

The Grange Therapeutic School

Inspection report for residential special school

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Inspector	Sue Michowicz
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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

Summary

This was the first inspection of the school since the transfer of regulatory duties to Ofsted. The inspection was undertaken over three days by Sue Michowicz (inspector) and Tom O'Neill (CIE) the head of school and the head of care were available throughout the inspection. This was a key inspection to ensure the school continues to provide suitable care and support to the young people living in the residential care provision. All of the Key National Minimum Standards were assessed under the six headings of 'Every Child Matters' - Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Positive Contribution, Economic Wellbeing and Organisation. The overall outcome of this inspection was rated as Good with a high number of Standards assessed as outstanding. There were six recommendations made and no actions as a result of this inspection.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The school have implemented new risk assessments for all young people which also provide behaviour management plans for staff to maintain a consistent approach to care delivery; whilst ensuring young people are able to build on their independence in a safe and supported manner. Extensive repairs have taken place in the past twelve months on the main building's chimneys and turret. As a grade two listed building this was undertaken as a matter of urgency; the works were well planned ensuring the health and safety of the site was maintained at all times. A successful recruitment drive has taken place to ensure the care needs of the young people continue to be met appropriately. Staff recruited are of a high calibre and bring a fresh and motivated approach to care provision. The care provided continues to be of a high standard with emphasis placed on providing a long term setting that supports the young people to meet their educational, social and personal goals whilst learning to live within the boundaries of school life.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The school implements systems that promote the health and welfare of its children; with policies and guidance in place to support staff practice. The school has good arrangements for meeting the first aid and medical needs of all young people with a suitably qualified and experienced nurse providing hands on care and support to young people. In addition to the support given from the nurse each house has a staff member who has been trained in the safe administration of medication. All records in respect to medication were found to be appropriately maintained with a strong commitment evident to ensuring the needs of all the young people were met appropriately. There is an abundance of information and fact sheets available to both staff and young people on any illness or social issue affecting young people. Within the surgery individual files are maintained for all of the young people; these are stored securely in lockable facilities and are only accessed by the nurse. Files held on behalf of young people contain a health history which includes immunisations, illnesses or allergies that may affect the wellbeing of the young person; files are regularly updated and are maintained to a high standard. Young

people reported feeling safe when going to the surgery and believed they were well looked after in a comfortable and relaxing setting. The surgery is also supported by a local G.P. service who ensure young people are able to access appointments on a daily basis; staff are available to accompany young people on request. Within each young person's placement plan there is a health promotion plan which is supported by the school's health care policy. Young people receive health education on such things as giving up smoking, sexual health and healthy eating. There is a strong emphasis on communicating with young people to ensure any issues affecting their wellbeing are highlighted and addressed with additional support from other health professionals put in place as required. Young people are supported to maintain their own hygiene needs; there are no young people who require hands on support at this time, however, staff ensure they are available for advice and support as needed; maintaining a non-intrusive presence to ensure the safety and privacy of young people is maintained. Meals provided to young people are well balanced and nutritious, ensuring young people are provided with a varied and appealing menu. The main kitchen prepares all main meals from a central kitchen; meals are taken in either the school's main dining room or in the satellite houses which creates a relaxed and social environment. There was evidence of chatter and banter throughout the meals with a good mixture of teaching and care staff joining the young people. There is evidence of flexibility in the menus; ensuring young people have a choice of meal with young people supported to try new foods and healthy options. The emphasis and education placed on the healthy eating programme in the school has been successful with young people observed preferring the healthier snacks provided instead of cakes and biscuits.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Young people are supported in a manner that is non-intrusive and respectful of their privacy and dignity, ensuring all information held about them remains confidential. All information held on behalf of a child is kept in lockable facilities. Each satellite home has a designated office space; ensuring the business of the school does not intrude on the facilities provided for the enjoyment of the young people. Care staff are sensitive to the needs of the young people, making sure any support offered is implemented in a non-intrusive manner. Staff always knock before entering the bedrooms of young people and only enter these areas when there is a need to. Telephone facilities are provided which generally provide young people with the privacy they require. Some facilities are less private than others, however, staff always ensure the office telephone can be used by young people on request to ensure their privacy is maintained. There is an emphasis on ensuring respect is shown to young people and in turn that young people show respect and understanding towards staff and their peers; this is done through positive role modelling, ensuring staff employed at the school have a clear understanding of the individual needs of the young people. Presently there is no agreed policy to address the searching of young people's possessions; on the odd occasion this has been required staff have undertaken this task in a sensitive and professional manner ensuring young people are always informed of the process and are present during the search. The school does need to ensure a policy with guidance is formulated as soon as is reasonably practicable to ensure the safety and dignity of young people is maintained. Children receive information on how to raise an issue of concern or a complaint with supporting policies and systems in place; which ensures children are able to make a complaint without fear of reprisal. Young people felt there was seldom any need to make a formal complaint as staff are always available to help sort out any problems. There have been no formal complaints received from young people since the last inspection, with any concerns raised successfully resolved. The school has highlighted

further work that needs to be completed to ensure the policy in place provides clear guidance on how the complaints process is implemented. On reading the policy it is evident this needs to take place as a matter of priority. Systems and training are in place, which aim to prevent the abuse of children. There is an emphasis on maintaining the safety of young people with staff trained to a high standard in child protection procedures and how to apply these to all aspects of school life. Senior staff have attended training on how to implement the Local Authority Multi Agency Safeguarding policy and are knowledgeable on its reporting procedures. Practice observed throughout the staff team and their knowledge is indisputable; they are a dedicated team of carers who ensure any risks to young people are minimised through education and a proactive approach to maintaining safety. However, the school's internal policy needs to be brought in line with the Local Authority policy to ensure the ongoing safety of young people is maintained. There is an open and supportive approach to addressing the potential for bullying of children; an anti-bullying policy is made available which supports practice within the school. The school has worked hard to address issues of bullying within the pupil groups, ensuring they provide young people with positive outlets to verbalise their fears or differences. Young people reported that most of the bullying taking place is of a verbal nature which is addressed by care staff appropriately, they also reported a high percentage of the bullying takes place during school hours. The school now has a children's and families' liaison worker who is addressing this issue proactively through behaviour risk assessments which are used both in the residential and school setting; this work is in its infancy but is already showing positive results for young people and provided good evidence of how the school tackles issues of bullying between pupils effectively. The policy in place is supportive of the young people when dealing with bullies within their peer groups, however, it does not address the zero tolerance to bullying as a whole school initiative, for example child to adult, adult to child or adult to adult bullying leaving young people and others vulnerable. The school is thorough in its reporting and follow up of unauthorised absences from the school. An absconding policy is in place, which is reflective of the recommended procedures should a child go missing from the school site; this includes when it would be necessary to contact the police and other significant persons. There have been no reports of absconding of young people since the last inspection which is a positive reflection of the care and support provided at the school. The school has written protocols and supporting reporting systems for any sanctions or behavioural plans to deal with children who challenge, these are relevant to boarding and ensure all children are treated in a fair manner. On a practical day to day level staff respond well to situations that require behaviour management with clear risk assessment plans in place which reflect the management of any behaviours that may adversely affect young people in the school environment, as well as when accessing facilities outside of the school. The school has worked hard to ensure these assessments and plans address all identified and potential hazards to young people, providing staff with clear guidance on how to successfully supervise and support young people. Sanctions used at the school to address behaviours that are not acceptable or pose a risk to young people are in line with the Standard with staff ensuring any given sanctions are recorded on the standardised format. On inspection it was found that these recordings are not held in a bound and numbered book in line with Standard 10.9, this needs to be addressed by the school to ensure all records are maintained appropriately and remain confidential. Physical intervention is only administered by those staff trained in Team Teach techniques, with supporting policies and guidance in place; thus ensuring the ongoing protection of the children. The school ensure alternative behaviour control mechanisms are in place, such as distraction, which has significantly reduced the number of restraints taking place. Where physical intervention has been necessary the school has good systems in place for the recording of such incidents, however, there is

inconsistent practice in the completion, detail and quality of these recordings which is more evident in the recording books used during school hours. Systems are in place, which protect the health, safety and welfare of the children and staff whilst on the school premises. The school has outstanding systems in place with an extremely effective and knowledgeable designated person who oversees the health and safety requirements of the school site and satellite homes. The school's minimal record of accidents and incidents on such a large and somewhat risky site are testament to the proactive systems in place. Every reasonable and practicable measure is taken to ensure the ongoing safety of all persons accessing the site with computerised and handwritten records of safety checks regularly taking place for such things as fire safety, building works, legionnaire and water monitoring, environmental risks, environmental health, hard wiring, PAT testing, Gas and boiler inspections and equipment checks. The school is to be commended for the high standard they have maintained when addressing this area of the Standards. Recruitment procedures in place ensure staff are compelled to apply for legislative clearances that render them appropriate for the post applied for and in turn are suitable to care for and support children. The files of all new care staff since April 2007 were assessed. All of the assessed files contained the relevant security checks such as Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosures and references with additional checks such as verbal checking of referencing taking place. Copies of CVs and qualifications are held on each file with any gaps in employment verified prior to employment. Application forms and interview notes are maintained with all recruitment files held securely. The recruitment systems are of an extremely high standard and were found to be in line with Standard 27.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The school residential provision actively supports educational progress, which ensures children are supported to reach their full potential. There are effective and high quality systems between the educational and care staff; this includes care staff supporting educational requirements for example additional school work in the evenings, and likewise educational staff support care staff with the taking on of additional duties in the evenings (joining activities). The formal liaison systems are good with handovers before and after the school day and informal liaison and discussion at lunch times when teaching staff join the pupils and care staff for meals. There are quiet areas provided within all of the houses for young people to undertake homework or other educational activities. A variety of planned activities are offered to children accessing both school facilities and external clubs, activities are meaningful and enjoyable, ensuring the children at the school are able to achieve their personal goals. The school offers a wide range of activities both in the school day and in the evenings; this has recently been expanded and new facilities such as a basketball court and a refurbished gym have been provided for the enjoyment of young people. The school is now working towards completing the improvements on the climbing wall in preparation for the summer months. The school supports two main charities and has an active involvement with work experience and social meetings with a local younger people's home for the learning disabled, which provides young people with the opportunity to become involved in the local community. Each home has their own activity resources such as video consoles, pool tables, table tennis and reading materials. There are a significant number of computer games available to young people, however, it is noticeable that the young people do not see these as the prime source of leisure activity and are there more as a back up for the quieter times than a key interest. Young people are encouraged to take part in social play for example board games which supports positive communication and social skills. Older children are able to access the local community independently to meet friends and

are supported to access local transport and trains to access other local towns. Despite the close proximity and size of the school to the local community there are no complaints or concerns apparent from the community with the school and the activities of the young people with the school taking into consideration the needs of the local villagers when making any plans for expansion. Staff ensure young people undertake quieter activities in the evenings to ensure the noise of the houses does not infringe on the privacy of neighbours. There is a system of personal support workers (key workers) with staff having the responsibility of approximately four young people each, these duties include regular one-to-one sessions which are recorded. These meetings give young people the opportunity to discuss any issues they may have with school life, home life and difficulties achieving their personal goals; time is also set aside to discuss the achievements of the young people which supports their sense of worth. The poor educational history of the young people is belied by their successes in this school environment both socially and educationally.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

A variety of systems are in place which ensure children can make decisions that influence the way the school is run. Young people's views are sought through their one-to-one sessions and the school is in the process of establishing the school council for residential pupils; this is something that has worked well in the past and is seen as a positive way forward for young people to involve themselves in the moulding of the new school. Pupil surveys are regularly undertaken for such things as menu planning and future changes for the school. Throughout the inspection young people said they were listened to and more importantly staff understood them and ensured any expressed views were shared with the appropriate staff. The school have implemented plans of care, which are in line with the statement of needs, ensuring the needs of children continue to be met. Each young person has an individual plan of care, all of the staff, both educational and residential are aware of the needs of each young person and take an active role in enabling the young person to move forward. All plans are kept under review both formally and informally by the staff within the setting. Reviews of the statement of need and the placement plan are undertaken with the school ensuring all relevant therapists and professionals are involved; young people are given the opportunity to attend their review meetings or if preferred prepare a report that can be read by a member of staff on their behalf. Young people and their families are supported to maintain contact during boarding. Young people are able to contact their parents at times of their choosing with the exception of the school day. Young people have access to telephones within the homes office but can also make use of the payphones provided in each home or use their personal mobiles. In addition to telephone contact young people have regular weekend leave at their parents' homes, this is optional for young people with some preferring to visit their families fortnightly so they can be included in the weekend activities arranged by the residential staff. Staff also maintain regular contact with families to ensure they are kept up to date with any significant events which supports and open dialogue and flow of information in both directions.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

The school is ensuring the environment at The Grange is maintained to a standard that protects the health, welfare and safety of its children. The boarding facility at the school provides a homely and well-maintained environment for children to enjoy safely. Good quality furnishings

are provided for the use of the young people with communal areas decorated in a homely and welcoming manner. In addition to the main house there is one other house in the school grounds, two houses in the local village and one house in the nearby town. All of the boarding provisions provided by the school are of a high standard, well maintained and provide a homely and relaxing environment for young people to enjoy.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The school has a range of documents providing clear information related to the principles and practices adopted at the school. The school provides a Statement of Purpose for the residential setting which supports children, families and placing authorities when making a decision for admission. This document does need reviewing to ensure it contains all of the criteria as set out in Standard 1.3. The school provides adequate numbers of skilled and trained staff to maintain the safety of young people during boarding regimes. There is a strong emphasis on providing National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) training to all care staff with 10 staff already completed an NVQ Level 3; in addition there are four staff working towards this qualification, four staff awaiting registration and four staff still working within their probationary period. The head of care is an NVQ assessor which has supported the school to maintain this training during a period of high staff turnover; the school hopes to maintain the recommended eighty percent quota now they have employed new staff. All new staff take part in the Induction to Social Care which is achieved over a six month period. In addition to the provided NVQ training staff undertake regularly updated child protection training with the last course taking place in February 2007. Medication training is in place for all care staff with staff completing the Boots foundation care of medications certificate; any further medication training is undertaken using the Boots medication handling course with the local pharmacist. All staff are provided with inset days which provide ongoing training to support their professional development. The head of school ensures the day-to-day operations of the school meet the requirements of the Standards in relation to the care of children accommodated at the school. The school has had a new head in post since April 2007; prior to his employment the school entered a time of instability due to a change of organisation and a high staff turnover which was unknown at the school previously. The school has been successful in maintaining a consistent approach to care and education delivery during this unsettling time which is evident in the way in which young people feel about their school and their ongoing achievements. The school is now entering a new cycle with the employment of new staff who are all of a high calibre providing support and care in a professional manner. The care team are supported by a suitably qualified and experienced head of care who ensures the safe management of the care provision. The organisation has invested in the ongoing success of the school providing funding to maintain the environment, increasing the activities and addressing the educational needs of the young people within a holistic approach. New committees have been established within the staff team to tackle any improvements identified in regulatory reports; ongoing training is provided to staff with a whole school approach evident; a professional approach to delivering care and education was evident throughout the inspection. The employment of the new head has supported the vision of the organisation with the senior management team working closely with the head to ensure the ongoing success of the school. Business plans are in place which address the educational needs as well as the care needs of the young people; staff are supported to share their ideas for improvements with the school eager to maintain and build on their successes in an innovative and inspirational manner. Young people were positive in their comments about the safe running of the school with comments of 'I don't want to be at any

other school' and 'I like being at this school' a frequent theme throughout this inspection. The staff were open and transparent in their feedback throughout this inspection and are to be commended for the hard work and commitment they have in ensuring the needs of the young people are central to all they do. The outcomes of this report were of a highly motivated team who deliver care and educational support in a manner that supports young people to achieve their dreams and aspirations. The outcomes for young people were of a happy and relaxed group of young people who are supported to voice their ideas and concerns in a safe and supportive environment. The school is now working towards ensuring their policies and procedures are in line with the high level of practical application observed throughout this inspection.

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 the complaints policy is written in a manner that provides all potential complainants with clear guidance on how their complaint will be addressed. National Minimum Standard 4
- ensure the school formulates a policy which is in line with Standard 3.11 for the searching of a child's room and possessions. National Minimum Standard 3.11
- ensure the school's internal policy for Child Protection is updated to reflect the Local Authority policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People and its reporting systems. National Minimum Standard 5
- ensure the bullying policy is updated to reflect a whole school policy for zero tolerance towards any bullying behaviour within the school. National Minimum Standard 6
- ensure sanctions records are maintained in a bound and numbered book in line with Standard 10.9. National Minimum Standard 10.9
- ensure further training is implemented to ensure a consistent approach to recording physical interventions. National Minimum Standard 10.14

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)

- 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.