

# Grateley House School

Inspection report for residential special school

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<b>Address</b>	Pond Lane Grateley Andover Hampshire SP11 8TA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01264 889751
<b>Email</b>	grateley.admin@cambianguroup.com
<b>Registered person</b>	Cambian Asperger Syndrome Services Limited
<b>Head of care</b>	Susan King
<b>Head / Principal</b>	Maggie Rigg
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	4 October 2006

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## About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

## **Service information**

### **Brief description of the service**

Grateley House is an Independent Residential Special School that is part of 'Cambian Education Services' a national company that specialises in providing residential care and education for young people on the autistic spectrum. The school provides co-educational termly residential care and education for students from nine to 19 years of age with Asperger Syndrome and associated difficulties within the autistic spectrum. The school has currently 42 residential places. The school's residential provision comprises of seven separate house bases, each accommodating six students, some within the main school building which was previously a large country house, and some purpose-built within the school grounds. The school has recently been successful in registering a post 16 home within the Salisbury community which provides a further eight residential places. This is inspected separately by the Commission for Social Care Inspection. At the time of the inspection the majority of house bases were of mixed gender. One of the purpose built house bases on site accommodate post-16 students who undertake a 'Moving-On' programme. The school provides an extensive range of therapeutic support services for students.

### **Summary**

The purpose of the inspection was to ensure that the responsible person safeguards and promotes the welfare of children accommodated there and that the school was continuing to meet the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. Grateley House School continues to operate to a very high standard of care. Outcomes for students are outstanding in all areas assessed. A majority of residential students contributed to the inspection process through discussion with the inspector or completing questionnaires. A survey was sent to the parents of students, however, few responded. The school excels in keeping meticulous records, which clearly demonstrate how students' health, safety and welfare are promoted. There are clear systems in place, adopted throughout the service, which aim to protect students and ensure effective responses are made in all safeguarding areas. Commitment to staff training is afforded high priority. There is strong leadership overseeing and monitoring all aspects of care provided. A dedicated staff team encourage, support and empower students to attain their full potential. The recommendation made at the last inspection had been acted upon and resolved satisfactorily. The school meets all of the National Minimum Standards and provides excellent outcomes for students. There were no recommendations made at this inspection.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection the school has continued to demonstrate sustained development and improvements in all areas. The last inspection at Grateley House School highlighted one recommendation. The school was recommended that they provide parents of students with information that summarises the arrangements for child protection within the school, which includes the name of the Child protection liaison officer (CPLO), and the contact details of the local Children's Services Department. The school has provided all the relevant information to parents within their prospectus and parent information pack and also on the school's web site. The school has been very successful in registering a post 16 home within the community, this provision is inspected separately by the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

## Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Students' health and wellbeing is extremely well promoted through clear, concise placement plans that include health details. They clearly demonstrate that students' physical health and emotional needs are identified, addressed and reviewed regularly. Specialist support is gained for students when needed and the students benefit from a highly skilled and qualified therapy team. Students benefit from a comprehensive programme of personal and social health education which includes drug and alcohol awareness and healthy living. The school has been awarded the Enhanced Healthy School award which looks at the personal and social education and healthy food options provided to students. All matters relating to health and medication are very effectively managed and monitored. Staff demonstrate a good awareness of students' health needs and the importance of safe administration of medication, and undertake regular training in first aid. Medical consents from parents and suitably trained staff ensure that emergency treatment can be provided to students in the house bases. Students' welfare is protected by the safe storage and administration of all medication which has recently been improved to a high standard to meet legislation. The school nurse has made considerable changes in all matters relating to health and medication to ensure the school fully complies with safe storage and recording of controlled drugs and good practice is adhered to. The school's surgery has been redesigned to make it a more suitable environment for students needing medical attention; however the shower area installed is not suitable for students to use in its current state. The school nurse and therapy team are highly committed to ensure that students' emotional and health needs are constantly assessed and their needs are well met and prove to be a valuable asset to the school. The school is aware of the need to continue to maintain the high standards in this area. The school states that there will be continued development in monitoring and safe handling and administration of medication and ensures that staff regularly update their safe handling medication training. Students' health is promoted through nutritious and varied meals. Pupils have fruit and healthy options readily available in house bases and are encouraged to participate in activities which promote a healthier lifestyle. The school's cook caters for all students' dietary needs and ensures that meals are home cooked with reduced sugar and salt to further promote a healthy diet for students.

## Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Students at Grateley House School live in a safe and stable environment where their welfare is paramount. Staff have an excellent understanding of the needs of the students and how to safeguard them. Students' privacy and dignity is highly valued and respected by staff who follow good practice. Supporting policies and practice guidance documents in relation to privacy and confidentiality are in place. Students confirm that staff are discreet when dealing with sensitive matters, and respect privacy by knocking on doors before entering. Each student has a single bedroom and all bathroom and toilet facilities have suitable locks to ensure privacy is maintained. Individual records are stored securely within the school. Students' welfare is protected through a comprehensive and effective complaints procedure. Staff at the school act swiftly, in line with their policies, to ensure good outcomes are achieved. Students are well supported by staff should they wish to make a complaint or advocate on behalf of students with communication difficulties. The school has been proactive in reviewing and updating all complaints information to include Ofsted details and this is available to students and parents. Students report feeling confident in raising any concerns with staff and feel that staff listen,

take their concerns seriously and act to resolve any issues. Students are protected through thorough and robust child protection procedures and professional well trained staff. Any issue which may relate to a child protection concern is addressed in line with the local Safeguarding Children procedures and the school responds in a professional manner to any allegations or serious concerns about a young person's safety. All staff receive child protection training at their initial induction and regular updated refresher training. Students are protected by good risk assessments. These are detailed and relate to each student's vulnerability and how staff minimise potential risks. The school has updated the child protection policy and procedure to ensure parents are aware of the school's Child Protection Liaison Officer and the local children's services contact number should they have a concern. Notifications of significant events are fully recorded and appropriate agencies are notified in a timely manner. Students are protected and their welfare promoted against bullying behaviour by good staffing ratios and regular communication with students about social behaviour and the impact it has on others. If issues of conflict arise, students are supported by various behaviour management strategies to minimise potential risk. Staff respond to students in a very positive manner and encourage positive behaviour and develop students' self esteem. The school surveys students about their thoughts on bullying and are committed to educating students about bullying behaviour. Students reported enjoying the 'Defeat Bullying' day and wore a range of colourful footwear to raise awareness throughout the school. Students are safeguarded against going missing by vigilant staff and good staff ratios. Students are further protected by comprehensive risk assessments. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of their role and responsibilities if a student should be absent without consent. Grateley House School campus is large and open within an eight acre site. Students have access to the grounds and staff actively encourage students to abide by the rules and arrangements in place for their safety and in turn are trusted to stay on site. Records demonstrate that students very rarely leave the site without permission. The school has a well established and effective system for behaviour management in place. Students are encouraged to develop positively through behaviour management that fosters self worth and confidence in students. Staff use a variety of skills and expertise to encourage and reinforce good behaviour. All staff are trained in a positive behaviour management technique. This technique includes various de-escalation methods and when necessary, physical intervention. Students are also protected by meticulous record keeping of all incidents requiring physical intervention and these are monitored regularly. Staff view the young people positively and observations of behaviour management were positive, respectful and managed well. The school aims to teach students self management through a range of strategies to enable them to achieve from their strengths and successfully manage their difficulties. The school has an extensive and well-established health and safety policy and thorough risk assessments in place for all hazardous pursuits and fire safety. Staff take particular efforts to ensure students are free from avoidable hazards and there are excellent responses to maintenance issues. Students are fully protected from fire hazards through regular and thorough testing of all equipment including fire alarm systems. Students regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure and staff are suitably trained in evacuation procedures and fire safety. Night waking staff have revisited training and practice issues after a student voiced their concerns about fire doors being propped open. The night manager is monitoring this closely. Students are protected by additional security of the school and the house bases have coded key pads that are known by students. The school has a thorough health and safety audit every six months by external consultants and the schools bursar is very effective in ensuring all health and safety matters raised are given high priority to ensure students' welfare is fully protected. The school has secured plans to increase the school's security through the installation of new school gates to prevent unauthorised access

to the campus. The vetting of staff and visitors is meticulous, comprehensive and thorough. The school follows a very clear and robust recruitment procedure. Staff responsible for this area demonstrated a very high regard to ensuring students are appropriately safeguarded through undertaking stringent recruitment checks and paying particular attention to detail when looking at applications. The school maintains records of the selection process undertaken and ensure checks are in place prior to staff commencing work.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Grateley house school has an excellent approach to providing students with a wide range of support and opportunities that encourage them to achieve educationally and socially to their fullest potential. The school welcomes and celebrates the diversity of its students. Students' educational achievement is positively promoted within the boarding environment. The school operates an effective 'waking day' curriculum which supports students when they are not in class. The school is successful at responding to individual needs and develops individual plans for students. These focus on the areas of need such as social education, independent living and communication skills as well as academic targets. The residential contribution to education is established and involves good liaison with the teaching staff and this is recognised as contributing to the educational achievement of the students. However the schools senior staff recognise communication between departments and families is continually under review to ensure developments are made in this area. Students are afforded many opportunities of working towards independence both in the house bases and within the community. Students receive a high level of individual support from staff that understand their needs and support them to take an active interest in social and leisure activities. Students benefit from having a dedicated key worker who supports them through regular one to one key work sessions. The school has explicitly identified how support to individual students will be provided and which person or agency will respond to that need. Staff are fully open to addressing a wide range of possible needs and were observed to respond excellently to students with a range of complex needs. The school has well established links with a range of external services and staff make every effort to find services to fit students' needs. Some students have external advocates and it was clear that residential staff would and do advocate on behalf of student's. The school's therapy team consist of a range of highly qualified and skilled staff that provide a significant level of support to students.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

The school fosters students' self worth through encouraging positive relationships between themselves, their families and the staff at the school. Excellent systems for listening and obtaining the views of boarders are integrated into the running of the school. The school has put effort into ensuring that students take an active interest in the outside world and those parts of the running of the school that will affect them. The majority of students reported very positive comments about the school and comments made were 'I like it here it is right for me' and 'this is the best school I have ever been to'. Students are encouraged to take an active and independent role in the running of the house bases and residential routines as well as contributing to the school council. Students actively take part in raising funds for people less fortunate than themselves, through a variety of charity fund raising events. Students benefit from comprehensive and concise placement plans. Individual care needs are identified, reviewed

and monitored regularly. This in turn assures consistency of care, clearer and accurate recording of outcomes for students. The school has a well established and thorough system for reviewing plans and the needs of each individual. Students are actively encouraged to participate in these reviews and students' contribution forms part of the record of the review. Plans are person centred for older students and students report being aware of their care plans and plans for the future. The school demonstrates a positive attitude to boarders' family and parental contact. The school makes provision for these contacts to be made in private in most cases. However one student reported their house base does not have a phone that students can use in private, although staff endeavour to offer other solutions and many students have personal mobiles. Students' wellbeing is further supported through regular communication between school and parents, in addition to weekly home to school reports. The development of the home link reports and parents receiving information via e-mail has increased communication to parents. The school has developed parents' day to encourage greater support and communication between school and home. Boarding at Grateley House School is flexible and students can decide if they wish to return home for the weekend. The school operates on a 38 week basis and students return home for school holidays.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is not judged.

This area was not judged due to not being a key standard. On inspection there was no cause for concern.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The school has a very effective and coordinated management system. The staff team responsible for care are valued and unquestionably committed to students' welfare. The style of management ensures that staff are clear about their tasks and responsibilities. Students benefit from a very well run school. The Statement of Purpose accurately reflects the school's principles and practice and information is available to students in a child friendly format. Students' welfare is protected and promoted by sufficient day and night staff. The school has had minor staffing issues in the past specifically in relation to recruiting full numbers of night waking staff; however at the time of inspection these shortfalls were covered. Staff have a range of experience and are provided with exceptional training opportunities to meet students' needs. Staff demonstrate an enthusiasm and commitment in supporting students in their activities and to help them to appropriately manage their behaviour. The team has a balanced mix of male and female staff to meet the needs of students. Although there was a limited response from parents, they unanimously reported that the staff provided extremely high standards of care and support to their children. The staff training programme includes an excellent induction. There are exceptional training opportunities for the staff and they are supported to make use of these opportunities. The recent training programme has included formal and comprehensive training in medication administration practice and procedure which staff report being extremely useful. Due to a turn over in staff, which is consistent with care provisions and a school having a large number of staff, the school does not meet the 80% target of staff achieving their NVQ Level 3 in Care. However, the school has demonstrated their commitment to ensuring all new staff are to be enrolled on the course and confirmation of this was in place. The Head of Care Services is well qualified to undertake the role and develop the care and support offered to residential students and has continued to update her knowledge and training in order to remain registered



with the General Social Care Council as a qualified social worker. Staff are clear about lines of responsibility and which staff are responsible for their support. Supervisions take place regularly and staff confirm notes are taken of these meetings and that they felt fully supported by senior staff, with the rare exception. Staff spoke very favourably about the support and professional guidance afforded to them from the Care Services Manager. The staff team demonstrated an eagerness to ensure students' needs are fully met and were observed to be committed, keen and energetic when supporting students. Students' welfare is protected and promoted by comprehensive and thorough monitoring systems. All areas, as prescribed within the National Minimum Standards, are monitored and developments are continually being made. The school has successfully met all their objectives within their 2007 development plan and is working towards meeting objectives set for the coming year. The school is very clearly driven to providing excellent outcomes for the students and it was evident on inspection that students are empowered to reach their full potential.

## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Statutory requirements**

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Due date</b>
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### **Recommendations**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

## Annex

## Annex A

### National Minimum Standards for residential special school

#### Being healthy

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted (NMS 14)
- children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs (NMS 15)

**Ofsted considers 14 the key standard to be inspected.**

#### Staying safe

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled (NMS 3)
- children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration (NMS 4)
- the welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse (NMS 5)
- children are protected from bullying (NMS 6)
- all significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified to the appropriate authorities by the head of the school or designated person (NMS 7)
- children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return (NMS 8)
- children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour (NMS 10)
- children live in schools that provide physical safety and security (NMS 26)
- there is careful selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers (NMS 27)

**Ofsted considers 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Enjoying and achieving

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- the school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school (NMS 12)
- children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities within the school and in the local community (NMS 13)
- children receive individual support when they need it (NMS 22)

**Ofsted considers 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Making a positive contribution

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run; no child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views (NMS 2)
- children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect (NMS 9)
- children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes (NMS 11)

**Annex A**

- children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school (NMS 17)
- in accordance with their wishes children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while at school (NMS 20)

**Ofsted considers 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.**

## **Achieving economic well-being**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children can wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money (NMS 16)
- children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living (NMS 21)
- children live in well designed and pleasant premises, which provide sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs
- children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use (NMS 24)
- children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity (NMS 25)

**Ofsted considers the key standard to be inspected.**

## **Organisation**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils (NMS 1)
- children's needs, development and progress are recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions (NMS 18)
- there are adequate records of the staff and child groups of the school (NMS 19)
- children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently (NMS 28)
- children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs (NMS 29)
- children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare (NMS 30)
- children receive the care and services they need from competent staff (NMS 31)
- children and staff enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools (NMS 32)
- the governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school (NMS 33)

**Ofsted considers 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.**