

Lakeside School

Inspection report for residential special school

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Inspector	Bridgette Lowe
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Date of last inspection	12 October 2006

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About this inspection

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

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

The inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Service information

Brief description of the service

Lakeside School is a day and residential special school, provided by the Local Education Authority, for boy's age 11–16 years, who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Boys are referred to the school from across the county of Hampshire. The boarding house can accommodate up to 18 pupils. In the boarding house pupils are cared for by the Head of Care and a team of care staff.

Summary

Lakeside School continue to operate to a high standard of care. Outcomes for students are good in all areas assessed. At the time of inspection the school had 70 pupils on role eight of which were boarding pupils. The purpose of the inspection was to ensure that the school was continuing to meet the National Minimum Standards for residential special schools and review the 18 key standards for residential Special Schools. Many boarding pupils completed a questionnaire prior to the inspection all of which were very positive about boarding at Lakeside School. The school meets a high majority of the National Minimum Standards and provides good outcomes for pupils. Areas for improvement highlighted in this report are in relation to updating policies and procedures to include Ofsted details and ensuring recruitment procedures are rigorously applied in all circumstances. There are clear systems in place which aim to protect students and ensure effective responses are made in all safeguarding areas. Communication between residential care staff and academic staff is a strength of the school, students therefore enjoy continuity of care. Students benefit from good levels of individual support from staff and a dedicated staff team encourage, support and empower students to attain their full potential. A new head of care joined the school earlier this year and is effective in the strong leadership overseeing and monitoring all aspects of care provided.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the school has demonstrated good development and improvements in all areas. The last inspection at Lakeside School highlighted three recommendations. The school was asked to ensure that recruitment checks were completed prior to staff commencing employment. The school has implemented safer recruitment procedures to ensure all pupils are safeguarded to a high standard, however, further improvements are needed in this area. The school was asked to ensure there is a system in place to make notifications of a serious nature. A system has been developed since the last inspection and the school is aware of the need to notify any child protection investigation and outcome to Ofsted. The school was asked to ensure controlled medication records were kept in line with pharmaceutical guidance. The school has introduced a new system for recording medication which ensures accurate and clear records of controlled drugs are in place. The new head of care has been proactive in reviewing care policies and procedures and has updated relevant procedural guidance to ensure good practice is maintained.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Pupils' health is well promoted through clear, concise placement plans that include health details. They clearly demonstrate that pupils' physical health and emotional needs are identified, addressed and reviewed regularly. Staff demonstrate a good awareness of pupils health needs and the importance of safe administration of controlled medication and undertake regular training in first aid. However, formal training in medication administration and medication procedures and practices is currently not part of the care staffs training programme. All matters relating to health and medication are very effectively managed and monitored. Medical consents from parents and suitably trained staff ensure that emergency treatment can be provided to pupils' in the boarding house. Pupils' welfare is protected by the safe storage and administration of all medication. Student's health is promoted through nutritious and varied meals. Pupils have fruit and healthy option snacks readily available in the boarding house and have adapted to a healthier lifestyle over the past year. Pupils benefit from preparing meals in the boarding houses supported by adequate suitably trained staff in food hygiene and handling. Staff are vigilant about the effects of processed and high sugar foods on pupils with Hyperactivity Disorders and are proactive in reducing these food groups within the boarding environment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Pupils' privacy and dignity are respected by staff that follow good practice. Policies in relation to privacy and confidentiality are under review. Staff are discreet when dealing with sensitive matters, and respect privacy by knocking on doors before entering. Each pupil has a single bedroom and all bathroom and toilet facilities have suitable locks. Students' privacy is protected as all confidential records are securely stored. Pupils' welfare is protected through a rigorous complaints procedure. Staff at the school act swiftly, in line with their policies, to ensure satisfactory outcomes are achieved. Pupils' are well supported by staff should they wish to make a complaint and a new pictorial system has been introduced to support pupils' with this process. However, the current complaints information for parents and boarding pupils does not contain Ofsted contact details. There have been no complaints about boarding welfare since the last inspection. Pupils are protected through robust child protection procedures and well trained staff. Any issue which may relate to a child protection concern is addressed in line with the local Safeguarding Children procedures. All staff receive child protection training at their initial induction, regular updated refresher training and within their National Vocational Qualification Level 3 Award. Students are protected by good risk assessments. These are detailed and relate to each student's vulnerability and how staff minimise potential risks. The school is aware of the need to update the child protection policy and procedure to ensure Ofsted details are present and notifications are made in a timely manner. Pupils are protected and their welfare promoted against bullying by good staffing ratios and good monitoring procedures. If issues of conflict arise, pupils are supported by various strategies to minimise potential risk. Staff respond to pupils in a positive manner and encourage positive behaviour. The school is extremely good at surveying and educating pupils about bullying and pupils report that there are very low levels of bullying within the boarding environment. Students are safeguarded against going missing by vigilant staff. Students are further protected by good risk assessments. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of their role and responsibilities if a pupil should be absent without consent. There are very low levels of boarders leaving the boarding environment without permission. The school has a well established and effective system for behaviour management in place, although changes have been made to the boarding house points system which has caused some confusion with staff and Pupils. Pupils are encouraged to develop positively through behaviour management and reward systems. Staff use a variety of skills to encourage

and reinforce good behaviour. Sanctions are imposed and these are documented, however, the current recording system does not allow for an accurate record of the effectiveness and consequence of any sanction given and is not maintained in a bound and numbered book. Pupils are protected and their welfare promoted by staff trained in a positive behaviour management technique called 'TEAM TEACH'. This technique includes various de-escalation methods and when necessary, restraint. Students are also protected by meticulous record keeping of all incidents requiring restraint. The head of care has introduced a system to monitor behavioural incidents and evidence outcomes for boarding pupils. Comments received from pupils' include the school is good at 'helping us, calming you down when you are upset and keeping me out of trouble'. The school has a well-established health and safety policy and thorough risk assessments in place for all hazardous pursuits and fire safety. Staff take particular efforts to ensure boarders are free from avoidable hazards and there are good responses to maintenance issues. Pupils are fully protected from fire hazards through regular and thorough testing of all equipment including fire alarm systems. Pupils' regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure and staff are suitably trained in evacuation procedures and fire safety. Students are protected by additional security of the school and the boarding house has restricted access. Students' welfare is protected by a generally robust staff recruitment process. The school follows a very clear safer recruitment procedure and training is undertaken in this area. The school maintains records of the selection process undertaken and ensure checks are in place prior to staff commencing work. However, on inspection of recruitment files it was unclear whether professional qualifications had been checked in all cases and there is a lack of evidence to demonstrate that gaps in employment history have been explored. Verification of references now takes place although a record of contact could not be evidenced in every case. Staff responsible for recruitment demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring recruitment procedures are further developed and clear evidencing of all checks are in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Students' educational achievement is positively promoted within the boarding environment. The residential contribution to education is established and involves good liaison with the teaching staff and this is recognised as contributing to the educational achievement of the pupils'. Residential staff give practical and emotional support to pupils' who have difficulties with attendance and punctuality. Pupils comment that the school is good at 'teaching, sport, activities and helping pupils get the work done'. Students are afforded many opportunities of working towards independence and a new accredited programme is being introduced with boarding pupils'. Residential education focuses on self help and independence skills as well as supporting pupils to manage their own behaviour. This may be through offering more choice, independent living skills and reward systems which encourage pupils' to access community leisure interests. The school has recently introduced the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme to encourage and promote outside activities with boarders. Pupils' receive a high level of individual support from staff that understand the needs of the pupils and support boarders to take an active interest in social and leisure activities. The school has links with a range of professionals and the staff liaise closely to ensure pupils' needs are met. Pupils' confirm that staff are approachable and comment that staff help them to 'have fun especially in the boarding house'. The school has the services of a dedicated social worker whom the pupils can go to at any time and support has been sought from connexions workers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The school has put effort into ensuring that boarders are provided with the information and support they need to take an active interest in the outside world and those parts of the running of the school that will affect them. The school fosters boarders self worth through encouraging positive relationships between themselves, their families and the staff at the school. Pupils enjoy continuity of care and are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives. The school ensures that parents have ample opportunity to contribute to their child's life at school and pupils are positively encouraged to contribute fully to their annual review process. Pupils' wellbeing is further supported through regular communication between school and parents, in addition to home to school reports. Pupils benefit from newly introduced comprehensive and concise placement plans, however, due to the infancy of these plans staff had not undertaken to complete all of these fully. Individual care needs are identified, reviewed and monitored regularly. This in turn assures consistency of care, clearer and accurate recording of outcomes for pupils. The school demonstrates a positive attitude to boarder's family and parental contact. The school makes provision for these contacts to be made in private and there is good internet access for pupils to maintain contact with family and friends. Boarders are able to use personal mobile phones at the boarding house and there is a pay phone facility. Boarding at Lakeside is on a term time only basis with pupils returning home at weekends.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

This area was not judged. On inspection there was no cause for concerns.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The school has a very effective and coordinated management system. The staff team responsible for care are valued and unquestionably committed to pupils' welfare. The style of management ensures that staff are clear about their tasks and responsibilities. Pupils benefit from a very well run school. The statement of purpose accurately reflects the schools principles and practice, however, this is currently under review and the pupil's guide is being updated to make it more pupil friendly. Pupils' report that the school is 'excellent'. Pupils' welfare is protected and promoted by sufficient day and night staff with experience to meet their needs. Pupils enjoy continuity of care because there are good arrangements for managing and supervising staff throughout the twenty four hour period. Examples of these include daily hand-over meetings, weekly staff meetings and regular one to one supervision. Pupils' welfare is safeguarded by a well trained, stable and dedicated staff team. High priority is afforded to training. All staff are qualified to National Vocational Qualification Level 3 standard. The new Head of Care is suitably qualified and demonstrates commitment, encouragement and support to students, staff and parents. Pupils' welfare is protected and promoted by good monitoring systems. All areas, as prescribed within the National Minimum Standards, are monitored and developments are being made to identify and clearly evidence outcomes for boarding pupils.

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 schools policy and procedural guidelines include prompt notification of the initiation and outcome of any child protection enquiries involving the school to Ofsted (NMS 5) (appendix 1)
- ensure that the schools complaints information available to parents and pupils includes Ofsted details (NMS 4)
- ensure that records of sanctions are kept in line with standard 10.9 and record the effectiveness and consequence of any sanction given (NMS 10)
- improve recruitment practices to ensure that gaps in employment history are satisfactorily explored and clearly evidenced (NMS 27)
- ensure that there is clear evidencing of checks undertaken to verify staff qualifications as part of the recruitment process (NMS 27)

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.