they were happy with their accommodation and with the furnishings and equipment available to them. The three older buildings would not be fully accessible for pupils with disabilities but the new house has been designed to meet wheelchair accessible standards.

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 open and scattered nature of the school campus, which also has a public road running through it, and its close proximity to the town of Bishops Stortford, presents some security problems and in recent months a number of intruders to the grounds have been apprehended. Extra security measures have been put in place on all external doors and notices were seen to be clearly displayed especially in the boarding houses. Boarding house doors have coded security locks and all the houses operate a lock up system, which is checked by the house staff. Some security gates have been installed in areas where this is feasible and security officers are hired to patrol the premises. A limited use of CCTV cameras is to be trialled shortly; these will not intrude upon the boarders privacy. Pupils and staff had received tuition as to how to be constantly vigilant and this has clearly been to good effect, see comments in standard.

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

Sleeping accommodation varies in style from house to house some being very spacious and other provision somewhat cramped. This accommodation ranges from large to small dormitories to rooms for single occupation. Most were seen to be well personalised with pin boards etc and this personalization is encouraged. The standard of the beds and bedding were seen to be similar in all the houses. Bunk beds are only used for a few flexi boarders. The students questionnaires revealed that some pupils found the mattresses too hard and one student commented that he would prefer to have a double bed. Most beds were positioned in such a way to afford the pupil sufficient space to change comfortably. The accommodation with the most space being reserved for the full time boarders whilst those who flexi boarded for only one or two nights a week were given the less spacious accommodation. Boarders questioned by the inspectors about the size of this accommodation generally had no complaints about what was provided. One flexi boarder said that he was lucky to have a large single room of his own at home but that he often found this rather lonely and that he actually liked the contrast provided by the dormitory accommodation where he had the company of his friends for the nights that he boarded.

There was seen to be considerable variation in the number of beds provided in the dormitories, from 4 to 10, and the staff explained that careful consideration was given as to the grouping of the pupils so as to ensure compatibility. The students confirmed that they shared with their friends and /or peer group and no student spoken with expressed unhappiness with their current arrangement. The school will give careful sympathetic consideration to any pupil requests for room changes and occasionally a boarder has changed from one house to another. House Masters / Mistresses and their families have separate accommodation from the pupils as do any other resident members of the House staff.

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**

All the boarding houses provide areas and facilities where boarders can study out of school time. Sixth formers are allowed to spend study lessons in their rooms. Prep undertaken in the houses is supervised by House staff to ensure that quiet conditions conducive to study are maintained. In the junior school it was observed that pupils were receiving supervision and very good help and support from the House staff and Gap students.

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**

All boarders are provided with adequate provision of toilet and washing facilities, a mixture of baths and showers are provided, and it was witnessed that at peak times of day (for washing) that no waiting occurred. While a full count of toilets and washbasins was not undertaken at this inspection there appeared to be adequate provision in each house and on each floor, ensuring that there is reasonable separation of age groups. Overall these facilities afforded a good degree of privacy but as the design of the facilities varied considerably depending on their location in an old or in a new building, so did the students perception as to the degree of privacy afforded. The lack of full privacy given by the shower doors in one of the boys houses were the most frequently mentioned problem area. On the day of this inspection these areas were found to be clean and well maintained.

Standard 45 (45.1 - 45.3)**Suitable changing provision is provided for use by day.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The schools swimming pool, sports hall and games pavilion all provide toilet, washing and changing facilities which are freely available for the students use. The greatest area of criticism from the students concerned the cleanliness of the facilities in the sports hall. Many of the boarders indicated that they choose to change in their boarding house accommodation.

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?	3
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All the boarding houses provide common room facilities with more than one area in each house, and all of these have TVs and videos. They were seen to be comfortably furnished with easy chairs tables and for music making. Facilities are also available for table tennis, pool and table football but not all of these three are available in every house. All these areas seen were well used by the students who clearly owned the areas as their own spaces for which they took responsibility. The extensive school grounds set with attractive and well maintained gardens and including a listed chapel building, provide a variety of out door greens where football and other outdoor games can be played as well as a hard area which is used for netball, basket ball and tennis. The boarding houses and the grounds also provide a number of secluded areas where students can find space to be alone or use for quiet relaxation.

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
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The Bursar is responsible for ensuring the safety of outdoor areas for which risk assessments have been compiled.

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
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See Standard 16.

Standard 49 (49.1 - 49.3)		
Adequate laundry provision is made for boarders' clothing and bedding.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The provision for the laundering of the boarders bedding and clothes was seen to be adequate with neat piles of freshly washed and ironed clothes seen in several of the dormitories during the inspection. The boarders questionnaires and discussions that the inspectors had with students during the inspection revealed a remarkably high level of satisfaction with this service with virtually no complaints from the students concerning missing items. In the junior house one girl boarder said that “sometimes a sock goes missing or is not returned in its correct pairing “, but she commented that, “ we can usually sort this out amongst ourselves “. However amongst the replies received from parents two, relating one each to a senior and the junior house, were critical about items getting lost.</p>		

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
<p>A stationery shop is not provided because this has been found not to be needed due to the schools close proximity to the shops in Bishops Stortford town centre.</p>		

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?	9
<p>There are no pupils lodged off site in lodgings organised by the school.</p>		

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 takes the appropriate steps to ensure the security and welfare of pupils who may, while under school jurisdiction, be staying away over night or longer on exchanges or field trips. The Bursar has the lead responsibility for overseeing all aspects of the arrangements of such trips including acquiring the necessary information, carrying out risk assessments and keeping the students parents informed at every stage. The school tends to revisit previous accommodation when going on tours or field trips and as such are familiar with the environment and facilities. Premises are checked to ensure adequate safety standards and that supervision of pupils by suitably qualified and checked people is provided. A policy is in place to provide guidance for teachers when away from the school. Mobile phones are extensively used by staff and students to maintain daily and more frequent contact for the duration of these tours and visits. The students questioned confirmed that they are well supervised by the staff when on these trips.

Lead Inspector	Jan Sheppard	Signature	_____
Second Inspector	_____	Signature	_____
Locality Manager	Cathryn Bramham	Signature	_____
Draft Date	05 05 04		_____
Final Report Date	25 05 04		_____

PART C LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

There was no lay assessor assigned to this inspection.

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____

Date _____

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 5th, 25th and 26th February 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

A copy of the Head's Response can be obtained from the Area Office

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 20th May 2004 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 John Trotman of Bishops Stortford College 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 _____ ~~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 _____

Note: In instance where there is a profound difference of view between the Inspector and the Head both views will be reported. Please attach any extra pages, as applicable.

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London
SW1P 2QF

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S0000019295.V125235.R05

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