



Department
for Education

National Minimum Standards for residential special schools

May 2026

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Summary

About this document

This document contains a statement¹ of national minimum standards (standards) to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, for whom residential accommodation is provided by residential special schools.

These standards do not override the need for schools to comply with other relevant legislation, such as that which sets the [standards for independent schools](#) or the conditions of approval for non-maintained special schools, legislation covering health and safety, fire or planning regulations, and the requirements associated with Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans.

These standards are additional to the requirements in statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping children safe in education](#), which all residential special schools must have regard to.

In these standards, 'have regard to' means that the school should be able to demonstrate that it either complies with the guidance or has considered the guidance and has a good reason for departing from it.

Where these standards refer to 'parent', the definition of parent is that of [section 576 of the Education Act 1996](#).

Expiry or review date

The Secretary of State will keep the standards under review and may publish amended statements as appropriate. A table of substantive changes, compared to the 2015 version of the standards is provided at Appendix D.

Who is this document for?

These standards apply to special schools in England providing residential accommodation for any child. For the purposes of these standards, a school is a special school if it is:

- a. a special school within the meaning of [section 337 of the Education Act 1996](#);
- or
- b. an independent school not falling within (a) above which is specially organised to make special educational provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

¹ This statement is a revision of the statement which came into force on 1 April 2015

This guidance therefore applies to residential provision in:

- 1 LA-maintained special schools
- 2 Special academies, including special free schools
- 3 Non-maintained special schools
- 4 Independent special schools

Residential special schools which accommodate or arrange accommodation for any child for more than 295 days a year (38 weeks), or intend to do so, are required to register as children's homes with Ofsted. Such schools are required to comply with legislation and standards set for children's homes² rather than the standards in this document. There is a separate set of [national minimum standards for mainstream schools](#) that provide boarding accommodation for pupils.

Main points

- This statement of national minimum standards for residential special schools is published by the Secretary of State for Education under section 87C(1) of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the [Care Standards Act 2000](#) and the [Education Act 2011](#).
- These standards contain arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children for whom accommodation is provided by residential special schools. They provide the minimum standards below which no school is expected to fall.
- The school will be inspected against the standards to determine if there is satisfactory compliance with the legal obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of residential children. In carrying out the inspection, the role of the inspectorate is to determine the extent to which the school promotes and safeguards the welfare of all children, rather than its compliance with structures and systems. Inspectorates will take account of the statement of purpose, and the school's admissions policy where applicable, and the views of parents (or those who hold parental responsibility) of children at the school.

Where terms such as 'adequate' and 'suitable' are used within the standards, inspectors will need to make judgements based on the adequacy and suitability of arrangements and in relation to the specific needs of the children residing at the school, having regard to their ages, numbers, sex, and any individual needs they may have. Where the term 'good' is used within the standards, the quality of provision should be such that a reasonable person would consider it to be good in relation to the specific needs of the children residing at the school, having regard to their ages, numbers and sex and any special requirements they may have. It does not necessarily mirror the term 'good' within inspection quality judgements.

- The Secretary of State will refer to these standards in any action she may take

² See [The Children's Homes \(England\) Regulations 2015](#) and the [Guide to the children's homes regulations, including quality standards](#).

against a residential independent special school, academy (including free school) or non-maintained special school that fails to comply with its duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in residential accommodation. Local authorities will also take the standards into account in any enforcement action taken in relation to a failure by a maintained school to safeguard or promote the welfare of the residential pupils it accommodates.

- Minimum standards do not mean standardisation of provision. The standards are designed to be applicable to the many different types of residential special school and are intended to support schools in developing their own ethos and approach that meets the needs of individual children.
- Although the standards are issued for use by inspectorates in assessing the quality of provision in residential special schools, they have other uses. They may be used by schools and staff in self-assessing their services to support the development of improvement plans; they may provide a basis for the induction and training of staff; they can be used by parents/carers, children and young people as a guide to what they should expect a school to do; they can be used by commissioners – usually local authorities – to inform decision making about placements; and they can provide guidance on what is required when schools set up residential provision.

Document history

- May 2026 – Technical update

Standards for residential special schools

Part A: Governance, leadership, and management

Aim: The leadership, management and governance of the school enable a culture to thrive which is child-centred, safeguards children's wellbeing and is ambitious for the progress of every child. Monitoring and accountability are strong and add value.

To achieve this aim, the school should meet the following standards:

Standard 1 - Statement of principles and practice

1.1 A statement³ of the school's principles and practice to be known as the 'Statement of Purpose' is promoted through the school and made available to parents and carers.

1.2 The school prepares a children's version of the statement which is communicated to them using appropriate methods.

1.3 The statement is child-centred and focused on welfare and is produced in consultation with families and reflects current policy and best practice guidance. It describes the overall purpose of the school, any theoretical or therapeutic model underpinning the practice of the school, the impact of any model on the overall progress and experience of children, which staff are trained in the model and how it is used. It also explains the ethos and philosophy of the school and provides an outline of the types of provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The statement includes the overall purpose of and arrangements for the residential provision and how this is organised, including short breaks and flexi or weekly provision. The statement sets out how the residential provision complements the life of the school, the staffing structure of the school, how staff are supervised, and a line management organogram.

1.4 The statement is published on the school's website and is reviewed annually and updated where required.

³ Individual schools will be best placed, on a case-by-case basis, to ensure the statement is accessible to those for whom English is not their first language.

Standard 2 - Leadership and management

- 2.1** The school's governing body, trustees and/or proprietor monitor the effectiveness of the leadership, management, and delivery of the residential and welfare provision in the school and take appropriate action where necessary.
- 2.2** The residential provision is a standing or regular item at the governing body meetings to ensure that children's experiences and the quality of provision are systematically kept under review. At least one governor should have responsibility for the oversight of residential provision but responsibility for the quality of provision lies with the governing body as a whole. At least one governor should also be expected to visit the residential provision on a regular basis.
- 2.3** The school's leadership and management, including governors, trustees, and proprietors, demonstrate effective skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, and actively promote the safeguarding and welfare of children. Staff with management responsibilities have undertaken appropriate training in the management and practice of residential care.
- 2.4** The school's leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities consistently and effectively so that the standards are met.
- 2.5** There is clear leadership and management of the practice and development of residential and care provision in the school. Leaders ensure that there is a mutually supportive and reinforcing approach, between (i) the educational provision and (ii) the residential provision, which is centred around the child. Individuals working in each aspect of provision should be able to challenge each other where necessary. The school should have processes in place to ensure this is the case.

Standard 3 - Monitoring by independent visitors

- 3.1** The governing body, trustees, or proprietor of the school appoint a representative who is independent of the leadership and management of the school to visit the residential provision six times, spread evenly, over the course of a school year and complete a written report on the conduct of the school. The representative is vetted in line with the school's safe recruitment policy, in accordance with the safer recruitment requirements set out in [Keeping children safe in education](#), and has the skills and authority to effectively carry out this role.
- 3.2** Monitoring visits are carried out unannounced. They include:
- conversations with children, the senior management team and staff;
 - conversations with social workers where relevant;
 - conversations with parents/carers where relevant;

- checks on the school's records of attendance, complaints, sanctions, bullying, restraint (including restrictive interventions), risk assessments, and where they exist, individual care plans for children including in relation to residential provision;
- evaluation of the quality of the provision and effectiveness of the care provided to children and whether they are safeguarded; and
- assessment of the suitability and physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment of the residential provision and the external environment.

3.3 Written reports of all monitoring visits are provided to the headteacher (or school equivalent) and where applicable the governing body, trust, or proprietor. Reports are also provided to each member of that body (or the appropriate committee of that body) within two weeks and as written by the visitor without amendment or summary. The governing body, trustees, or proprietor of the school should record a formal response to each written report. Monitoring reports and formal responses should be retained by the school and made available during an inspection and, on request, shared with any placing authorities and with the local authority where the school is located.

3.4 The headteacher (or school equivalent), governing body, trustees, or proprietor carry out, and record in writing, once each year:

- a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for residential pupils, in relation to:
- its Statement of Purpose;
- its staffing policy;
- the placement plans for individual children; and
- an internal assessment of its compliance with these standards and actions it will undertake to ensure compliance.

Where appropriate such a report may be incorporated within a review of the whole school.

Standard 4 – Inclusion, equality, and diversity

4.1 Children are not discriminated against, paying particular regard to the legally protected characteristics and requirements set out in the [Equality Act 2010](#)⁴. In addition, children are not discriminated against because of their cultural background, linguistic background, special educational need, or academic or sporting ability (the

⁴ The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Guidance is available at: [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

list is not intended to be all encompassing, the key factor is protecting children from discrimination). These factors are taken into account in the care of children, so that care is sensitive to different needs, and any reasonable adjustments required where a pupil has a disability, and an inclusive environment is promoted within the school.

Standard 5 – Records

5.1 Every child has an accurate, permanent record of their history and progress which can be read by the child and parents/carers at any time (except where the data controller is not obliged to supply the information to the child/parent/carer), and to which personal statements or statements correcting errors can be added.

5.2 Each child's file includes the information in Appendix B (individual records).

5.3 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 kept⁵.

5.4 The school keeps a register showing for each child resident at the school:

- 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;
- the placing authority and legal status (if applicable); and
- duty rosters recording the identities of the staff and other persons who actually worked at the school or with children from the school, by day and night.

The above records are retained for at least 5 years from the date of the last entry.

5.5 The school follows and maintains the policies and documents described in Appendix A.

Part B: Care and placement planning

Aim: Children's needs are met fully through effectively planned and monitored placements. Children have a positive experience of arriving at and leaving the school.

To achieve this aim, the school should meet the following standards:

⁵ If the school closes, the individual pupil records should be returned to the placing authority, or if the child has not been placed by a local authority, to the local authority in the area of the school.

Standard 6 – Admission and induction

- 6.1** Schools ensure that they admit children where the school is named in an EHC plan. If the school is commissioned to admit a pupil without an EHC plan (for example while a statutory EHC needs assessment process is under way), the school should ensure it is able to meet the pupil's needs.
- 6.2** The school should have obtained 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 or as soon as practicable after) admission.
- 6.3** Arrangements are in place to review how the child is settling following admission to the school and whether the provision is meeting their needs as set out in the EHC plan, or otherwise. In the case of 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 whether it is in that child's interests to move to a different placement. Review meetings shall include a residential report, and 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, local authority SEN teams, or health services) and, where appropriate, the child.
- 6.4** 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.

Standard 7- Placement planning and review

- 7.1** There is a written plan in place for each child resident in the school setting out how their day-to-day needs will be met, known as the placement plan. The plan is thorough and specific to the child and is agreed, as far as is practicable, with the child, the child's parents/carers, and any placing authority for the child. Children have an opportunity to contribute to their plans. The placement plan identifies the needs of that child that the school should meet, assesses any risk, 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 EHC plan and reflects any changes to the EHC plan.
- 7.2** Placement plans are regularly reviewed (not less than every term and in conjunction with reviews of any EHC plan) and amended as necessary to reflect significant changes in the child's needs or progress in his or her development. Children and parents/carers are aware of the content of the placement plans.
- 7.3** Each child has a key worker (or similar person) within the school who provides individual guidance and support to the child. The key worker regularly makes time available to the child to enable the child to seek guidance, advice, and support on any matter. The key worker monitors the school's compliance with the child's placement plan.

7.4 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. This should take into account the child's communication needs and may be done by an independent advocate.

7.5 The school contributes appropriately to all statutory reviews for children; enables children to contribute to and understand any processes of review that apply to them; and actively implements any resulting actions.

Standard 8 – Transition and Preparing for Adulthood

8.1 Where children are to leave the school on a planned date, they are given appropriate information, support, and guidance as soon as possible after the decision has been made and up until departure, to assist in the process of transition.

8.2 Where a child is in care and will be leaving care on leaving the school, the school agrees with the child's responsible authority what contribution it should make to implement any pathway, continuing health care plan or other plan for the child before the child leaves school. These arrangements should support that child's needs, and promote a smooth transition, involve all relevant agencies, and allow adequate time for implementation.

8.3 Schools ensure that children are well prepared for adulthood. Schools are clear about how the residential provision contributes to this, paying particular regard to the Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) outcomes set out in the [SEND Code of Practice 0-25](#). This includes preparation for employment/higher education, independent living, community inclusion and health. Schools carefully consider destinations and make positive outcomes central to their practice throughout the curriculum and for all age groups, ensuring that children receive tailored careers guidance and experience relevant activities which maximise opportunities to prepare them for adulthood. Schools consider how to promote the four PfA outcomes as part of EHC planning⁶, noting that there must be a focus on preparing for adulthood as part of annual EHC plan annual reviews from year 9 onwards.

Part C: Residential provision

Aim: The school provides a homely and welcoming environment in which children feel safe, secure, and comfortable, and their privacy is respected as appropriate for their age. Children enjoy their accommodation and mealtimes and feel that their belongings and personal possessions are protected.

To achieve this aim, the school should meet the following standards:

⁶ Schools may wish to access the PfA planning tool at: <https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources/pfa-ehc-planning>

Standard 9 - Residential accommodation

9.1 Good quality sleeping accommodation is provided for children. It is well organised and responsive to children's needs and is managed with ongoing assessments of risk (which should be documented) and the findings acted upon to reduce risk for all children. Accommodation gives children appropriate privacy, taking into account sex, age and any individual needs. Where children share a bedroom, they are able to express a preference about who they share with. To minimise disruption the school should aim to avoid mixing accommodation arrangements for children on longer placements and those on short breaks.

9.2 Good quality living accommodation and equipment, including appropriate internet access⁷, is provided for the purposes of organised and private study outside school hours and for social purposes.

9.3 Sufficient toilet and washing facilities with good quality and necessary fixtures, fittings and adaptations, and access to hot water are provided for children, and are readily accessible from the sleeping accommodation. Toilet and washing facilities provide privacy for children, taking into account sex, age and any individual needs. Separate toilet facilities for boys and girls aged 8 years or over must be provided except where the toilet facility is provided in a room that can be secured from the inside and that is intended for use by one pupil at a time⁸.

9.4 Accommodation is well lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned, and maintained, and reasonable adjustments are made to provide accessible accommodation for any children with disabilities. The accommodation contains suitable specialist facilities and equipment to support the specific needs of children with disabilities. Any specialist equipment should be well maintained and safe, and staff should have appropriate training to operate it.

9.5 Accommodation is well furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of children accommodated, with protection and separation between children's accommodation and staff accommodation. Bedding is warm, clean, and comfortable.

9.6 Children can, if they wish, personalise an area of their accommodation with suitable posters and personal items.

7 Part 2 of [Keeping-children-safe-in-education](#) sets out supervision requirements sets out requirements for appropriate filtering and monitoring.

8 ⁸ As required by The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/1943/regulation/4/made> and [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

9.7 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) unsupervised⁹ access to children, or to residential accommodation while occupied by children.

9.8 Any use of [biometric data/technology](#)¹⁰ or surveillance equipment (e.g. CCTV cameras) or patrolling of school buildings or grounds for security¹¹ purposes does not intrude unreasonably on children's privacy. Any schools¹² which use biometric technology and/or CCTV should set out the rationale for its use in the school's security policy. In addition, schools using [CCTV](#) must be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)¹³ and comply with relevant [data protection legislation](#) including the UK General Data Protection Regulations, the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and the [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#).

Standard 10 - Personal possessions

10.1 Good and regular laundry provision is made for children's clothing and bedding. Children's clothing is stored safely when in the process of being laundered and returned to the right child following laundering.

10.2 Children are able to obtain personal and stationery items whilst accommodated at school.

10.3 Good protection is provided for children's personal possessions and for any children's money or valuables looked after by the school.

Standard 11 - Provision and preparation of food and drinks

11.1 All children, including those with special dietary, medical or religious needs, are provided with good quality, nutritionally balanced meals with choice and variety and of sufficient quantity¹⁴.

11.2 Good quality facilities are provided for the hygienic preparation, serving and consumption of children's main meals. These may be situated in the main school building provided it is adjacent to or reasonably accessible from the residential

⁹ Part 3 of [Keeping children safe in education](#) sets out supervision requirements

¹⁰ Biometric data means personal information resulting from specific technical processing relating to the individual's physical, psychological or behavioural characteristics which allow or confirm the unique identification of that person, such as facial images, voice recognition or fingerprints.

¹¹ Policies should be clear where surveillance is used for security purposes- it should not be used to compensate for inadequate staffing levels

¹² [Data protection in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

¹³ [Amended Surveillance Camera Code of Practice \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁴ [School food standards: resources for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

accommodation.

11.3 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.

11.4 Children with disabilities are provided with appropriate assistance to eat, in a manner which promotes dignity and choice.

Part D: Health and wellbeing

Aim: Children's health needs are fully met, and their physical, emotional, and social development and wellbeing¹⁵ and mental health are promoted and supported.

Planning is child-centred, and health care provided is in the best interests of the child.

To achieve this aim, the school should meet the following standard:

Standard 12 - Health and wellbeing

12.1 Children understand their health needs, how to develop and maintain a healthy, happy, and fulfilling lifestyle and to make informed decisions about their own health. They are proactively engaged and supported to participate in a wide range of positive activities, such as social activities, sport, arts, cooking and off-site visits, that contribute to their physical, emotional, and mental health.

12.2 Staff working with children develop strong nurturing relationships with the children to support their emotional needs. Staff also have the skills and knowledge to recognise and meet children's individual healthcare needs and respect their rights and dignity. This should include recognising a change in a child's behaviour or communication that indicates they are in pain or unwell. Where staff have been delegated clinical tasks by healthcare practitioners, employers must follow guidance on training and competency from the relevant professional organisations that align to these.¹⁶

12.3 Children's wishes and feelings are actively sought using methods appropriate to their level of understanding and communication needs, and taken into account in their health care, and staff at the school take reasonable steps to intervene with health services on behalf of a child where this is in the child's best interests.

12.4 The school has effective links with health agencies, including specialist

¹⁵ 'wellbeing' means wellbeing within the meaning of [section 10\(2\) of the Children Act 2004](#).

¹⁶ Providers should have regard to the NICE guidance: [Disabled children and young people up to 25 with severe complex needs: integrated service delivery and organisation across health, social care and education](#), particularly pages 62-4.

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 considering admissions. Schools secure appropriate services for children when required. Children also have access to local medical, dental, optometric, and other services or provision as necessary.¹⁷

12.5 Where a child does not have an EHC plan that sets out specific therapeutic support, specific therapeutic techniques are used only:

- 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; and
- where specialist professionals (such as medical, legal, educationalists, psychologists, therapists) are professionally qualified and, where applicable, registered by the appropriate professional body.

12.6 The school has, and implements effectively, appropriate policies for the care of children who have medical conditions and/or are unwell. These include first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, administration of prescription and non-prescription medicines (including controlled drugs) and dealing with medical emergencies. Policies for administration of medication should reflect guidance provided by the [Royal Pharmaceutical Society](#) and the [Royal College of Nursing](#).

12.7 Effective arrangements are in place to care for children who are sick or injured. Children are accommodated away from other children where this is necessary to care for the child in question or to protect other resident children (e.g. from contagious conditions). Where children need to be cared for away from their usual accommodation, they are provided with good quality accommodation, with toilet and washing facilities appropriate to their needs. The accommodation is well staffed by appropriately qualified personnel, separated from other children, and provides children with appropriate privacy, taking into account sex, age and any individual needs.

12.8 All medication is safely, and securely stored and accurate records are kept of its administration. Prescribed medicines are given only to the children to whom they are prescribed. Staff are suitably trained to administer a child's medication as appropriate. Children allowed to self-medicate are assessed as sufficiently responsible to do so. Where applicable, schools have regard to statutory guidance¹⁸.

12.9 Any treatment received by a child is recorded in a written or electronic school

¹⁷ [Healthy Child Programme: 5 to 19 years old - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3> Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE, 2015), which is statutory guidance for maintained schools, PRUs and academies, and non-statutory guidance for other independent schools. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-health-and-wellbeing-of-looked-after-children--2> Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children, DfE & DH 2015

record (separate from NHS records) to which only appropriately designated staff have access.

12.10 Where school staff carry out medical or nursing procedures, or may need to administer emergency medication, for a disabled child (e.g. PEG (percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy) feeding, 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 and following the correct medication protocol. Staff carrying out these procedures are authorised to do so and have the correct knowledge, skills, up-to-date training, and necessary external support. There are clear arrangements in place to access medical support at all times, and for when clinicians are not available. Timely records are kept of all such tasks carried out.

12.11 Children's confidentiality, rights, privacy, and dignity as patients are fundamental and are appropriately protected. This includes the right of a child deemed to be 'Gillick Competent'¹⁹ to give or withhold consent for their own treatment.

12.12 Where necessary, a child has a clear plan covering their individual health and welfare needs. This contains relevant health and welfare information and records significant health and welfare needs and issues. The plan is child-centred, agreed by the child (where appropriate) and their parents/carers and includes:

- records of developmental checks;
- records of routine universal health checks (e.g. age appropriate immunisations, dental health, hearing and eyesight checks);
- health monitoring required by staff;
- intimate care or bodily functions requiring staff help;
- any sensory needs; and
- the involvement of a child's parents/carers or significant others in health and welfare issues.

This plan could be informed by health information in an EHC plan or similar plan as appropriate.

¹⁹ 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 deemed to be Gillick competent, if he or she has sufficient maturity and understanding of the treatment being proposed and the nature of the consent required. Further guidance is provided in the NHS consent to treatment – children and young people advice: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/consent-to-treatment/children/>. Young people aged 16 and over are assumed to have sufficient capacity to decide on their own medical treatment, unless they are deemed not to have capacity under section 2 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, or where the decision in relation to their medical treatment is deemed to be against their best interests. Fraser guidelines apply specifically to advice and treatment about contraception and sexual health-[Gillick competence and Fraser guidelines | NSPCC Learning](#)

Part E: Safeguarding

Aim: Children are safe, including in the school's residential accommodation and away from the school's premises. Effective measures are taken to manage risk and protect children from harm, and to manage well any incidents that do occur.

To achieve this aim, the school should meet the following standard:

Standard 13 - Safeguarding

13.1 The school should ensure that:

- 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 State²⁰.

13.2 The school should ensure that all staff are aware that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility throughout the school and its residential facilities.

13.3 It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The school's approach to online safety should be reflected in their child protection policy, having regard to the Department's [Keeping children safe in education](#) guidance.

13.4 [Keeping children safe in education](#) sets out that residential special schools have additional factors to consider with regard to safeguarding. As such it will be important that the residential special school's child protection policy (and/or other policies if appropriate) reflects:

- the school's policy on sexual relationships between children (and importance of children understanding this policy);
- the school's approach to child-on-child abuse, reflecting the unique nature of residential accommodation and the risks associated with children sharing overnight accommodation;
- the approach to protecting children where there is a significant gender imbalance in the school; and
- the approach to harmful online content and how children's devices are managed in terms of bringing a device into the school, and harmful content that may already be downloaded on to it, and the opportunity to download harmful content via 3, 4 and 5G that will bypass the school's filtering and monitoring systems.

²⁰ [Keeping children safe In education](#); and [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

Part F: Health and safety

Aim: Children are safe while at school, including in the school's residential accommodation, and when away from the school's premises but under the care of the school, on an educational visit for example. Effective measures are taken to manage risk and protect children from harm, and to manage well any incidents that do occur.

To achieve this aim, the school should meet the following standards:

Standard 14 - Safety of children

14.1 The school ensures compliance with relevant health and safety laws by drawing up and implementing effectively a written [health and safety policy](#). Staff undertake sufficient training to ensure that this is followed in practice.

14.2 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 children are ensured, and they are provided a safe environment in which they can live and learn.

14.3 The school ensures that the welfare of children at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

14.4 The school, as part of its health and safety policy, has written procedures setting out the contingency arrangements in case of a major incident, including what happens in the case of an overnight emergency where the premises need to be evacuated.

14.5 Schools should have procedures to ensure children's safety when off site, but under the care of the school, including when on [organised visits](#). These procedures should be proportionate and focus on managing assessed risks.

Standard 15 - Fire precautions and drills

15.1 Children and staff know what they need to do in an emergency and can be evacuated safely.

15.2 The school complies with the [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)²¹ and ensures alerting systems are accessible and there are clear evacuation plans for all children subject to their needs.

15.3 In addition, fire drills are regularly (at least once per term) carried out in 'residential time', and at least one per year should be carried out overnight unless the school has assessed that this would be detrimental to children's welfare.

²¹ [SI 2005/1541](#) - There are amendments which are not relevant to these standards.

15.4 Schools with children on short breaks or flexi or weekly provision may need to carry out additional fire drills to ensure children with those arrangements know what to do in an emergency.

Part G: Children's rights, advocacy, and complaints

Aim: Children are enabled to communicate, and develop positive relationships with staff, make their views known and maintain a relationship with their family (unless precluded by law). Children's views, wishes and feelings about their residential experience are taken into account by the school.

To achieve this aim, the school should meet the following standards:

Standard 16 - Contact with parents/carers

Children can contact their parents/carers and families in private, at a time that is suitable for both parties, and schools facilitate this where necessary. Schools should operate proportionate systems to monitor the use of electronic communications in order to detect abuse, bullying or unsafe practice by children. Schools are sensitive and comply with individual children's circumstances such as restricted contact with families. Communication aids are available for children who need them.

Standard 17 - Individual support

17.1 Children are able to contact any member of staff with personal, academic or welfare concerns. All staff should know what to do if a child approaches them with a concern.

17.2 The school identifies at least one person other than a parent, outside the staff and those responsible for the leadership and governance of the school, who children may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school. This person may be known as the 'independent person'²². Children know who this person is, know how to contact them and feel comfortable talking to them. The person is easily accessible at all reasonable times, visits regularly (at least monthly), and knows the children. The person should have the necessary skills to interact and communicate effectively with the children and be able to recognise good/poor care and safeguarding concerns. Children who cannot communicate verbally are given the means to request individual support. Schools may need to make a range of arrangements for independent support, which might be provided by more than one person, to ensure that the needs of each child are met.

²² To note: the independent person has a different role to the independent visitor. The independent person's focus is on individual support for children.

17.3 Children are provided with appropriate advocacy support where necessary and are made aware of what advocacy services are available, how they may access such support and any entitlement they may have to advocacy provision and that advocacy provision adheres to the National Standards²³²⁴.

17.4 Children are provided with details of two or more child specific support services, such as [Childline](#) or the [Children's Commissioner's Help at Hand service](#), to contact in case of problems or distress.

Standard 18 - Securing children's views

18.1 Children are actively encouraged to contribute their views to the operation of residential provision. There should be clear and easily accessible systems for children to provide their views and raise concerns. Children's views are considered in decisions about the running of the school and residential provision and children are provided with feedback about their expressed views. Children are not penalised for raising a concern in good faith.

18.2 Active steps are taken to enable all children to make their views known about their residential experience. Those views are recorded and taken into account in making everyday choices and in maximising their opportunities to develop independence.

18.3 Children are supported to participate in important decisions about their lives using means appropriate to their level of understanding and provided with support where they have additional communication needs. The school does not assume that any child is unable to communicate their views.

Standard 19 - Complaints

19.1 The school has, and follows, an effective policy on recording and responding to **parental** complaints that is compliant with the relevant [regulatory standards](#). The policy is clear on how to make a complaint, how it will be dealt with and the timescales for a response.

19.2 The school should also have a clear and easily accessible process for **children** to raise their own complaints about residential provision. The school's procedures should be clear about how it will respond to complaints from children and allow for different communication needs. Children are not penalised for raising a complaint in good faith.

²³ [National Standards for the Provision of Children's Advocacy Services](#)

²⁴ Further guidance on advocacy for children and young people with SEND is set out in [SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#). The Code re-states the statutory requirement in S19 Children and Families Act 2014 for local authorities to have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people and, in paragraph 2.15, the Code is clear that for young people 'advocacy should be provided where necessary'.

19.3 The school's written record of complaints identifies those complaints relating to residential provision, and action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld). The school should also keep a record of complaints made but later withdrawn. The school should keep under review any emerging patterns arising from complaints.

Part H: Promoting positive behaviour and relationships

Aim: Children are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff. Positive behaviour and good relationships are encouraged and praised. Any sanctions for misbehaviour are well understood (considering the age and stage of development of the child) and implemented fairly (considering the age and stage of development of the child).

To achieve this aim, the school should meet the following standards:

Standard 20 - Promoting positive behaviour

20.1 The school has, and consistently implements, a written policy²⁵ to promote good behaviour amongst pupils. This policy includes:

- the underlying objective to create a safe environment in which all pupils can learn and reach their full potential and to reflect the values and ethos of the school;
- the role of designated staff in maintaining consistent behaviour expectations, including the responsibilities of school leaders, any resources allocated, and the involvement of governors or trustees;
- the behaviour expected of pupils, including treating others with dignity, kindness and respect, and the measures to promote good behaviour, including positive reinforcement and reward and consequence systems;
- how the needs of all pupils and staff are met so members of the school community feel safe knowing that bullying, physical threats or abuse are not tolerated, and that they belong;
- pupil support, including the roles and responsibilities of designated staff and the support provided to pupils with additional needs where those needs might affect behaviour;
- measures to prevent child-on-child abuse and the response to incidents of such abuse, including disciplinary action;
- how the school creates an environment in which children experience low stress;
- staff understanding children's individual behaviours and how a child communicates, adapting their approach accordingly (for example, for some

²⁵ DfE guidance is here- [Behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools](#).

non-verbal children behavioural challenge can be a form of communication and therefore staff need to understand non-verbal cues);

- when restraint, including [reasonable force](#), is to be used and other physical contact and how this will be managed. Including how the policy, as required, complies with [Reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention](#)
- arrangements for [searching and screening](#) children and their possessions and how this relates to safeguarding policies. Any search of children's personal belongings should be carried out in accordance with section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996 and with regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

20.2 The policy complies with relevant legislation and has regard to [relevant guidance](#) and is understood by staff, children, parents, and carers.

20.3 Staff should receive appropriate training and support to recognise and deal with incidences of challenging behaviour and bullying. This should include as appropriate, additional training and support to enable staff to de-escalate potential confrontations between pupils, or potentially violent behaviour, to minimise the need for restraint. This training should include assistance in managing staff members' responses and feelings arising from working with children who have emotional difficulties which result in behaviour that challenges. Staff training is regularly refreshed.

20.4 Methods to understand triggers for behaviour that challenges, and to deescalate situations that may result in restraint, are used to avoid restraint wherever possible. Restraint should be used only to prevent injury to any person including the child involved, or to prevent serious damage to property and cannot be used to maintain good order. Restraint should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

20.5 All children and staff are given an opportunity to discuss with a relevant adult (who was not directly involved) incidents of restraint they have been involved in, witnessed, or been affected by, where possible within 24 hours. Discussions should take account of the age of the child, their capacity and cognitive ability and communication needs, and the circumstances of the restraint.

20.6 A clear and unambiguous written record²⁶ is kept of major sanctions and the use of any restraint. Records include the information in Appendix B (use of restraint (including restrictive interventions)). The record is made within 24 hours and is legible. Children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records and should be offered the opportunity to access advocacy support to help them with this. The head of residential provision or equivalent regularly reviews any instances of the use of all types of restraint and examines trends or issues to enable staff to reflect and learn in a way that will inform future practice and minimise the use of restraint.

²⁶ A written record includes electronic records in formats that cannot later be changed.

20.7 Senior leaders should monitor the use of restraint, take appropriate action to prevent the inappropriate use of restraint, and take effective action when inappropriate restraint has been used.

20.8 These standards do not prevent a child from being deprived of their liberty where that deprivation is authorised through the correct processes.

20.9 Staff working within the school know and implement the school's policy, and any local protocols, in relation to children going missing, and understand their role in implementing that policy. Staff actively search for children who are missing, including working with the police where appropriate. 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 school follows the local RMFHC protocol and complies with and makes staff aware of any other processes required by the placing authority. Staff must keep written records of absent and missing episodes.

Standard 21 - Preventing bullying

21.1 The school ensures that all forms of bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory), at the school, are prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective antibullying strategy. The strategy should include accessible and effective systems for children to report bullying.

21.2 Any incidents of bullying, discrimination, aggression, and derogatory language (including name calling), whether in relation to a protected characteristic under the [Equality Act 2010](#) or otherwise, are dealt with quickly and effectively, and staff take reasonable steps to help children to overcome the impact of bullying. All staff are trained to recognise bullying and know who to go to, if required, to ensure bullying is dealt with.

21.3 The school's anti-bullying strategy should reflect that, unlike at day schools, children who are at residential schools who are being bullied (offline) cannot escape their bullies for long periods of time as they are not going home as often.

Standard 22: Promoting good relationships

22.1 Children are supported to develop good relationships with other pupils and staff, which are based on mutual trust and respect. Through regulations made under [section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017](#), schools are required to teach relationships education to primary school pupils and relationships and sex education to secondary school pupils.

22.2 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.

22.3 Staff understand, and help children to understand, what makes a healthy, nurturing relationship. Staff are trained (the regular safeguarding and child protection training (as required in [Keeping children safe in education](#)) could be one useful avenue) to think curiously about and recognise the signs of children at risk of or involved in damaging relationships with others, including teenage relationship abuse, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation and child-on-child abuse, and take appropriate action and reasonable steps to prevent unhealthy relationships when they have a concern²⁷

Part J: Staffing

Aim: Children are supervised by well-trained, experienced, and skilled staff who have been vetted to ensure their suitability. There are sufficient staff to provide care for each child, and continuity of staff.

To achieve this aim, the school should meet the following standards:

Standard 24 - Staff recruitment and checks on other adults

24.1 Schools operate safer recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures in line with the [regulatory requirements](#) and having regard to guidance²⁸ issued by the Secretary of State.

24.2 For all members of staff households who are aged 16 and over (not on the roll of, nor employed by, the school) and who live on the same premises as children, an Enhanced certificate with a check of the Children's Barred List must be obtained from the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) (DBS). For all other persons aged 16 and over, not on the roll of, nor employed by the school, who live on the same premises as boarders, an Enhanced certificate with a check of the Children's Barred List must be obtained. The same premises would include, for example, teacher housing on the same grounds as the school, requiring the use of the same entry and exit points.

24.3 There is a written agreement between the school and any person aged 16 and over 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, and expectations 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 of staff if they are charged with, or convicted of, any offence.

²⁷ Annex B of [Keeping children safe in education](#) provides information on teenage relationship abuse, exploitation and child on child abuse.

²⁸ Part 3 of [Keeping children safe in education](#);

24.4 All persons visiting residential accommodation or staff accommodation (e.g. visitors, outside delivery and maintenance personnel) are kept under sufficient staff supervision to prevent them gaining unsupervised access to children or their accommodation²⁹.

Standard 25 - Staff deployment and supervision of children

25.1 There are sufficient 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.

25.2 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.

25.3 There are clear arrangements for suitably experienced staff to deputise in the absence of the Head of Care (or school equivalent).

25.4 Staff members who are placed in charge of the residential provision and other staff at particular times (e.g. as leaders of staff shifts) have relevant experience of working in the school and have successfully completed their induction and probationary periods.

25.5 The Head of Care (or school equivalent) has in place a staff disciplinary procedure which is clear and effective. The procedure clearly separates staff disciplinary processes from child protection enquiries and criminal proceedings and is known by staff.

25.6 There is continuity of staff such that, as far as is possible, children's relationships are not overly disrupted. The school should aim to have no more than half the staff on duty, at any one time by day or night, as external agency staff or temporary staff who do not know the children very well. Schools should have plans that show how they aim to recruit and retain permanent staff. Agency/temporary staff are not put in permanent overall charge of the care of any child or children.

25.7 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. As far as is possible, children are able to choose who provides their personal care.

25.8 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. The school must identify and take appropriate actions, if necessary, to reduce and manage the risks identified within the required risk assessment.

²⁹ Part 3 of [Keeping children safe in education](#) provides advice on visitors, contractors and volunteers and supervision.

25.9 The staff group in day-to-day contact with children includes staff of both sexes whenever possible. Where the school's Statement of Purpose makes it explicit that the school uses staff of one sex only, clear guidance is provided and implemented on how children are enabled to maintain relationships with members of the opposite sex to the staff group. Staffing arrangements also take into consideration any protected characteristics under the [Equality Act 2010](#) plus children's ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

25.10 Any role of spouses, partners and/or other adult members of staff households within residential accommodation is made clear.

25.11 Suitable accommodation (consisting of accommodation in which meals may be taken, living accommodation, and sleeping accommodation) and suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for residential staff. This accommodation is appropriately separated³⁰ from the accommodation and facilities provided for children.

25.12 No children have access to staff residential accommodation, other than in exceptional circumstances. Where this occurs, a one-to-one situation should be avoided with another adult always present. There is no inappropriate favouritism or inappropriate one-to-one contact between staff and children.

25.13 There is a suitable number of staff on duty to meet the needs of, and be responsible for, the children in each building where children sleep at night. Children should be able to easily contact members of staff during the night if necessary and should know how to do this.

Standard 26 - Staff supervision, training, and support

26.1 Staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the children resident in the school. Staff are well trained and up to date with professional, legal and practice developments and the policies and legal obligations of the school.

26.2 All existing care staff have attained a relevant minimum level 3 qualification or have qualifications which demonstrate the same competencies. All new staff engaged following the commencement of the 2015 standards hold these qualifications or begin working towards them within three months of confirmation of employment and complete the qualification within two years.

26.3 The school ensures that new staff undertake an induction programme designed and delivered to enable them to meet the range of needs of children at the school and fully equip them to identify and safely manage safeguarding issues. The programme should begin within seven working days of starting their employment and be completed within six months.

³⁰ 'Appropriately separated' does not mean that the accommodation has to be in a separate building. However, separation should mean that facilities are not shared.

26.4 The learning and development programme is evaluated for effectiveness at least annually and is updated if necessary.

26.5 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 childcare and the policies and purpose of the school.

26.6 All staff have access to relevant support and advice for their role. They also have at least termly supervision and a formal annual appraisal of their performance.

Standard 27 – Guardians

27.1 All educational guardians appointed by the school³¹ are subject to the same safer recruitment procedures as staff.

27.2 Where the school is responsible for appointing educational guardians, it regularly monitors the suitability of its arrangements.

27.3 Whether an educational guardian is appointed by the school or a parent/carer the school takes appropriate steps to ensure that the guardianship arrangement is promoting the welfare, physical wellbeing, and emotional wellbeing of the child.

27.4 Any concerns about an educational guardianship arrangement should be acted upon immediately and referred to any relevant agencies³².

27.5 Under no circumstances should school staff be appointed as an educational guardian for children³³.

³¹ 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 as to whether the school or parent is responsible for the arrangements made and thus the welfare of the child. Guidance for schools on educational guardians is available in the 'Boarding Briefing' series published by the Boarding Schools' Association.

³² Steps to take where a concern about an educational guardianship arrangement relate to the harm (or likely harm) of a boarder are set out in Part 1 of [Keeping children safe in education](#)

³³ Note- this does not prevent school staff supporting a child in an emergency situation where that support has been risk assessed and arranged through consultation with senior managers (and where possible the designated safeguarding lead and SENCO as appropriate).

Appendix A: List of policies and documents

The following policies and documents should be kept by the school:

Policies:

1. Countering bullying, including cyberbullying
2. Safeguarding
3. Behaviour
4. Staff disciplinary, grievance and whistleblowing policy
5. Care of children who have medical conditions and/or are unwell, including first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, dealing with medical emergencies and the use of prescription and non-prescription medication
6. Safety and supervision on school journeys
7. Access to school premises by people outside the school
8. Pupil access to risky areas of school buildings and grounds
9. Health and safety
10. Pupil access to a person independent of the school staff group
11. Provision for pupils with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs
12. Supervision of 'unchecked' staff

Documents:

13. Staff handbook/guidance for residential staff (this document may include many of the policy documents listed above)
14. Statement of the school's residential principles and practice
15. Requirement for staff to report concerns or allegations of risk of harm to pupils
16. Complaints procedure
17. Procedure for enabling pupils to take problems or concerns to any member of staff
18. Responses to alcohol, smoking and substance abuse
19. Plans for foreseeable crises
20. Staff induction, training, and development programme
21. Prefect duties, powers, and responsibilities
22. Key written information for new children
23. Job descriptions for staff with residential duties

Where applicable:

- 24.** Clarification of whether any educational guardians or lodgings are arranged by the school or parents
- 25.** Agreement with any adult providing lodgings to pupils
- 26.** Guidance on welfare to host families accommodating pupils on behalf of the school

Appendix B: List of records

The following school records are required:

1. Child protection allegations or concerns
2. Major sanctions. Information should include:
 - date and location of the incident which led to the sanction being applied
 - the nature of the sanction;
 - the name of the staff member giving the sanction the effectiveness and any consequences of the sanction
3. Use of restraint (including restrictive interventions). Information should include:
 - name of the child
 - details of relevant behaviour
 - details of the reasonable force employed
 - the name(s) of any other staff present
 - confirmation of whether the parents have been alerted to the use of restraint
 - the signature of the staff member concerned
 - evidence that the record has been approved by a senior member of staff
4. Bullying incidents, investigations, and outcomes
5. Complaints and their outcomes
6. Individual children's records (containing personal, health and welfare information)
 - name, sex and date of birth
 - home address
 - name, address, and telephone number for emergency contact with parents/carers and for each person with parental responsibility
 - the name and contact details for the person or authority responsible for the placement of the child at the school
 - whether the child is in care and details of any known court orders affecting his or her care
 - dates and details of any unauthorised absences from the school
 - the date of, and reason for, any visit to the child whilst in the school
 - the date and circumstances of any measure of control, reasonable force or discipline used on the child
 - a copy of any EHC plan maintained in relation to the child
 - special dietary, health, and dental needs, if any
 - a copy of any Individual Health Care plan in relation to the child
 - contact arrangements, and any restrictions on contact or communication, with parents/carers and others
 - current and past placements or other plans
 - the name and address of the general practitioner with whom the child is registered, and of the child's registered dental practitioner

- details of any accidents, injuries or serious illnesses of the child while accommodated by the school
 - immunisations, allergies, medical, health or developmental tests or examinations carried out while accommodated by the school
 - medication (both prescribed and non-prescription) given to the child by staff and medication controlled by the child itself
 - deposit or withdrawal of money or valuables given to the school for safekeeping, with dates and details
7. Administration of medication, treatment and first aid (kept confidentially)
 8. Significant illnesses
 9. Significant accidents and injuries
 10. Parental permission for medical and dental treatment, first aid and non-prescription medication
 11. Risk assessments, and actions taken in response to risk assessments
 12. Staff recruitment records and checks (including checks on others given substantial unsupervised access to children or residential accommodation)
 13. Staff duty rotas
 14. Staff supervision, appraisal, and training
 15. Fire precautions tests and drills
 16. Risk assessments under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
 17. Menus where applicable
 18. Pocket money and any personal property looked after by staff
 19. Care plans (where applicable)
 20. Parental permission for high-risk activities
 21. Checks on licensing of relevant Adventure Activities Centres
 22. Assessments of lodgings arranged by the school
 23. Assessment of off-site accommodation used by the school
 24. Suitability of any guardianship arrangements

All of the above must be regularly monitored by the headteacher (or school equivalent) or a senior member of staff, to identify whether review or change in welfare practice is needed.

Appendix C: Further information

This is not an exhaustive list of useful resources and organisations but is intended as a guide for users.

Useful resources and external organisations

- [Ofsted](#)
- [Boarding Schools Association](#)
- [National Association of Independent Schools & Non-Maintained Special Schools \(NASS\)](#)

Other relevant departmental advice and statutory guidance

- [National minimum standards for boarding schools](#)
- [Guide to the children's homes regulations, including quality standards](#)
- [Health and safety: advice for schools](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- [Use of reasonable force: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies](#)
- [School and college behaviour and attendance](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation: Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies](#)
- [Visiting children in residential special schools and colleges](#)
- [Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention](#)
- [RCPCH Healthcare Standards for Children and Young People 1.2 updated 2019-09.pdf](#)
- [Disabled children and young people up to 25 with severe complex needs: integrated service delivery and organisation across health, social care and education](#)

Other resources

- [The Children's Homes \(England\) Regulations 2015](#)
- [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#)

Appendix D - Table of substantive changes

Where	What
Part A	Governance Leadership and Management
Aim	Aim added to provide context to the standards in Part A.
Standard 1	Statement of principles and practice
1.1	Added the school should promote its Statement of Purpose.
1.2 New	Added the school should prepare a children's version of the Statement of Purpose.
1.3 New	Added additional content to include in the Statement of Purpose.
1.4 New	Added that the Statement of Purpose should be published on the school website and reviewed annually and updated where required.
Standard 2 (was 13)	Leadership and management
2.1 (was 13.1)	Added trustees to the list of people who should have oversight of the running of the school.
2.2 New	Added that residential provision is a standing or regular item at the governing body meetings. At least one governor should have responsibility for the oversight of residential provision and at least one governor should also be expected to visit the residential provision on a regular basis.
2.3 (was 13.3 and 13.6)	Combined what was 13.3 and 13.6 and added governors, trustees, and proprietors.
2.5 New	Added that the residential and educational provision should be mutually supportive, with staff in each provision being comfortable challenging each other with the school introducing processes to do so.
Standard 3 (was 20)	Monitoring by independent visitors
3.1(was 20.1)	<p>Changed 'partnership' to 'proprietor' to reflect common terminology.</p> <p>Added the independent visitor is independent from the 'leadership' and management.</p> <p>Added the independent visitor is vetted in line with Keeping children safe in education and has the skills and authority to carry out the role.</p>

Where	What
3.2(was 20.2)	<p>Added monitoring visits should include conversations with children, senior management team, staff and parents/carers and social workers, where relevant.</p> <p>Added monitoring visits should include the 'quality of provision'. Added monitoring visits should include an assessment of the suitability of the building and furnishings and the external environment.</p>
3.3(was 20.3)	Added the governing body, trustees, or proprietor of the school should record a formal response to each written report from the independent visitor. Reports and responses should be shared, on request, with the local authority where the school is located and any placing local authorities.
Standard 4 (was 16)	Inclusion, equality, and diversity
4.1 (was 16.1)	Added a note to confirm the list is not supposed to be all encompassing and the key factor is protecting children from discrimination. Added additional line to reflect importance of considering discrimination when creating an inclusive environment.
Standard 5 (was 22)	Records
5.1 (was 22.1)	Added parents/carers.
5.5 (was 13.7)	Moved from what was 13.7
Part B	Care and placement planning
Aim	Aim added to provide context to the standards in Part B.
Standard 6 (was 2)	Admission and induction
6.1 New	New information added reflecting schools' duties in relation to EHC plans.
6.3 (was 2.5)	<p>Added that the review should consider whether the provision is meeting the child's needs and EHC plan. Review meetings shall include a residential report.</p> <p>Changed the requirement to have the child in the review 'where possible' to 'where appropriate'.</p>

Where	What
Standard 7 (was 21)	Placement planning and review
7.2 (was 21.1)	Defined the regular review of the placement plan as at least every term and in conjunction with any EHC plan review.
7.4 (was 21.3)	Added that when the child's views are being sought on their key worker, this should take into account any communication needs and may be done by an independent advocate.
Standard 8 (was 2)	Transition and preparing for adulthood
8.1 (was 2.6)	Added that information, support, and guidance should be provided 'as soon as possible' rather than 'well in advance' to children ahead of their transition and this should continue until their departure.
8.2 (was 2.7)	Added the need to implement any continuing health care plan alongside other transition plans. Added the need to involve all relevant agencies and allow adequate time for implementation ahead of transition.
8.3 New	New line added reflecting the Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) outcomes set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25.
Part C	Residential Provision
Aim	Aim added to provide context to the standards in Part C.
Standard 9 (was 5)	Residential accommodation
9.1 (was 5.1)	Moved to 'good' quality sleeping accommodation from 'suitable' Made clear risk assessments should be documented. Accommodation considerations should include privacy, sex, age, and individual needs (and removed the arbitrary 'age 8' split). Added a line setting out children should be able to express a preference about whom they share accommodation with. Added that children on long- and short-term placements should not be mixed where possible.

Where	What
9.2 (was 5.2)	Moved to 'good quality' living accommodation from 'suitable' and added that children should have appropriate access to the internet.
9.3 (was 5.3)	Made clear fixtures, fittings and adaptations should be 'good quality' and hot water should be available. Toilets should be 'readily' accessible rather than 'reasonably'. When considering privacy of boarders and toilet facilities added a line to consider 'age, sex and individual needs'.
9.4 (was 5.4)	Moved to 'well' instead of 'appropriately'. Added the accommodation contains suitable specialist 'equipment'. Updated to reflect 'disabilities' rather than 'restricted mobility'. Added any specialist equipment should be well maintained and safe, and staff should have appropriate training to operate it.
9.5 (was 5.5)	Moved from 'suitably furnished' to 'well furnished'.
9.7 (was 5.7)	Removed 'substantial' to reflect it wouldn't be acceptable to allow members of the public unsupervised access to children or residential accommodation whilst in use by children.
9.8 (was 5.8)	Added additional information to help schools meet their legal obligations around data protection. Added that any school using CCTV should set out the rationale for its use in the school's security policy.
Standard 10 (was 9)	Personal possessions
10.1 (was 9.1)	Moved from 'adequate' laundry provision to 'good'.
10.3 (was 9.3)	Moved from 'reasonable' protection to 'good'.
Standard 11 (was 8)	Provision and preparation of food and drinks
11.1 (was 8.1)	Moved from 'adequate' meals to 'good' meals. Added footnote to the school food standards resources for schools.
11.2 (was 8.2)	Moved from 'suitable accommodation' to 'good quality facilities'.
Part D	Health and Wellbeing
Aim	Aim added to provide context to the standards in Part D.
Previous 3.1	Standard was removed as it is now reflected in the Part D aim.

Where	What
Standard 12 was 3)	Provision and preparation of food and drinks
12.6 (was 3.6)	Updated to reflect a policy for children with ‘medical conditions’ as well as children who are unwell. Added ‘prescription and non-prescription’. Updated the link to the guidance.
12.7 (was 3.7)	Additional information added on the care of sick or injured children, including as with other standards moving from ‘suitable’ to ‘good’.
12.8 (was 3.8)	Added that staff should be suitably trained to administer a child’s medication as appropriate. Added that where applicable schools should have regard to statutory guidance. Added footnote to statutory guidance Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions.
12.10 (was 3.10)	Updated to cover staff who administer ‘emergency medication’. Included PEG (percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy) feeding in example of medical conditions. Added that staff should have correct knowledge, skills, up to date training and necessary external support. Added the need for arrangements in place to always be able to access medical support at all times and for when clinicians are not available. Updated to reflect ‘timely’ records should be kept.
12.11 (was 3.11)	Added that children’s confidentiality, rights, privacy, and dignity as patients are fundamental and are appropriately protected. Expanded the footnote to reflect over 16s may be covered by the Mental Capacity Act.
12.12 (was 3.12)	Updated that any healthcare plans should be ‘child-centred’ and where appropriate agreed with the child. Added that plans should cover records of routine universal health checks. Added that plans should capture any sensory needs. Added that the plan may be informed by health information.
Part E	Safeguarding
Aim	Aim added to provide context to the standards in Part E. Also new standalone part to reflect health and safety.
Standard 13 (was 11)	Safeguarding

Where	What
13.1-13.4 (was 11.1)	Reflecting consultation feedback from NMS, Keeping children safe in education and the Ofsted review into sexual abuse in schools we have added additional context to reflect the unique nature of residential provision over and above day schools- the updated standard aligns with requirements as set out in Keeping children safe in education.
Part F	Health and safety
Part F	Aim added to provide context to the standards in Part F.
Standard 14 (was 6)	Safety of children
14.1 (was 6.1)	Added line to reflect importance of sufficient training.
14.2 (was 6.2)	Linking into updates to other standards added a line to be clear the output of ensuring the health and safety of pupils will be a safe environment where they can live and learn.
14.4 New	Added line on contingency arrangements.
14.5 New	Added line linking into Health and Safety on educational visits.
Standard 15 (was 7)	Fire precaution and drills
15.2 (was 7.1)	Added alerting systems are accessible and there are evacuation plans subject to children's needs.
15.3 (was 7.2)	Added importance of an overnight drill (unless an assessment has been carried out that shows this would be detrimental to children's welfare).
Standard 18 (was 17)	Securing children's views
18.1 (was 17.1)	Updated to reflect importance of having systems that are clear and easily accessible where boarders are able to contribute their views and to make clear the importance of giving feedback. Removed complaints from this standard and reflected in standard 19.
18.2 (was 17.2)	Added that children are able to express views on their 'residential experience' and these are recorded.
18.3 (was 17.2)	Split from what was 17.2. Added that children are supported to participate in decisions about their lives, appropriate to their level of understanding and taking into account communication needs.

Where	What
Standard 19 (was 18)	Complaints
19.1 (was 18.1)	Updated to be clear this is 'parental complaints' as they have regulatory underpinning.
19.2	Separated complaints from Standard 18 'Securing children's views' to reflect in the complaint standard
19.3 (was 18.2)	Added that withdrawn complaints are kept on record and keeping any patterns under review.
Part H	Promoting positive behaviour and relationships
Aim	Aim added to provide context to the standards in Part H
Standard 20 (was 12)	Promoting positive behaviour
20.1	Included link to guidance. Added additional areas to include in behaviour policy (in line with DfE behaviour and restraint guidance)- making links to other standards and wider duties in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of boarders.
Standard 21 New	Preventing bullying - Added new standard (bullying was previously reflected in the promoting positive behaviour standard)
21.1 New	Reflecting requirement for an anti-bullying strategy including accessible and effective systems to report bullying.
21.2 New	Reflecting importance of dealing with bullying quickly and effectively
21.3 New	Reflecting the unique nature of residential schools and implications for children who are being bullied (offline) when they have no escape from the bullies- i.e. to go home.
Standard 22	Promoting good relationships
22.1-22.3 New	Building on the introduction of statutory relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education and updated Keeping children safe in education guidance, a new standard reflecting the important role of school staff in supporting children to develop good relationships and be able identify harmful relationships.

Where	What
Part I	Boarders' development
Aim	Aim added to provide context to the standards in Part I.
Standard 23 (was standard 10. 23.4 was standard 2.8)	Activities and free time
23.1 (was 10.1)	Amended line to add importance of daily living skills as reflected in SEND code of practice.
23.2 (was 10.2)	Updated to reflect this should apply to 'all' children and they should engage in a range of activities and that some activities may be captured in the EHC plan. Age appropriate has been replaced with developmentally appropriate.
23.3 (was 10.4)	Added that there is appropriate separation of areas for staff and pupils' recreation and socialising.
Part J	Staffing
Aim	Aim added to provide context to the standards in Part J.
Standard 24 (was 14)	Staffing
24.2	Updated to reflect members of staff households and all other persons.
24.3 (was 14.3)	Added that the written agreement between the school and persons over 16 living in the accommodation includes guidance 'and expectations' around contact with children.
24.4 (was 14.4)	Removed 'substantial' to reflect it wouldn't be acceptable to allow visitors unsupervised access to children or residential accommodation whilst in use by children.
Standard 25 (was 15)	Staff deployment and supervision of children
25.4 (was 15.4)	Updated to clarify it is the staff in charge of the residential provision rather than the school who should have relevant experience.
25.5 (was 15.5)	Added that the staff disciplinary procedure should be 'effective'.
25.6 (was 15.7)	The target of below 50% temporary staff is an aim. Added that temporary staff are not put in permanent overall charge of the care of any child or children.

Where	What
25.8 (was 15.9)	Added that the school must take appropriate action to reduce and manage risks identified by the risk assessment.
25.9 (was 15.10)	Added reference to the Equality Act 2010.
25.12 (was 15.13)	Clarified that children should only access staff residential accommodation in exceptional circumstances.
25.13 New	New line reflecting importance of suitable staffing overnight.
Standard 26 (was 19)	Staff supervision, training, and support
26.1 (was 19.1)	Clarified that staff are equipped to meet needs of children 'resident in the school'. Added 'staff are well trained'. Removed requirement for staff to be aware of school business needs.
26.2 (was 19.2)	Added that staff must complete their Level 3 qualification within 2 years.
26.6 (was 19.6)	Added requirement that support, staff have access to, is 'relevant'.
Standard 27 (was part of 14)	Guardians
27.3 New	New line reflecting importance of schools taking appropriate steps to ensure guardianship arrangements are promoting the welfare of the child.
27.4 New	New line reflecting existing requirement as per Keeping children safe in education to act on any concerns about a child.
27.5 New	New line to be clear school staff should not be appointed as educational guardians for children. But this doesn't prevent school staff providing support in an emergency.



Department
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