



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

BOARDING SCHOOL

Exeter Cathedral School

**Palace Gate
Exeter
Devon
EX1 1HX**

Lead Inspector
Derek Curtis

Announced Inspection
28th November 2006 09:30

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Boarding Schools*. They can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

Every Child Matters, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life. Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of school	Exeter Cathedral School
Address	Palace Gate Exeter Devon EX1 1HX
Telephone number	01392 255298
Fax number	
Email address	
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	The Governors, Exeter Cathedral School
Name of Head	Brian McDowell
Name of Head of Care	Mr and Mrs Brittain (Joint Senior House Parents)
Age range of boarding pupils	8 – 13 years
Date of last welfare inspection	14 th October 2003

Brief Description of the School:

Exeter Cathedral School provides full, weekly and 'flexi' boarding to between twenty and thirty boys and girls between the ages of eight and thirteen years. Most of the boarders are Choristers and, as such, have a tremendous commitment to music in the Cathedral in addition to their normal busy schedule. As on previous inspections the inspectors were invited to Evensong in the Cathedral and given the opportunity to attend choir practices. It was remarked that the choristers 'love singing and music' – and indeed they do - further confirmed by the impromptu singing heard around the school and boarding areas.

The teaching areas and boarders' accommodation, whilst close to the Cathedral is not actually attached to it nor in the same grounds – hence great care is taken when moving pupils and choristers between the various venues. The school is virtually in the centre of the City of Exeter thus it is easy for the boarders to take advantage of shops and other benefits of a city centre location. Being in the city centre there are no on site facilities for major games but a fair sized hard playing area is available for ball and other games during breaks from lessons and other free periods of the day.

The one and only boarding house is linked to the main teaching area and school offices by a short bridge at second floor level. The Senior House-parents, the Assistant House-parent and two Gap Assistant Teachers, live in the boarding house and a sleeping-in room provides additional accommodation for other duty staff.

The meals, provided by an out of school contract caterer, are cooked on site and served cafeteria style in the dining room situated in the main building.

SUMMARY

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

This inspection was undertaken by three inspectors - two from the Commission for Social Care Inspection and a Professional Inspector from the Boarding Schools Association. The inspection was carried out over a period of three days during which time the inspectors had the run of the school and boarding areas. The inspectors were most grateful to the Headmaster, the staff and pupils, the boarders in particular, who were so helpful and cooperative throughout the process. A special note of thanks is due to the Head's Personal Assistant who worked so hard in preparing for the inspection and who remained an ever present source of information and assistance.

Early morning call and bedtime routines were observed, school policies read, the recruiting procedures, and the reporting and filing systems sampled. Many people were interviewed, informally and formally, all of whom spoke highly of the family atmosphere felt in the educative and boarding spheres of life in the school.

As Christmastide was approaching the boarders were looking forward to the bedroom competition – the occupants of one room insisted on an inspector watching a dress-rehearsal of a short sketch that was to be part of their presentation. The invitation was accepted!

For the most part, food being the only exception, the boarders were happy with their life in the school. They are extremely busy but not, in the view of the inspectors, excessively so. The competent and committed staff group provide a good all round boarding experience to a delightful group of well behaved and talented children, in a safe and homely, but somewhat tired environment.

What the school does well:

The school has gathered together a committed group of staff who provide good role models and a consistent level of care to the boarders. The good practice is underpinned by sound policies known to staff. The resulting good relationships between the staff and boarders are but one indication that the school has found the right balance between control and care. The information for parents is clear. The system of pastoral care throughout the school is of a very high order. The mentoring of the Gap Assistant Teachers is commendable.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The method of administration of medicines for boarders is now satisfactory. The school has a planned approach to Crisis Management. The boarder's telephone provides appropriate privacy for the users. Members of staff have individual job descriptions. A named member of the Board of Governors liaises with the Headmaster and Senior House-parents.

What they could do better:

The school should revisit the catering arrangements for the boarders especially at weekends when members of the catering team are not on duty. The school should formalise its method of providing training in child protection for all staff and consider offering the boarding team additional courses in boarding practice. Those staff engaged in caring for boarders should have regular supervision in addition to their biennial appraisal. The revised protocol for the recruitment of staff should be adhered to. Any wedges used to hold open doors in the boarding areas should be removed unless approved by the fire officer and the 'slippery' decking between the gym and the boarding house should be made safe. A programme of refurbishment of boarding areas in terms of décor and furniture should be commenced as soon as possible. The school should complete its review of appointing guardians for boarders. The inspectors note that many of the above items had been identified by the Headmaster as in need of attention prior to the inspection.

Please contact the Head for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders' health is promoted. (NMS 6)
- Safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records. (NMS 7)
- Boarders' receive first aid and health care as necessary.(NMS 15)
- Boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill.(NMS 16)
- Boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal Problems.(NMS 17)
- Boarders receive good quality catering provision (NMS 24)
- Boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals.(NMS 25)
- Boarders are suitably accommodated when ill. (NMS 48)
- Boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered.(NMS 49)

The Commission considers Standards 6 and 15 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Quality in this outcome area is adequate. The health and general welfare of the boarders is considered to be good. At the time of the inspection the school was in the process of looking at the provision of meals with which the boarding pupils were not overly enamoured.

We looked at standards 6, 7, 15, 16, 17, 24, 25, 48 and 49

EVIDENCE:

The boarders' health is promoted by way of a whole school approach to welfare. Their immediate care is the responsibility of Mrs Brittain under the direction of the school doctor with whom almost all boarders are registered and with whom contact was made as part of the inspection. The inspectors were told that the misuse of alcohol, and the dangers of other addictive substances, were dealt with within the personal, social and health part of the curriculum in the classroom setting. The School Lay Chaplain uses her influence to counteract undesirable habits and to promote and enhance the spirituality in each pupil. The records in relation to the health care of the boarders were up to date and contained the relevant information for each child.

Mrs Brittain, a registered nurse, although not employed as such, takes responsibility for the record keeping, security, distribution and disposal of boarders' medicines. Mrs Brittain also has responsibility for the delivery of first aid and organising the first aid training for other staff. It is noted that the recommendations made at the previous inspection in relation to the security of medication and the boarders' health records have been met. Two beds, in a room adjacent to the House-parents' flat are available for pupils who may be unwell, or alternatively boarders may be looked after for short periods in their own bedroom, in either case the staff confirmed that boarders would be monitored regularly when sick. The boarders reported that they felt well looked after when unwell. All laundry, sports gear, every day clothing (changed daily as necessary), and bedding (changed weekly) is undertaken by the school. There are no facilities for boarders to do their own washing.

With regard to standard 17 which states the need for the school to have a written and agreed 'welfare plan' for any boarder with special needs the inspectors agreed that there were no boarders falling into this category at the time of inspection, nevertheless, the school should be prepared for this if the need arises. In reality standard 17 is particularly interested in 'significant health and personal problems' and in general terms the school handles the day to day issues associated with boarding quite well although some boarders felt that the phenomenon of homesickness could be handled more gently.

A contracted caterer provides the meals for boarders. The catering team can provide a full range of special diets as requested. The food is served, cafeteria style, by members of the catering team who seem to know the likes and dislikes of most of the boarders. There was good hearted banter between the catering staff and the boarders and a happy atmosphere in the dining room which becomes very crowded at lunch times when the whole school – boarders, day pupils, staff and visitors take lunch. At breakfast there is a choice of cereals and toast with various spreads and fresh fruit. For lunch there is a choice of various hot dishes, and a rather well laid out salad bar, followed by a sweet course or fresh fruit. The boarders have a snack tea after school and an evening meal at 18:25. For the most part the boarders find the mid day meal acceptable but most commented unfavourably about the evening meal and about those served at weekends. The inspectors thought that the evening meal, whilst plentiful with second helpings eagerly taken up by boarders, was something of an easy option for the catering team. With regard to comments about food at weekends the inspectors found that the disappointment was mainly in relation to sandwiches that had been frozen and other pre-prepared food for use when the catering team was not on duty. The boarders confirmed that there was plenty of drinking water for their use and that older ones still had use of the 'bistro' for preparing snacks and hot drinks – younger boarders may only use the bistro when adults are present.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders are protected from bullying.(NMS 2)
- Boarders are protected from abuse.(NMS 3)
- Use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate.(NMS 4)
- Boarders' complaints are appropriately responded to.(NMS 5)
- The operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare (NMS 13)
- Boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school.(NMS 22)
- Boarders are protected from the risk of fire. (NMS 26)
- The welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school.(NMS 28)
- Boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high risk activities.(NMS 29)
- Boarders' personal privacy is respected.(NMS 37)
- There is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders.(NMS 38)
- 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.(NMS 39)
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion. (NMS 41)
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.(NMS 47)

The Commission considers Standards 2, 3, 4, 5, 26, 37, 38, 39, 41 and 47 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Quality in this outcome area is adequate. The school has sound policies and procedures designed to promote the welfare of the boarders.

We looked at standards 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 22, 26, 28, 29, 37, 38, 39, 41 and 47

EVIDENCE:

The school has an anti-bullying policy. This is posted on notice boards around the school and appears in the boarders' handbook. In the inspectors' discussions it became clear that boarders were aware of bullying but thought that the staff handled matters brought to their attention appropriately. Interestingly the pupil's questionnaire indicated that 15.4% thought that they were being bullied, 46.2% thought they were not, but 38.5% did not know if they were being bullied! The inspectors are aware that the sample was very small but even so were not sure why some pupils either did not understand the question or did not understand the concept of bullying; on balance it was thought the latter was more likely to be the case.

The school's child protection policy is sound, known to staff and staff knew to whom they would report if they had concerns about the welfare of any pupil. The designated child protection co-ordinator within the school is the Deputy Headmaster or in his absence the Headmaster. The care and teaching staff said that they had received training in child protection within the last two years but this training did not include ancillary staff although one person had some child protection training in a previous post. All staff employed by the school should be trained in child protection - at least to a basic level. The school should record evidence of such training. It should be an integral part of the induction of new staff too. The inspectors thought that an 'at a glance' flow chart, as a back up to the main policy, would assist staff should the need arise. (During the inspection a record of an incident came to the notice of the inspectors that they felt had not been appropriately investigated at the time. Consequently the Headmaster, who was not in post at the time of the incident, was requested look into the matter. The inspectors are satisfied with the result of his enquiries.)

Discipline within the school is based upon good relationships between staff and boarders. This is underpinned by a system of rewards and sanctions with emphasis being placed upon the praise and acknowledgement of good behaviour. The boarders consider the system of rewards and sanctions fair. Any sanctions given - early bed times, loss of shopping trips, for instance, are recorded in the boarding house log book. The Headmaster holds the records of major sanctions. The atmosphere in the school is not punitive and the inspectors found the boarders to be well mannered, helpful and full of fun.

The complaints policies, one for boarders and another for parents, clearly explain the processes involved. In case of the boarders there is a distinction between 'wishing to talk' or 'wishing to make a complaint', in either case the process is fully explained. A helpful list of things that might make a boarder unhappy is attached together with useful telephone numbers.

Prefects, chosen by the Headmaster from year 8 pupils, together with Senior Choristers, also selected from year 8 assist with the smooth running of the school; they do not issue sanctions but they are expected to show leadership

and set a good example to younger pupils and boarders at all times. The prefects meet regularly with the Headmaster.

The school has appointed one guardian on behalf of parents from overseas. The matter of guardians appointed by the school was being reviewed at the time of this inspection.

The Headmaster confirmed that the recommendations set out in a letter from the Devon Fire and Rescue Service, dated 30th January 2006, had received attention. The school had recently changed the method of recording the tests of the fire precautions in the school. However the inspectors noticed several wedges used to hold doors open in the boarding areas – these should be removed. (See annotation on Fire Officer's report.) The daily log sheet used in the boarding house provides the night check list for emergency use.

The school does not accommodate children apart from its own boarders. At certain times the chorister boarders stay longer than the normal school term and remain under the care of school staff. The boarding accommodation is let out to other organisations during the longer school holidays – any children so accommodated are looked after by their accompanying adults and are not the responsibility of Exeter Cathedral School.

There is no Health and Safety Committee in the school. The responsibility for Health and Safety matters rests with the Housemaster in consultation with the Governors' Buildings, Planning and Development Committee. All areas of the school and activities undertaken by boarders are subject to stringent risk assessments. The Headmaster confirmed that the school would use only accredited organisations with appropriately qualified staff.

The staff did not intrude upon the privacy of the boarders – an inspector was impressed by the sensitivity and courtesy of staff when waking boarders in the morning and no doubt this is extended at other times too.

The protocol for recruiting staff had been tightened. Historically, checks with the Criminal Records Bureau or the previous checks with Department for Education were insufficiently evidenced by the school. The school's revised Staff Recruitment Policy, updated September 2006, will cover the inadequacies of the previous system. The employment of Gap Assistant Teachers should, as far as is practicable, follow the same protocol.

All visitors to the school are required to show their identity and to sign in and out. Access to the school and boarding areas are protected by 'digital locks' – the pupils knowing the codes to the areas to which they are entitled to have access (the main front door is also locked by way of a traditional key overnight.) The school uses one taxi company from whom the school has written confirmation that all their drivers have CRB clearance. Even taking into

account the above measures one of the inspectors was able to gain access to the school via a back gate through the courtesy of a delivery driver!

All staff are required to familiarise themselves with the school's Health and Safety Policy, copies of which are available in the staff room and the offices of the Head and Deputy Headmaster. No unsafe practices were seen by the inspectors other than the use of wedges to hold doors open in the boarding areas – this practice should be discontinued and the wooden bridge connecting the gymnasium to the boarding house was slippery and in need of some sort of anti slip surfacing.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.(NMS 11)
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.(NMS 14)
- Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination.(NMS 18)
- Boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands.(NMS 27)
- Boarders have satisfactory provision to study.(NMS 43)
- Boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas.(NMS 46)

The Commission considers Standards 14 and 18 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Quality in this outcome area is considered to be good. In spite of the spatial limitations, of a somewhat 'tired' environment that lacks some amenities the boarders, for the most part, enjoy their life in school presenting as a busy but happy and enthusiastic group of young people.

We looked at standards 11, 14, 18, 27, 43 and 46

EVIDENCE:

Boarders have the opportunity to engage in a good selection of games and out of school activities and hobbies. Activity time is somewhat limited because of the choristers' high commitment to duties in the Cathedral and the necessary practices. Boarders have access to one computer with access to the internet; this is in great demand hence they would like this facility extended. As mentioned in a previous inspection report problems can arise if parents deviate from the agreed times of departure or return when taking boarders out of school - this can disrupt planned outings for others especially as free time is so limited. There was a request from parents that exeats should not be programmed the first weekend after return from the major holiday periods however the inspectors understood that such exeats were arranged when choristers were not required for ecclesiastical duties.

Whilst the inspectors agree that the pastoral care within the school is of the highest order and the staff are approachable, and there are many to whom the boarders could go if they feel the need to share problems, the school is asked to continue to search for an 'independent person' outside the teaching or boarding staff whom boarders may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at school. (Standard 14.4 refers)

The school has a firm commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discrimination. Although 'Christian' in outlook, ethos and practice the school was able to demonstrate how a child from another faith was assisted to attend prayers elsewhere.

The boarders are very busy people – prep (supervised by teachers in classrooms), choir practice, orchestra, individual music practice and sporting activities led to some of the younger ones looking somewhat tired towards the end of Evensong, notwithstanding, the inspectors did not consider the boarders to be overstretched or their duties to be especially onerous. The boys and girls sing in separate choirs sharing the services thus reducing the load that they might have carried in earlier days.

The common room area remains as at the previous inspection. The one room split in two by a thoroughfare, accommodates the tuck cupboard and an aged television and video, on the other side of the thoroughfare, is situated the computer (for games and e-mails) and a general purpose desk used by staff and boarders. The décor is jaded and the furniture coming to the end of its life seems nonetheless enjoyed by the boarders. The bistro, basically a kitchen in which older boarders may prepare snacks, whilst far from being cosy, to some extent supplements the common room. The games room at basement level is no longer available. Boarders under adult supervision use the school gymnasium as a wet weather facility and for other activities in the evenings. A school yard, part of which is covered, provides a hard area for play and a 'jungle gym', in a corner of the playing area provides a popular activity – it was noticed that the climbing netting was in need of repair and the bark, used as a soft fall medium, was in need of replenishment.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school.(NMS 12)
- Boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families.(NMS 19)
- New boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in.(NMS 21)
- Boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school.(NMS 30)
- There are sound relationships between staff and boarders.(NMS 36)

The Commission considers Standards 12 and 19 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Quality in this outcome area is good. Boarders are expected to contribute to life within the school. They are assisted to keep in contact with home and with the wider community. The relationships betwixt staff and the boarders were seen to be good throughout the inspection.

We looked at standards 12, 19, 21, 30 and 36

EVIDENCE:

The School Council, according to the boarders, tends to dwell more on the interests of the school as whole rather than boarding issues, thus the school may like to consider setting up a Council specifically for boarding. Minuted council meetings of elected members or even full house meetings give children an opportunity to come to terms with protocols and etiquette of such gatherings in addition to helping them to understand why some requests are, or are not, appropriate. However, much dialogue was seen to take place between the boarders and the staff responsible for them that has led to some changes in school routines – staff cited the 'all day' breakfast now served on Sundays as just one example.

Contact with home for most boarders is frequent. Visits are encouraged. Many boarders have personal mobile telephones and they understand the school

rules applying to their use. There is one payphone that gives the boarders a measure of privacy and this was seen to be used appropriately during the inspection but some felt that there should be another telephone for boarders' use, others thought that contact with home would be easier if they had improved access to the internet. Parents can contact boarding staff direct and vice versa as the need arises. 'Childline' and other useful telephone numbers are displayed around the school in addition to those listed in the Concerns and Complaints leaflet.

Talking to the boarders indicated that they had a good grasp of what was going on in the world in local, national and global terms. Suitable daily news papers are delivered to the school library. Local information of interest to the boarders is displayed on school notice boards. Senior boarders may go shopping in the city without staff for limited periods providing they remain in groups of two or three. Younger boarders are always accompanied by staff when undertaking forays into the city.

Relationships between the staff and boarders were seen to be very good throughout the inspection. Whilst there was much fun and occasional high jinks this was ever tempered with respect for staff at all levels. However the inspectors were aware that boarders recognised that some staff had shorter fuses than others and at times altercations ended in sanctions being applied.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders' possessions and money are protected.(NMS 20)
- Boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation.(NMS 40)
- Boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.(NMS 42)
- Boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities.(NMS 44)
- Boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day.(NMS 45)
- Boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school.(NMS 50)
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.(NMS 51)

The Commission considers Standard 51 the key standard to be inspected.

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

Quality in this outcome area is adequate. The boarders' living accommodation whilst cosy is in need of refurbishment and this renders it difficult to clean. The school was in the process of reviewing its protocol in relation to the use of lodgings.

We looked at standards 20, 40, 42, 44 and 51

EVIDENCE:

Each boarder has a lockable box to which they attach their own padlock. The housemaster looks after pocket money, deposited by parents and topped up as necessary, and which can be drawn out on Saturdays or at other times on request. Boarders said that only very rarely do personal items or money go missing – they are aware that all spare money and items of value should be handed in for safe keeping on return from shopping trips or other outings.

The boarders are all accommodated in one building known as 'Eyre House' which is adjacent to the main teaching area and school offices. There are four floors, three of which have been adapted to provide a reasonable standard of accommodation for boarders. The building is of some character and probably good fun for pupils if difficult for staff to manage. The decor throughout is looking somewhat tired and some of the common room furniture has seen

better days. The bedrooms are carpeted and cosy and the boarders say that they are warm and can be personalised by the occupant. Some carpets were showing signs of wear. The windows are fitted with safety blocks. Most bedrooms are multiple occupancy, using two tier bunks or divan type beds - one room can sleep as many eight although with current numbers this is not likely to happen and the spare capacity does allow some flexibility in their use. The girls say that their mattresses are uncomfortable - the inspectors agreed that the mattresses were somewhat lumpy. Some boarders reported that the building was not sound proof and, at times, they were disturbed by noises from the restaurant across the road. There is a separation zone between the girls' and boys' bedrooms and their respective ablution areas but the girls complained that boys occasionally (as do some male staff) take a short cut that entails passing the girls' shower area - the school should reinforce the rule that already applies to this matter.

The inspectors thought that cleaning, dusting in particular, in some areas was not as good as might be expected. The boys' lavatories were not exactly odour free and there were several holes in the partitions in the cubicles that needed attention. Interestingly, on responding to the boarders' questionnaire, 84.6% declared they were 'usually satisfied' with their boarding house.

The school has arranged lodgings for one overseas boarder with a person known to the school. The home has been inspected by school staff but there was no evidence that all of the requirements in relation standard 51 had been met. However, it was anticipated that this would be available shortly after the inspection.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- A suitable statement of the school's principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff (NMS 1)
- There is clear leadership of boarding in the school.(NMS 8)
- Crises affecting boarders' welfare are effectively managed.(NMS 9)
- The school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare.(NMS 10)
- Risk assessment and school record keeping contribute to boarders' welfare.(NMS 23)
- Boarders are adequately supervised by staff.(NMS 31)
- Staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site.(NMS 32)
- Boarders are adequately supervised at night.(NMS 33)
- Boarders are looked after by staff with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.(NMS 34)
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.(NMS 35)
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

The Commission considers Standards 1, 23, 31 and 34 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Quality in this outcome area is adequate. The management structure of the school and boarding is clearly defined. The staff who care for the boarders are confident and enthusiastic but should be subject to formal supervision and offered additional training in boarding practice.

We looked at standards 1, 8, 9, 23, 31,32, 33, 34, 35 and 52

EVIDENCE:

The inspectors note that the Headmaster was not in post at the time of the previous inspection and is currently updating, or has updated, many of the school's policies and procedures.

The school's statement of boarding principles and practice is included in the prospectus. The boarding statement when read with the prospectus and other information provided by the school gives a reasonable account of how the school functions and an indication of what a boarder may expect. The management of boarding is under the leadership of the Headmaster who delegates day to day responsibility for the welfare of the boarders to the senior house-parents one of whom is a registered nurse. The house-parents meet fortnightly with the Headmaster. The Board of Governors meet once each term to discuss the management of the school including boarding issues. The school has a comprehensive procedure for managing foreseen emergencies. The Headmaster confirmed that he monitors all risk assessments, and the records of major punishments, accidents and complaints.

Mr and Mrs Brittain, Senior House-parents, an Assistant House-parent, two live-in House Tutors and three Gap Year Assistant Teachers (there were two Gaps at the inspection as the third had already left for the Christmas holiday) look after the boarders on a rostered basis. Other members of the teaching team help out during early evenings and at weekends. The staffing establishment was considered to be appropriate for the numbers of boarders in the school although additional staff at weekends would enable a greater degree of choice of activities. The junior staff were seen to be keen and enthusiastic and the boarders were especially appreciative of the improved range of in-house activities introduced by the recently employed assistant house-parent. The school takes great care in the movement of all pupils, including the boarders, between the various teaching areas of the school and when escorting choristers to and from the Cathedral. As mentioned elsewhere, younger boarders are always accompanied by staff or Gap Teachers when going shopping in the city. The House-parents and at least one other member of the team provide nighttime cover.

Staff had appropriate job descriptions. A new system of staff appraisal has been introduced that will ensure that all staff employed directly by the school will have their performance appraised every two years. Supervision of care staff, including supporting staff, whilst effective, is informal and should become a permanent and recorded feature of boarding practice. Boarding staff are not receiving ongoing training in boarding practice other than in first aid, some in child protection and fire precautions. The staff told an inspector that if they identify a suitable course it is likely that the school will provide the wherewithal – maybe the initiative for staff training should be from line managers, perhaps identified within the process of formal supervision. A recently employed member of the team confirmed that their induction process had been helpful and supportive.

The Gap Assistant Teachers (GTs) are inducted and supervised by a member of the teaching staff who offers day to day guidance on their relationships with pupils and staff and on their input into the life of the school. The GTs have

their own handbook. The management and ongoing support and supervision of the GTs is considered to be very good.

As per the previous report the school continues to use exchange premises in France on regular basis. The Head gave assurance that the accommodation used and its security was satisfactory. Any other short term accommodation used by the school would be subject to a full risk assessment.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools have been met and uses the following scale.

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

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion

"N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
6	3
7	3
15	3
16	3
17	3
24	2
25	3
48	3
49	3

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	3
3	2
4	3
5	3
13	3
22	1
26	3
28	X
29	3
37	4
38	2
39	3
41	3
47	3

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
11	3
14	3
18	4
27	3
43	3
46	3

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	3
19	3
21	3
30	3
36	4

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
20	3
40	3
42	3
44	2
45	3
50	3
51	X

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

Continued

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
8	3
9	4
10	3
23	3
31	3
32	3
33	3
34	2
35	4
52	X

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection? Yes

The outstanding items are in relation to: child protection training for all staff, the catering provision, and the provision of additional common room space.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the proprietor meets the Children Act 1989, Inspection of Schools and Colleges Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards.

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1	BS24	The catering provision for boarders, especially at weekends, should be re-examined.	
2	BS3	Child protection training should be included in the induction of all staff, and should be part of their continuing development.	
3	BS22	The school's procedure for appointing and monitoring guardians should meet the standard in full.	
4	BS26	Wedges and other devices used to retain doors open should be removed unless approved by Devon Fire and Rescue Service	
5	BS34	Boarding staff should be supervised on a regular basis and offered opportunities for additional training in boarding practice.	
6	BS38	The recruitment of all staff should adhere to the school's recently revised procedure.	
7	BS40	The boarding areas should be refurbished and subject to an effective cleaning process	
8	BS46	The netting of the outside climbing frame should be repaired and the 'soft fall bark' replenished.	
9	BS47	The surface of the bridge between the gymnasium should be rendered non-slip.	

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