

Littlegreen School

Inspection report for residential special school

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Inspector	Gavin Thomas
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Address	Little Green School Compton CHICHESTER West Sussex PO18 9NW
Telephone number	02392 631259
Email	office@littlegreen.w-sussex.sch.uk
Registered person	West Sussex County Council
Head of care	Susan Roberts
Head / Principal	Susan Roberts
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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

Littlegreen School is a West Sussex County Council Local Education Authority Special School for boys with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Littlegreen School provides negotiated, flexible boarding provision in order to support and promote the boys social and emotional growth and the school's behaviour management programme. Boarding is provided in the form of flexible 'sleep - overs'. Full time boarding is not available. Littlegreen School is situated in the rural area north of the village of Compton, approximately 11 miles from Chichester. The school is set in extensive and superb grounds, providing a vast amount of space for play and education purposes. The main school building is a large country mansion. Some of the facilities are housed in out buildings. The boarding accommodation is on the first floor of the main school building.

Summary

This key announced inspection took place over a period of one and a half days. The school is very resourceful. This includes individualised learning programmes and a tailored introductory programme for each of the boys on admission to the school. Communication and contact with parents and significant others is very effective. There is a strong emphasis on creativity, inclusion in community activities and specialist learning strategies. This includes the success of the learning centre for children with autism. The deployment of staff promotes excellent outcomes for the boys. For example, some boarding staff and teaching staff have dual roles and work in both the boarding and education settings. The boys are well supervised. They enjoy the learning opportunities and speak proudly of their achievements. The boarding provision is one of the highlights for the boys as this includes a vast array of extra curricular activities.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

All matters brought to the attention of the school are taken seriously. This includes minor concerns. The school has not received any formal or major complaints. However, recording and tracking systems would take into account the nature of any complaints received in the future.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The boys' health needs are met through robust procedures. This includes detailed assessments obtained before and after admission to the school. Assessments include Paediatric Occupational Therapy assessments and assessments undertaken by the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service. The planning and monitoring of individual health needs and well being are comprehensive and consistent with the outcomes of assessments undertaken by external professionals. Parents are responsible for arranging health checks such as immunisations, vision, dental and hearing checks. However, the school keeps very good records of these appointments. Matters are addressed at annual reviews and at other times when necessary. Effective procedures are in place for the receipt, storage and administration of medication. This includes parental consent from parents for the school to administer medications. Locked cabinets are used for the storage of medication. Medication administration records are kept up to date. There are sufficient staff trained in First Aid to ensure that emergencies are responded to in all sections

of the school. There are robust procedures in place for ensuring the safe exchange of medication. For example, medications are handled between parents and staff only. School meals are served in a very sociable and friendly environment with the whole school sharing the main meal of the day at lunch times. Equally, evening meals are served in pleasant surroundings. The quality and presentation of foods served is superb. For example, boys are encouraged to help themselves with relevant levels of support. Meals are fresh and well cooked. The selection of foods served on a daily basis is impressive. The boys enjoy the variety which includes fresh fruits and vegetarian options. Special diets are provided in accordance with preferences and requests. The breakfast club is popular with the boys. This is optional and well attended. Food safety records and menus are maintained and in very good order. Food preparation areas are cleaned to a very high standard. The boys are enjoying the range of benefits the new home craft centre has to offer. For example, they learn how to prepare and cook different types of foods and meals. They also learn about safety and protection in the kitchen environment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The privacy and dignity of all boys is managed sensitively and effectively. This includes the use of Closed Circuit Camera in communal areas of the school. The arrangements for boarding are flexible and tailored in accordance with individual boys' needs and wishes. For example, shared bedrooms are optional. The complaints procedure is known to all boys, parents and significant others. The procedure is adapted to enable boys at all ages to express any concerns. For example, a form called 'let me speak' is available throughout the school. The role of the Home Liaison Coordinator is intricate for ensuring effective communication between, parents, the boys and the school. There are no complaints to comment on. However, processes for managing any complaints received are comprehensive and very clearly set out. The safety and well being of all boys is paramount. All boys are safeguarded by safe caring procedures which are implemented robustly and consistently throughout the school. This includes regular training for all staff employed by the school, good team work with external professionals and parents and maximum supervision of the boys at all times. Vigorous monitoring systems are in place including monitoring visits carried out by the governing body. The procedures in place for promoting positive relationships and anti bullying behaviours exceed the minimum standard. The whole school's approach towards anti bullying is clearly demonstrated and practised. This includes the views of the boys which signifies that they feel safe in all areas of the school. The school has received an external award in recognition of its continuous work in implementing the anti bullying policy. The staffing ratios reflects the high levels of supervision required to ensure the safety of the boys at all times. The policy on absconding is known throughout the school. The principles underpinning the behavioural management programme ensure that support strategies are fair and consistent. Protocols are modelled throughout the school to reinforce positive relationships and interventions. The deployment of staff is also a key factor for ensuring consistency. For example, education and boarding staff work very closely together. This includes some staff having a dual role. Robust systems are in place for maintaining a safe environment. All boys benefit from the use of the immediate grounds surrounding the school for educational and recreational purposes. The grounds are well maintained. Play areas are safe and monitored for hazards and risks. Routine safety checks are kept up to date. This includes checks carried out by staff employed by the school and approved contractors. Food safety and hygiene standards are well managed. Recruitment procedures are sound. This includes revised procedures based upon updated training on 'safer recruitment' which the head teacher has attended.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The school thrives on its success which provides opportunities for all boys to achieve and in some cases, excel. This is as a result of its commitment to ensuring a 'whole school' approach. Examples of good practice include effective organisation of the staff teams, expertise within the staff team, inclusion whereby the boys are fully consulted on their targets for learning and close liaison with parents. The boys value the integrated approach which strengthens their learning opportunities. For example, the boys can reflect on what they have accomplished since their admission to the school. Recreational activities are stimulating and enjoyable. The boys are delighted with the school's surroundings. This includes sporting facilities, opportunities to explore the woods and quieter activities such as board games and reading. External opportunities are exciting and highly valued by the boys. These include a recent trip to France as part of an exchange programme, travel training opportunities, eating out and joint activities with other local schools. In particular, the school with whom Little Green School is federated with. The school's 're-integration consultant' is instrumental in researching new and innovative schemes and activities for the boys to participate in.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The boys enjoy talking about their experiences at the school. Processes for consulting with the boys are encouraging and tailored in accordance with their ability to contribute effectively and purposefully. These processes include a school council, completion of surveys for review purposes and informal discussions with staff and visitors such as members of the governing body. The Home agency Liaison Coordinator consults with the boys individually or in groups for a number of reasons which may involve education or welfare matters. Methods of communication with the boys is key. Therefore, processes such as surveys are designed to ensure that the boys can fully contribute to the purpose of information gathering exercises. The quality of records pertaining to the assessed needs of each boy is exemplary. This includes the quality of Individual Education Plans, overall files content which contains details of assessments and reviews and outcomes of home visits conducted by the Home Agency Liaison Coordinator. The implementation of individualised goals and support strategies are transferable throughout the school. There are very focused and structured procedures in place for ensuring whole school involvement in delivering individualised programmes. Communication with parents is effective. This contributes to the success of the flexible boarding arrangements. There are opportunities in place for boys to contact parents if they wish. The school is forward thinking with regards to processes for including parents in school life. For example, weekly parental support groups and coffee mornings are hosted by the school. Parents are also encouraged to join the governing body.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The flexible boarding arrangements is an inspiration for the boys. They find it exciting and enjoy the opportunity of spending time with their peers for extra curricular activities. The significance underpinning boarding arrangements provides a holistic service including one which parents and families benefit from, for a variety of reasons. Consultation with parents and the provisions of boarding are well managed. The numbers of boys who board at any one

time takes into account safety and a commitment to ensuring that individual needs are met consistently. Boarding provisions are clean, comfortable and adequately furnished. A programme is in place for the replacement of bedroom furniture and fixtures. There are thorough procedures in place for ensuring that the premises are safe and secure.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Documents relating to the ethos and management of the school are comprehensive and kept under regular review. For example, the objectives as set out in the school development plan are clearly linked to the mission statement and provisions of service which are clearly set out in the school prospectus. The school's policies and procedures are written to a very high standard and subject to periodic review. The school is staffed in accordance with its policy. The staff team are highly experienced and qualified. Staff are committed to ensuring the best outcomes for the boys. This is accomplished through effective team work and established working relationships with families and stakeholders. Staffing arrangements are excellent. For example, the management and deployment of staff takes into account continuity and best child care practice. The school is lead by a team of experienced and qualified professionals. Leadership is strong and transparent. Staff are highly motivated and supportive of each other. Good progress is being made towards all boarding staff achieving an NVQ Level 3 in the Caring for Children and Young People or equivalent. Robust systems are in place for monitoring outcomes for the boys. This includes full involvement of the governing body, regular meetings with the staff team and effective quality assurance systems. There are robust management systems in place for ensuring that records and business management systems are maintained.

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):

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.