

Royal School for the Deaf Derby

Inspection report for residential special school

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Inspector	Joanne Vyas
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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

The Royal School for the Deaf, Derby was founded over 100 years ago. It is a non-maintained special school providing primary and secondary education to deaf children and young people. The school has a language and communication policy giving equal status to the British Sign Language and English. Nearly half the staff team are deaf, ensuring a signing community. At the time of this inspection there were 117 students on roll, of which 59 students were boarding at the school for part or all of the week, the school being closed at weekends. The school is situated close to Derby city centre. It is within easy walking distance to the city centre making easy access to shops, leisure and educational facilities, religious establishments, libraries and parks. There are good public transport links to Derby's main bus terminal, and regional and national rail and road links. At the time of this visit students were accommodated in seven houses. Each house has a lounge, kitchen, dining area and sufficient bathrooms and toilets. Houses have single and shared bedrooms. Each house has sleeping-in accommodation for staff and most also have a waking night member of staff. The school has a multi-disciplinary approach and provides specialist support to ensure students' individual needs are met. The school employs a nurse and other specialist staff.

Summary

The inspector visited this school to complete an announced full inspection where all the key standards were inspected. The staff team are highly qualified, caring, competent and well supported by each other and the senior management team. They are passionate and committed to the work that they do. Staff are able to provide appropriate care for students and meet their individual needs with the knowledge and understanding they have of them. The staff team includes both hearing and deaf staff to ensure inclusive practice and culture. There are excellent relationships between the students and staff. Staff are focussed and committed to ensuring the provision for health care is good for all students. Students are kept active with a varied range of sports and activities. Staff are pro-active and dedicated to ensuring the students maintain contact with people who are significant to them. They are committed to work in partnership with the students and their families, social workers and external agencies to promote a child-centred approach to care and education. The students are protected by robust recruitment and health and safety procedures. Some areas of weakness were found. Staff do not currently know how much medication is kept in the school so are unable to effectively audit medication. The child protection policy is not in line with the current guidelines from the local authority. Records for child protection, complaints and physical intervention do not clearly state the incident, who was informed, the outcome of any investigation and how long a restraint was used for. Behaviour management plans and care plans are not comprehensive.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

No recommendations were made at the last inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff are focussed and committed to ensuring the provision for health care is good for all students. All students are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians, either locally to the school or to their home. They also have a close working relationship with other healthcare professionals including occupational therapists, audiologists, speech and language therapists and mental health services. Each student has a health plan that addresses their needs. Plans are reviewed by a qualified nurse. The nurse plays an active role in supporting the care team with day to day support and meeting their training needs. The safe handling of medication is good in this school. The school use homely remedies, and these have been agreed with a doctor. Staff receive training in the safe handling of medication during their induction training and then receive updates as necessary. Medication is accurately recorded, received and disposed of appropriately. However, the amount of medication received, sent to and returned from parents and disposed of at the pharmacy is not recorded and therefore the nurse is unable to complete an audit of medication to ensure systems are safe. The medication cupboards are secure. All accidents are recorded and first aid is given as appropriate. There is a high level of staff who are qualified in first aid and so there is always a member of staff on duty who is trained to give first aid. Mealtimes are sociable occasions, where a variety of healthy food is served in ample quantities. Students have mixed views about the variety of meals on offer but all agree the food is lovely. They are given the opportunity to discuss and change menus as well as shop for and cook their own meals. All dietary needs are catered for. The school has recently been awarded the healthy school award from the local environmental health department.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The privacy of students is respected by staff. All bathrooms have appropriate locks on the doors. All records are kept confidentially. Students' issues are not discussed openly. Students are enabled by staff to make complaints. An opportunity exists during the students' house meetings and school and residential council meetings to make complaints. Students also have access to complaints forms and fully understand the complaints procedure. Complaints are taken seriously and resolved where possible. It is clear from observation and discussion that the school's management team is responsive to issues raised by the students and their parents and ensures measures put in place to resolve issues are effectively communicated. However, not all records of complaint state an outcome and therefore it is difficult to ascertain that the action taken has been successful. Students feel safe living at this school. They receive training on safeguarding children at least twice a year. Staff are competent in their knowledge of the school's child protection procedures. However, the school's policy does not reflect current guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Also, some records are not clearly written, for example, what happened and who the incident was reported to, and do not provide an outcome of any investigation that took place. Some students have experienced incidents of bullying but staff are pro-active and responsive to all bullying behaviour. The school has a written procedure for action when students are absent without authority. There are very few incidents of absconding from the school but these are dealt with appropriately. Staff view the students positively and there is a good, family atmosphere in the houses. Staff are given training during their induction on physical intervention and this is updated annually. Physical intervention is used as a last resort. There is a minimal amount of physical intervention carried out in this school. However, although staff are clear about why a student would be restrained, records are not clear and do not state the length of time a student is restrained for. Permissible sanctions are clearly stated in the school's policies and procedures. Risk assessments are in place for all students, covering their activities and behaviour. Boundaries between staff and students are

clear and relationships are excellent. Recruitment procedures are robust. Safety checks are completed and staff only commence employment when they have a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure and two satisfactory references. The school has comprehensive risk assessments for all aspects of safety of the premises and grounds including fire. All staff are given fire safety training during their induction and then annually. Fire drills are carried out on a regular basis and at different times of the day. Fire safety equipment is checked regularly and a detailed record kept. All health and safety procedures are robust. All visitors sign into the school and must show identification.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Students have excellent relationships with staff. They said there are lots of activities both in school and in the community. Students enjoy the many and varied activities, including various clubs that they attend. The students' individual interests are supported and they are involved in planning activities and outings. Staff are positive in their approach to education and its value for students. There is excellent communication between care and teaching staff. They meet at the beginning and end of each day to provide feed back about each student. Time is set aside for homework after school and staff help and support students with this. There is a child-centred approach to care and education within a 24 hour curriculum, which is delivered to develop independence and social skills. Individual support is detailed in each student's file and observations and discussions with staff showed that staff ensure each student's individual needs are met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff are able to provide appropriate care for students and meet their individual needs with the knowledge and understanding they have of them. Students' files include a comprehensive health care plan and targets which are linked directly to the objectives set out in the Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN). Targets are reviewed each term by students, their teachers and residential staff. Care plans do not currently extend to all areas discussed in the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools 17.5. Student's behaviour management plans are written by the school staff and therefore are not always relevant to residence. They only detail pro-active strategies and do not state any strategies that staff might use when a student's behaviour has deteriorated. Staff are then required to make difficult decisions about how to manage a student's behaviour, when in situations of conflict, quickly and under pressure, in order to protect students, without any written guidance for each individual student. Staff are pro-active and dedicated to ensuring students maintain contact with parents and everyone else who is significant to a student. They are committed to working in partnership with the students and their families, social workers and external agencies to promote confidence and independence within each student. House meetings for students are held every week and recorded. Discussions are held about food, bullying, activities, holidays, trips out and complaints. There is also an active residential and school council.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Students live in a homely environment, with high quality furnishings. Their bedrooms are highly personalised. There is a good amount of communal space. The students have good facilities,

including a youth club equipped with table games such as pool and table football and access to a computer suite. The school is clean and tidy and well maintained. Students value their school and their surroundings. The school has some disabled facilities including bathing aids, disabled toilets and a widened door, as recommended by occupational therapists. However, students with physical disabilities find it difficult to negotiate some doors and corridors in residence. Paths outside between the school buildings and residence are level and marked with yellow lines. However, the path is dimly lit and may not be adequate for students with visual impairments.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The Statement of Purpose is a comprehensive document and is reviewed on an annual basis. There are good staffing levels in each of the houses with senior staff on call. All houses are staffed at night. Staff have access to an excellent training programme. The staff team are highly qualified, caring, competent and well supported by each other and the senior management team. They are passionate and committed to the work that they do. The staff team includes both hearing and deaf staff to ensure inclusive practice and culture. The school ensures the quality of care through continuous monitoring and evaluation of the service. Students and parents are asked to complete annual surveys to ensure the school captures their views. Unannounced visits are carried out by the governing body as well as the Head Teacher and Head of Care. All records are signed by senior managers. The annual development plan sets out the way in which the school wants to develop and how it will be achieved. Success is evaluated at the end of each term. The school also have a comprehensive development plan for training and professional development.

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.

Standard	Action	Due date
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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):

- ensure a written record is kept of all medication, including the quantity stored and disposed of (NMS 14.20)
- ensure the school's complaints procedure includes a written record of the outcome of the complaint (NMS 4.3)
- ensure the school's child protection policies are consistent with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (NMS 5.2)
- ensure records made under child protection procedures clearly state the incident, who was informed and measures put in place to protect students following an allegation or suspicion of abuse (NMS 5.4)

- ensure records of physical intervention clearly state the incident, the duration of the physical intervention and the effectiveness and any consequences (NMS 10.14)
- ensure care plans include all areas set out in the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools 17.5
- ensure behaviour management plans for students include strategies staff can use when a student's behaviour deteriorates and is challenging (NMS 17.5)
- ensure all facilities are appropriate for students with physical disabilities and visual impairment (NMS 23.2).

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.