

Residential special school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form

Welfare inspection of a residential special school

School name

DfE registration number

Unique reference number (URN)

URN for social care

SC

Inspection number

Inspection dates

Lead inspector

Template issue date: January 2014

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Please delete the italicised text above.

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Information about the inspection

This inspection of residential provision was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.^{1,2,3}

Overall effectiveness of the residential experience

Key evidence

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/14/contents.

³ www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools.

Outcomes for residential pupils

Key evidence

Quality of residential provision and care

A standard which is greyed out in the table below means that it is also covered by schools' legislation, for example The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012.^{4,5} When checking these standards, inspectors must refer to the more detailed guidance for each standard provided in *Completing the record of inspection evidence and judgements*.⁶ On integrated inspections, inspectors are advised to work together to avoid duplication and ensure consistency.

RSS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
2	Induction, transition and individual support		
2.1	There is a clear policy, implemented in practice, that children are able to contact any member of staff of either gender with personal, academic or welfare concerns.		
2.2	The school identifies at least one person other than a parent, outside the residential and teaching staff, who children may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school. The school ensures that children know who this person is, and how to contact them. Children are also provided with one or more appropriate helpline(s) or outside contact numbers, including the Children's Rights Director, to ring in case of problems or distress.		
2.3	There are appropriate procedures for induction and support for children on admission to the school to ensure that they are familiar with staff, other children, the school's expectations and daily routine.		
2.4	The school makes reasonable efforts to obtain all necessary information about a child's health, education and care needs, prior attainment and achievements prior to (or in an emergency, at the time of) admission.		
2.5	Arrangements are in place to review how the child is settling following admission to the school. In an emergency admission a review meeting is initiated as soon as possible (and never longer than four school weeks after admission) to consider whether the child should remain at the school, or		

⁴ The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made.

⁵ The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/2962/contents/made.

⁶ *Completing the record of inspection evidence and judgements* (090051), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090051.

RSS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
	whether it is in that child's interests to move to a different placement. Such a review meeting may involve (where appropriate) the school, the placing authority, the parents/carers or those with parental responsibility, those with significant involvement with the child (such as social services or health services) and, where possible, the child.		
2.6	Where children are to leave the school on a planned date they are given appropriate information and guidance well in advance to assist in the process of transition.		
2.7	Where a child is in care and will be leaving care on leaving the school, the school agrees with the young person's responsible authority what contribution it should make to implement any Pathway or other plan for the child before the child leaves school. These arrangements should support that young person's needs, and promote a smooth transition.		
2.8	The school provides opportunities for all children to develop the daily living skills needed by the young person for their likely future living arrangements, taking account of their age and needs.		
3	Health and well being		
3.1	Children's physical, emotional and social development needs are promoted.		
3.2	Children understand their health needs, how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and to make informed decisions about their own health. They are encouraged to participate in a range of positive activities that contribute to their physical and emotional health.		
3.3	Children's wishes and feelings are sought and taken into account in their health care, according to their understanding, and staff at the school act as advocates on behalf of children.		
3.4	The school has good links with health agencies, including specialist services where appropriate, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and sexual health services. The availability of such services is taken into account when making admissions decisions.		
3.5	<p>Specific therapeutic techniques are used only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ where there is a clear and widely accepted theoretical basis or evidence base underpinning their effectiveness; ■ with the continuing agreement of the child's responsible authority or a person with parental responsibility, and of the child concerned where the child has sufficient understanding to make an informed decision. 		

RSS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
3.6	The school has, and implements, appropriate policies for the care of children who are unwell. These include first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, administration of medicines and dealing with medical emergencies		
3.7	Suitable accommodation, including toilet and washing facilities, are provided in order to cater for the needs of children who are sick or injured.		
3.8	Prescribed medicines are given only to the children to whom they are prescribed. Children allowed to self-medicate are assessed as sufficiently responsible to do so.		
3.9	Any treatment received by a child is recorded in a written or electronic school record (separate from NHS records) to which only appropriately designated staff have access.		
3.10	Where school staff carry out medical or nursing procedures for a disabled child (e.g. catheter care, administration of oxygen, administration of rectal diazepam, management of prostheses), these are only carried out on the written authorisation of the prescribing doctor or the responsible qualified nurse in relation to the individual child concerned. Staff carrying out these procedures should be authorised and trained to do so, and their training should be kept up to date. Records are kept of all such tasks carried out.		
3.11	The confidentiality and rights of children as patients are appropriately respected. This includes the right of a child deemed to be 'Gillick Competent' ⁷ (as referenced in 'Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards') to give or withhold consent for his/her own treatment.		
3.12	Where necessary, a child has a clear individual health and welfare plan or similar record, containing relevant health and welfare information provided by parents/carers and recording significant health and welfare needs and issues. This record should be agreed by parents/carers and include: records of developmental checks; health monitoring required by staff; intimate care or bodily functions requiring staff help; and the involvement of a child's parents/carers or significant others in health and welfare issues.		

⁷ Gillick competence is used in medical law to decide whether a child (16 years or younger) is able to consent to his or her own medical treatment, without the need for parental permission or knowledge. A child will be 'Gillick competent' if he or she has sufficient understanding and intelligence to understand fully what is proposed.

4	Contact with parents/carers		
4	Children can contact their parents/carers and families in private and schools facilitate this where necessary. This does not prevent schools from operating proportionate systems to monitor the use of electronic communications in order to detect abuse, bullying or unsafe practice by children. Schools are sensitive to individual children's circumstances such as restricted contact with families. Communication aids should be available for children who need them.		
5	Residential accommodation		
5.1	Suitable sleeping accommodation is provided for children. Where children are aged 8 years or over, sleeping accommodation for boys is separate from sleeping accommodation for girls.		
5.2	Suitable living accommodation is provided for the purposes of organised and private study outside school hours and for social purposes.		
5.3	Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for children, which are reasonably accessible from the sleeping accommodation. Separate toilet facilities are provided for boys and girls unless each toilet facility is provided in a separate room intended for use by one pupil at a time, the door to which is capable of being secured from inside. Toilet and washing facilities provide appropriate privacy for children.		
5.4	Accommodation is appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained, and reasonable adjustments are made to provide adequate accessible accommodation for any children with restricted mobility. The accommodation contains suitable specialist facilities to support children whose disabilities require them.		
5.5	Accommodation is suitably furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of children accommodated, with appropriate protection and separation between genders, age groups and accommodation for adults. Bedding is clean and suitable, and is sufficiently warm.		
5.6	Children can if they wish personalise an area of their accommodation with suitable posters and personal items.		
5.7	Residential accommodation is reserved for the use of those children designated to use it, and is protected from access by unauthorised persons. Any use of school facilities by individuals or groups does not allow members of the public (including members of organised groups using school facilities) substantial and unsupervised access to children, or to residential accommodation while occupied by children.		
5.8	Any use of surveillance equipment (e.g. CCTV cameras) or patrolling of school buildings or grounds for security purposes		

	does not intrude unreasonably on children's privacy.		
8	Provision and preparation of food and drinks		
8.1	All children, including those with special dietary, medical or religious needs, are provided with meals which are adequate in nutrition, quantity, quality, choice and variety.		
8.2	Suitable accommodation is provided for the hygienic preparation, serving and consumption of children's main meals. This may be situated in the main school provided it is adjacent to or reasonably accessible from the residential accommodation. IS reg 23(l))		
8.3	In addition to main meals, children have access to drinking water and to food or the means of hygienically preparing food at reasonable times. Schools are sensitive to children's individual needs in this respect.		
8.4	Any assistance needed in eating by children with disabilities is provided as and when required in an appropriate manner, which promotes dignity and choice.		
9	Personal possessions		
9.1	Adequate laundry provision is made for children's clothing and bedding. Children's clothing is satisfactorily stored and issued to the right child following laundering.		
9.2	Children are able to obtain necessary personal and stationery items while accommodated at school.		
9.3	Reasonable protection is provided for children's personal possessions and for any children's money or valuables looked after by the school.		
9.4	Children's belongings are searched only on grounds which are explained to the child concerned, and where failure to carry out the search might put at risk the welfare of the child or others.		
10	Activities and free time		
10.1	Children develop their emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical skills through the accessible and stimulating environment created by the school. Children are supported to take part in school based and out of school activities.		
10.2	Children take part in age appropriate peer activities as would normally be permitted by the parent in relation to their children or as outlined in any placement plan. Decision-making and any assessment of risk to the child should be undertaken from the perspective of a reasonable parent.		
10.3	Children are encouraged and enabled to make and sustain friendships with children outside the school, which may involve friends visiting the school and reciprocal arrangements to visit friends' homes.		

10.4	Children have access to a range and choice of safe recreational areas, both indoors and outdoors, and there are safe areas at school where children can be alone if they wish.		
21	Placement planning and review		
21.1	The school produces a written placement plan, agreed as far as is practicable with the child, the child's parents/carers and any placing authority for the child, unless the information is held elsewhere such as in the child's statement of special educational needs. The placement plan identifies the needs of that child that the school should meet and specifies how the school will care for the child and promote their welfare on a day to day basis. Where significant changes are made to the placement plan there is appropriate consultation. Where applicable the plan is consistent with the care plan of the placing authority for any child placed by a local authority. The placement plan is regularly reviewed and amended as necessary to reflect significant changes in the child's needs or progress in his or her development. Where feasible children in the school are aware of the content of their placement plans, and confirm that the school is providing care for them that is consistent with the plans.		
21.2	Each child has at least one key worker (or similar person) within the school who provides individual guidance and support to the child. They regularly make time available to the child to enable the child to seek guidance, advice and support on any matter. They monitor the school's compliance on a day to day basis with the child's placement plan.		
21.3	The child's wishes are sought and taken into account in the selection of their key worker/s and if they request a change of key worker.		
21.4	The school contributes appropriately to all statutory reviews for children; enables, as far as possible, children to contribute to and understand any processes of review that apply to them; and actively implements any resulting actions.		

Key evidence

Residential pupils' safety

BS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
6	Safety of children		
6.1	The school has a written policy on compliance with relevant health and safety laws which is effectively implemented. (IS reg 11)		
6.2	The school premises, accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured. (IS reg 23C)		
7	Fire precautions and drills		
7.1	The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as referenced in 'Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards').(IS reg 13)		
7.2	In addition, fire drills are regularly (at least once per term) carried out in 'residential time'.		
11	Child protection		
11	The school ensures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and ■ such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.⁸ (IS reg 7) 		
12	Promoting positive behaviour and relationships		
12.1	The school has and consistently implements a written policy on managing behaviour, including promoting good behaviour. This policy includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ measures to combat bullying and to promote positive behaviour; ■ school rules; ■ disciplinary sanctions; ■ when restraint is to be used; and ■ arrangements for searching children and their possessions. 		
12.2	The policy complies with relevant legislation and guidance and is understood by staff and children ⁹ .		

⁸ *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* (DFES-04217-2006), Department for Education, 2006; www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/dfes-04217-2006

⁹ Department for Education behaviour and attendance webpage; www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour.

BS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
12.3	Staff receive appropriate training and support to recognise and deal with incidences of challenging behaviour or bullying. This training should include assistance in managing staff members' responses and feelings arising from working with children who have emotional difficulties which result in challenging behaviour. Staff training is regularly refreshed.		
12.4	Methods to de-escalate confrontations or potentially challenging behaviour are used wherever appropriate to avoid use of physical restraint. Restraint is only used in exceptional circumstances, to prevent injury to any person (including the child who is being restrained) or to prevent serious damage to the property of any person (including the child who is being restrained).		
12.5	All children and staff are given an opportunity to discuss with a relevant adult incidents of restraint they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by.		
12.6	A written record is kept of major sanctions and the use of any physical intervention. Records may include the information in Appendix 2 (use of physical restraint). The record is made within 24 hours of the sanction being applied and is legible. Children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records. The school regularly reviews any instances of the use of physical intervention restraint and examines trends or issues to enable staff to reflect and learn in a way that will inform future practice.		
12.7	No school restricts the liberty of any child as a matter of routine or provides any form of secure accommodation.		
14	Staff recruitment and checks on other adults		
14.1	Schools operate safe recruitment procedures and vet staff in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (IS regs 19-22, Part 4)		
14.2	For all persons over 16 (not on roll of the school) who after April 2002 began to live on the same premises as children but are not employed by the school, there is a criminal records check completed at the standard level.		
14.3	There is a written agreement between the school and any person over 16 not employed by the school but living in the same premises as children (for example, members of staff households). This specifies the terms of their accommodation, guidance on contact with children, their responsibilities to supervise their visitors, and notice that accommodation may cease to be provided if there is evidence that they are unsuitable to have regular contact with children. They must be required to notify an unrelated designated senior member		

BS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
	of staff if they are charged with, or convicted of, any offence.		
14.4	All adults visiting residential accommodation (e.g. visitors, outside delivery and maintenance personnel) are kept under sufficient staff supervision to prevent them gaining substantial unsupervised access to children or their accommodation.		
14.5	The school regularly monitors the suitability of any arrangements it makes for the appointment of guardians.		
14.6	Any guardians appointed by the school are subject to the same recruitment checks as staff, and their care of pupils should be monitored. Guardians appointed by schools do not have parental responsibility. This standard applies where a guardian is appointed for a child under 18 by a school, by a member of staff as part of their work for the school, or by an agency or organisation on behalf of the school. Where a school provides lists of possible guardians, written documents should be clear whether the school or parent is responsible for the appointment of guardians.		

Key evidence

Leadership and management of the residential provision

BS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
1	Statement of principles and practice		
1	A suitable statement of the school's principles and practice is available to parents and staff, is made known to children through an appropriate method of communication, and is seen to work in practice. The statement describes the overall purpose of the school and describes any theoretical or therapeutic model underpinning the practice of the school. It also explains the ethos and philosophy of the school, and provides an outline of provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.		
13	Leadership and management		
13.1	There is clear leadership and management of the practice and development of residential and care provision in the school, and effective links are made between academic and residential staff. The school's governing body or proprietor has a system to monitor care and welfare provision in the school.		
13.2	Staff with management responsibilities have an adequate level of experience or training in the management and practice of boarding to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted.		
13.3	The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate.		
15	Staff deployment and supervision of children		
15.1	There is a sufficient number of competent staff deployed appropriately, both as a staff group and on individual shifts, to fulfil the school's Statement of Purpose and meet the individual needs of all children resident in the school.		
15.2	Records of staff working in the school demonstrate sufficient competent staff are deployed and that contingency plans are in place in the event of a shortfall in staffing levels.		
15.3	There are clear arrangements for suitably experienced staff to deputise in the absence of the Head of Care.		
15.4	Staff members who are placed in charge of the school and other staff at particular times (e.g. as leaders of staff shifts) have substantial relevant experience of working in the school and have successfully completed their induction and probationary periods.		
15.5	The Head of Care (or school equivalent) has in place a staff disciplinary procedure which is clear. The procedure clearly		

BS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
	separates staff disciplinary processes from child protection enquiries and criminal proceedings, and is known by staff.		
15.6	Staff working within the school know and implement the school's policy, and where relevant the local authority's policy, in relation to children going missing and their role in implementing that policy. Staff actively search for children who are missing, including working with the police where appropriate.		
15.7	The school's procedures are compatible with the local Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols and procedures applicable to the area where the school is located. Where children placed out of authority go missing, the Head of Care follows the local RMFHC protocol and complies with and makes staff aware of any other processes required by the placing authority.		
15.8	There is continuity of staff such that children's relationships are not overly disrupted. No more than half the staff on duty at any one time by day or night at the school are external agency staff or temporary staff who do not know the children very well.		
15.9	The arrangements for deploying staff facilitate continuity of care for individual children, and maximise children's choices of staff members to provide their personal care, where appropriate. The school can demonstrate that, as far as is possible, children are able to choose who provides their personal care.		
15.10	Where only one member of staff is on duty at any time, a risk assessment has been carried out and recorded in writing, identifying any likely risks to children, staff and members of the public.		
15.11	The staff group in day-to-day contact with children includes staff of both genders whenever possible. Where the school's Statement of Purpose makes it explicit that the school uses staff of one gender only, clear guidance is provided and implemented on how children are enabled to maintain relationships with members of the opposite gender to the staff group. Staffing arrangements also take into consideration children's ethnic and cultural backgrounds and any disabilities they may have.		
15.12	Any role of spouses, partners and/or other adult members of staff households within residential accommodation is made clear.		
15.13	Suitable accommodation (consisting of accommodation in which meals may be taken, living accommodation and sleeping accommodation) and suitable toilet and washing		

BS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
	facilities are provided for residential staff. This accommodation is appropriately separated (as referenced in 'Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards') from the accommodation and facilities provided for children.		
15.14	Any child access to staff accommodation is properly supervised and does not involve inappropriate favouritism or inappropriate one-to-one contacts between staff and children.		
16	Equal opportunities		
16	Children do not experience inappropriate discrimination because of differences arising out of gender, pregnancy or maternity, disability, race, religion or belief, cultural background, linguistic background, special educational need, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or academic or sporting ability. These factors are taken into account in the care of boarders, so that care is sensitive to different needs.		
17	Securing children's views		
17.1	Children have an opportunity to contribute their views to the operation of residential provision, are able to raise concerns and make complaints, and their views are given appropriate weight in decisions about the running of the school. Children are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith.		
17.2	Active steps are taken to enable all children to make their views known, to make everyday choices and to maximise their opportunities to develop independence. The school should not assume that any child is unable to communicate their views.		
18	Complaints		
18	The school has, and follows, an appropriate policy on responding to complaints that is compliant with the relevant regulatory requirements ¹⁰ (IS regs 25 (a-k), Part 7)		
19	Staff supervision, training and support		
19.1	Staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the children as they relate to the purpose of the setting. Training keeps them up-to-date with professional, legal and practice developments and reflects the policies, legal obligations and business needs of the school.		
19.2	All existing care staff have attained a relevant minimum level 3 qualification or have qualifications which demonstrate the		

¹⁰ Independent Schools: The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made.

BS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
	same competencies. All new staff engaged from the commencement of these Standards hold these qualifications or begin working towards them within 3 months of confirmation of employment.		
19.3	New staff undertake the Children’s Workforce Development Council’s induction, beginning within 7 working days of starting their employment and completing training within 6 months.		
19.4	The learning and development programme is evaluated for effectiveness at least annually and is updated if necessary.		
19.5	Any social workers and other specialist professionals (e.g. medical, legal, educational, psychologists, therapists) are professionally qualified and, where applicable, registered by the appropriate professional body. They are appropriately trained to work with children and their families, and have a good understanding of residential child care and the policies and purpose of the school.		
19.6	All staff have access to support and advice for their role. They also have regular supervision and formal annual appraisal of their performance.		
20	Monitoring by independent visitors		
20.1	The governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for carrying on the school arrange for one of their number, or a representative who does not work at, or directly manage, the school, to visit the school once every half term and complete a written report on the conduct of the school. Where the school has an individual proprietor, that person may carry out such visits personally if they are not also the Headteacher (or school equivalent).		
20.2	<p>Most monitoring visits are carried out unannounced. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ checks on the school’s records of attendance, complaints, sanctions, use of physical interventions, risk assessments, and where they exist, individual care plans for children; ■ assessment of the physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment of the school; and ■ opportunities for any child or member of staff who wishes to meet the visitor (in private if they wish). 		
20.3	Written reports of all monitoring visits are provided to the Headteacher (or school equivalent) and where applicable the governing body, organisation, or partnership. Reports are also provided to each member of that body (or the appropriate committee of that body), within two weeks and as		

BS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
	written by the visitor without amendment or summary.		
20.4	<p>The Headteacher (or school equivalent), governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for carrying on the school carries out, and records in writing, once each year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for boarding pupils, in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> its Statement of Purpose; its staffing policy; the placement plans for individual children; and ■ an internal assessment of its compliance with these Standards. ■ Where appropriate such a report may be incorporated within a review of the whole school. 		
22	Records		
22.1	Every child has an accurate, permanent record of their history and progress which can be read by the child at anytime (except where the data controller is not obliged to supply the information to the child), and add personal statements or statements correcting errors.		
22.2	A child's file may include the information in Appendix 2 (individual records).		
22.3	Any individual pupil records are kept by the school for a period of 25 years after the date of birth of the child or are passed to the next school and a receipt obtained. This retention period is the minimum period that any pupil file should be kept.		
22.4	<p>The school keeps a register showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For each child resident at the school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the dates of admission and departure of each child who was responsible for their placement in the school where they were living/accommodated prior to arriving at the school where they are living/accommodated on leaving the school, and the placing authority and legal status (if applicable) ■ duty rosters recording the identities of the staff and other persons who actually worked at the school or 		

BS NMS	National minimum standard	Met	Not met
	<p style="text-align: center;">with children from the school, by day and night</p> <p>The above records are retained for at least 5 years from the date of the last entry.</p>		

Key evidence