

Chaigeley Educational Foundation

Inspection report for residential special school

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Inspector	Jeffrey Banham
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Date of last inspection	21 November 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

Chaigeley School is a non-maintained school that caters for boys between the ages of eight and 16 years who have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. The school has residential provision for a maximum of 24 students on a weekly, term-time only basis and a small weekend provision. The school is part of the Chaigeley Education Foundation which is a registered charity. The school consists of a number of one and two-storey buildings set in their own grounds. The residential provision is on the first and second floors of the main building and consists of three units for juniors, intermediates and senior boys.

Summary

The school continues to review and develop its provision, in order to ensure it has sound systems and practices and provides care and education, to meet the needs of placing authorities. There is good integration between the care and education provision. Care staff are well managed, trained and supported. Relationships between staff and children are good. Staff are committed to the care and welfare of children, many of whom present with complex and challenging needs. The school works hard to ensure the physical premises offer a non-institutional living environment.

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 ensures that enhanced checks with the Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) are undertaken for all staff, so that they are safe to work with children. There is an improved system of involving children in the production of their care plans. Regular sessions between children and their key workers, gives children every opportunity to be aware of and to contribute to the care they receive. The school has developed a more rigorous process for obtaining information on children referred, so that the school is able to determine if it can meet a child's needs. Visits to the referring agency and the child's home are becoming standard practice where this is required. The school is developing more efficient systems for auditing the case files of children in residential care. There is a more effective system of support for staff working in the weekend cottage.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The physical, emotional and mental health needs of children are promoted in the day to day care of the child. Health care information about children is obtained from parents and other carers and describes how specific health care needs are to be met. Not every child has a clear health care plan or similar document that covers both specific and general issues in those cases where children have no identified health conditions or are not taking any medication. Children are provided with adequate information about health and social issues and those children competent to do so are enabled to make choices about their nursing, medical or dental treatment. Issues of personal hygiene are dealt with sensitively. The school has a medication policy that addresses all aspects of medication administration. Staff are aware of their responsibilities to provide supportive care to children. The school however, is not always clear that it has obtained prior written permission from a person or body with parental responsibility

for every child for the administration of first aid, appropriate non-prescription medication and to seek medical, optical or dental treatment when required. Children are encouraged to eat a healthy balanced diet. Staff responsible for the provision and preparation of meals, have an understanding of what constitutes healthy eating. Children have some choice in deciding menus and generally treat mealtimes as social occasions with expected standards of behaviour.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff respect a child's wishes for privacy and confidentiality, so far as is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect a child. Children's records are stored securely, but not every record of a child's activities and progress is made in such a way as for it to remain confidential. Children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are confident that their complaints are dealt with appropriately. Staff respond in a professional and knowledgeable way to allegations or serious concerns about children's safety. The school has clear procedures for responding to child protection issues and has good links with the local safeguarding board. Children are supported by the school's anti-bullying policy and confirm that staff respond quickly and effectively to their concerns. Children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and staff demonstrate constructive responses to inappropriate behaviour. Staff see the children in a positive light and are able to look past their behaviour and to look at the children themselves and the factors that lead to their sometimes challenging behaviour. The school has a detailed and thorough framework for all aspects of health and safety. Children's safety is supported and promoted through updated risk assessments of all aspects of the school's activities. The implementation and effectiveness of assessments and audits is regularly reviewed to ensure they maintain their effectiveness. The school has a recruitment process for the employment of all staff joining the school. CRB checks are undertaken on every employee before they start work. Not every appointment is subject to the requirement for two written references. Telephone verification is carried out to confirm each reference but this is not always evidenced in records held at the school.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The residential contribution to education is well established and involves good liaison between education and care staff. Residential staff give effective emotional and practical support to children who have difficulties with attendance and consistency with educational performance. Care staff are familiar with the educational needs and progress of children in their care. Children are provided with purposeful support in their preparation for independent living. Children are encouraged to take part in leisure activities both inside the school and in the local and wider community. Staff share their own interests and encourage children to try new activities. The school has a clear framework for providing support to children. Staff are open to addressing a range of issues. Children are comfortable and confident with staff. Staff actively promote the involvement of children in social groups and set out to ensure every child is given the opportunity to be part of peer activities and interests.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff demonstrate that they value the opinions and views of children. There are systems in place to provide children with a range of opportunities to be consulted and feel involved.

Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour, in so far as their needs and abilities permit. There is an evident warmth in the relationships between staff and children. Children confirm that they feel supported by staff and they appreciate the work done on their behalf. Staff are comfortable with their role in setting clearly understood boundaries, whilst maintaining good relationships with children. All admissions to the school are planned and the child and their parents or carers are given the opportunity to visit before starting at the school. Children are supported to leave the school in a structured and positive way wherever this is possible. Each child has a placement plan and a care plan, that details their needs and how they are to be addressed. The plan describes a child's needs and the tasks and responsibilities of staff in meeting those needs. The school recognises that improvements are needed to the format and content of the placement plans, to ensure they accurately reflect the needs of the child and the responsibilities of staff. For example, there is some confusion between the 'placement plan' and the 'care plan', both of which are school-produced documents, the purpose of which is not always clear. Staff are being guided and supported to create more effective care plans and to ensure that they are confident their role in acting as 'key worker' for the child. Some components of the placement plan, such as risk assessments and behaviour plans, do not always evidence the extent to which children have been given the opportunity to contribute to the plans and be made aware of their content. Information about the legal status of children and the identification of those people with parental responsibility is not always accurately established. Children are encouraged to keep in contact with their families and significant people, where this is in accordance with their safety and best interests. Staff give practical support to make this contact possible. Arrangements for maintaining and promoting the contact are addressed in the placement plan.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Children are provided for on an individual basis and are encouraged to take pride in their appearance. They are encouraged to make choices about their clothing and personal requisites. Children who require assistance are well supported by staff, to choose what they wear and how they spend their money and are enabled to maximise their ability to make choices. Children are given good support to assist them in preparing to leave the school. Staff are knowledgeable about helping young people move towards independence and they have developed good links with other agencies. The daily life of the school provides opportunities for all children, appropriate to their age and need, for the development of knowledge and skills needed for their future living arrangements. The location of the school is well suited to its purpose. The school has continued to improve the standard of the domestic accommodation to ensure it is domestic in style, homely and decorated. It is furnished and maintained to a high standard. The school recognises that further improvements are needed and a school development plan provides the basis for further work. Not every toilet door has a functioning lock.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The school's Statement of Purpose is clear in setting out what care the school will provide and how this will be provided. It is reviewed and agreed each year by the board of governors and provides children and parents with clear information about their care. Children's individual case files are securely stored and are accessible to the staff who need them. Children know they have access to their records and contribute to the compiling of their records. Children's needs

and development is recorded to reflect their progress. The school's records are efficiently and effectively organised and maintained to a good standard. The school keeps records of the numbers and types sanctions, incidents and serious incidents (restraints) that occur. The records do not distinguish between those restraints that occur on the residential units from those that take place in the school day. The school's staffing policy ensures that the level of staffing is adequate to meet every child's needs and that it reflects the Statement of Purpose. There is good continuity of staff so that children's relationships are not disrupted. The staff training and development programme includes a good induction and further training opportunities for all staff. Staff have a personal development plan and the school places a high emphasis on the support, training and development of its staff. Staff are clear about which manager is responsible for their support. They receive one to one supervision, which contributes to the overall high level of team working and mutual support that exists within the school. There is a good range of experience amongst the staff team. The Head of Care and the management team are establishing effective systems for running the residential service and these form part of the daily operations of the school in a way that avoids an institutional approach. The school has an effective monitoring system for all areas of its practices and operations. The results of regular monitoring and audit, contributes to the continuing development of a child-centred service. The board of governors conducts regular monitoring visits that form part of the quality assurance system of the school. Action points are identified and followed up by the Head of Care. Children are always spoken to as part of these visits.

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 that every child has a clear written health plan or similar document that covers all the areas identified in NMS 14.6 (NMS14)
- ensure that prior written permission for medical care and treatment for every child is obtained from a person or body with parental responsibility (NMS 14)
- ensure that the content of records on children remain confidential and shared only with those individuals with a right to access (NMS 3)
- ensure that the school's system for recruiting all staff includes obtaining at least two written references and direct contact with each referee to verify the reference (NMS 27)
- ensure that each child has a written placement plan that specifies how the school will care for that child in accordance with his assessed needs (NMS 17)
- ensure that all elements of the written placement plan are agreed as far as is practicable with the child and people with parental responsibility (NMS 17)

- ensure that every toilet and bathroom door can be locked where this is in accordance with a child's abilities and safety. (NMS 25)
- ensure that records of physical interventions used in the residential units are completed so that they can be effectively reviewed at least twice a year. (NMS 32)

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)

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- 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.