

# St Anne's Community Special School

Inspection report for residential special school

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<b>Inspector</b>	Lynne Busby / Sarah Urding
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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	4 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**

St Anne's Community Special School is situated in its own grounds in the village of Welton to the west of Hull. Access is available to public transport, shops and leisure facilities. The school caters for pupils from two to 16 years of age. All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and have severe learning difficulties, or profound and multiple learning difficulties. Within the residential unit, boarding facilities are offered to the children who attend the school and would benefit from the 24-hour curriculum. At the time of the inspection, 41 of the 73 children on roll were using the residential facilities at various times, for overnight stays. Children board on one or two nights each week and are also able to board at weekends. The residence is open throughout the year, apart from two weeks in the summer and some days during the Christmas and new year period, and all bank holiday weekends. Boarding is provided in a single storey block adjacent to the main school with accommodation provided in single and shared bedrooms. The unit is separated into areas each with bathing and toilet facilities, a lounge, dining room and kitchen area. The residence also has a light/sensory room, a soft play room, a computer and music room.

### **Summary**

This was an announced key inspection and took place over two days. An assessment of the recommendations made at the previous inspection was also undertaken. The staff are enthusiastic and motivated to provide a positive experience for the children staying in residence and they are an asset to the school. There is an integrated approach between the residence and school that promotes a whole-school experience. There is a very structured and well-planned programme in place that is monitored and reviewed to meet the needs of the children. Communication systems are conducive to informing staff and promoting good practice. Parents gave positive comments regarding the care their children receive whilst staying at the residence.

Recommendations refer to monitoring visits undertaken by the governors that are not presently half termly and monitoring of records are not signed and dated by senior staff. Accidents are not always fully recorded. Staff recruitment is not consistently robust. A policy on absence without authority was not available for the residence.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The Head of Care was asked to ensure that the laundry was redecorated so that the walls were easy to clean. This has now been completed and is bright and clean. The governing body were requested to monitor the welfare of the children in the school once every half term and produce a report. This has occurred termly.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

The children's individual health and intimate care needs are clearly identified and met. The responsibilities for the overall healthcare needs remain with the parents as the children only board for two days a week. Many of the children have complex health needs and there are healthcare plans that staff follow. Staff work in partnership with parents and health professionals to ensure that health needs are identified and met. All staff receive training in health issues,

which helps them have a better understanding of how to deal with the health needs of the children. It is evident that health of the children is given high priority with a nurse and other health professionals being available for consultation if required. A health professional said: 'Meetings are always attended by senior staff members and they are always knowledgeable about individual pupils'. The school have policies and procedures on the administration and storage of medication. The senior staff are responsible for administering medication. Children are only given medication that is prescribed for them. There is a safe and accountable system with clear recording which makes checking and monitoring easier. The accidents are mainly recorded; however, one does not give a full account. The staff have training in first aid and this is updated.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's privacy and dignity are respected in all aspects of their care by staff who are aware of their responsibilities. The staff are trained in moving and handling and physical intimate care. They are sensitive to gender issues when dealing with children of the opposite sex. Staff are aware of how to deal with and share information they are given in confidence. Children's records are kept safely and securely to ensure confidentiality. However, there is some dietary information on the dining room wall, which shows children's personal details. The school has a complaints procedure that is available to parents and the children's handbook tells them how to complain. However, the procedure does not include how to contact Ofsted. There have been no complaints about the residence in the last year. Staff say they advocate on behalf of the children when they are in residence and know them individually and how they communicate. A parent said: 'Any concerns I have raised, which are few, have been dealt with empathetically and thoroughly'. Children are fully protected from abuse and bullying by staff who are aware of their responsibilities. The school has the Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures. All staff have received training in child protection, which they clearly understand. An update is planned in the near future. The school has a child protection co-ordinator who covers both the residence and school. The senior staff are undertaking further training in safeguarding children, to assist with the out of hours cover that the child protection coordinator presently undertakes. This ensures children's safety is promoted. There is a policy on bullying and this is available in the staff handbook. Children are monitored and supervised at all times to prevent bullying occurring. There is a policy on being absent but this refers to the school and does not include being absent without authority from the residence. Lack of guidance to staff may compromise children's safety. There is a managing children's behaviour policy that is clearly understood by staff. Sanctions are appropriate and recorded, but rarely used. Staff are very skilled in using distraction techniques, which promotes positive behaviour. Throughout the inspection it was observed that staff work in a child-centred manner and treat children as individuals. The school operate the 'Team Teach' method of positive care and control. Staff regularly receive updated training from the Head of Care and the child protection coordinator. However, the trainers have not had updated training. This has been identified to be completed in the school's improvement plan for this academic year. The school has risk assessments in place for activities undertaken to ensure children and staff are safe. The maintenance certificates are up to date and fire drills are regularly held. However, there is no fire risk assessment. There are plans for the local authority health and safety officer to complete this on the day after the inspection. This was confirmed by the Head of Care. The school follows the local authority recruitment and selection procedure. There was evidence that a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check had been received after the start date. The head teacher said that if the staff member

had previously had a CRB with the local authority this was accepted while a new one was completed. In addition, one reference had been received after the start date and one file had only one reference. Full checks have not been received before new staff begin work at the school this does not ensure a robust system is in place.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

There are close links between the residence and teaching staff and communication between the two happens twice daily, which ensures children's individual needs and progress are identified and met. The link workers for each child have regular meetings with the class teacher to identify ways of encouraging each child's personal, social and educational development. Care staff contribute to the annual review of the statement. This promotes excellent information sharing and a whole-school approach. Parents said: 'The residence is important with a 24-hour curriculum, but with lots of fun, interaction, social skills and self-help. The children just love to stay'. There are structured activity programmes in place when children are in residence that compliment the structure of the school day, involving learning and fun. A range of activities is offered which is age, understanding and ability appropriate and includes tactile games, arts and crafts, water and sand play, walks, music and trips out. A parent said: 'The care and education of our child is excellent'. There are summaries written in the daily log about each young person. These are useful as they inform staff about any issues pertaining to individuals. This aids consistency, good communication and highlights any information that other staff need to pick up on. Where children stay at the residence they have the same bedroom and routines and are in the same group which helps them feel secure.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

There is warmth in the relationships between the staff and children. Consultation with children is ongoing and staff use the children's preferred method of communication. Children can make their wishes and feelings known and make everyday choices which maximise their independence. This was observed in practice and in discussion with staff. The school have recently set up a residence council to discuss issues that affect children's day-to-day lives at the residence. This is a positive way of encouraging participation. The children have a plan in place which details how their individual needs are to be met. There is a reviewing system in place and staff are fully involved in the process. Parents said: 'We are involved in all decisions regarding our child, we know which agencies are involved in their care'. Children have a link worker who supports the children and keeps all records up to date. The children can have contact with their families while staying in residence. Children can telephone home and also receive phone calls. A parent said: 'I can speak to the staff when my child stays so any problems can be discussed'. There is evidence that families can visit the residence to see their children and rooms are available for privacy. The children and parents have been surveyed to ask their views about the school and residence. This inclusive approach demonstrates that the school is committed to raising standards.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

The residence is set close to the main school building and accommodation is on one floor. The internal layout is not purpose built; however, with staff support it meets the children's individual

needs. The residence is bright, cheerful and comfortably furnished. The accommodation has greatly improved since the last inspection, with the classroom now moving into school. There are more rooms available for children to use while in the residence including a soft play area and music room. In addition, there is a light/sensory room that has been recently refurbished due to flood damage. This has improved this facility for the children. The school has sufficient bathrooms; one is having a new shower fitted so children can choose between having a bath or shower. The bathrooms are designed taking into account children's individual needs and include ceiling tracking and assisted baths. There are plans to refurbish one of the bathrooms.

## Organisation

The organisation is good.

The residence is well managed and the children are cared for by a motivated and enthusiastic staff team. The Head of Care has recently been seconded out of the residence. A senior care officer has taken over the post until March. There is a Statement of Purpose that is clear in setting out what care the school will provide. There is a child-friendly pupil handbook which is in a pictorial format. The school's staffing structure is in line with the school's Statement of Purpose and is adequate to meet the needs of the children and support them in getting involved in activities. The children know who is on duty through a noticeboard that gives the pictures of the staff on that day. Where there is only one member of staff with a group, the staff use a 'walkie talkie' to call for back up from other staff if required. The head teacher is proactive in ensuring staff either have National Vocational Qualification level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People or are working towards gaining a qualification. The staff have completed a variety of training during the last year that enables them to have a better understanding of children's individual needs. The head teacher completes an annual report on the operation of the school and monitors records. The Head of Care monitors records within the residence. However, these are not signed to indicate the frequency of monitoring, and patterns or issues requiring action are not identified. The governing body have a designated governor who is responsible for visiting the residence. However, visits are not taking place every half term. A report is produced but this does not convey whether children and staff views are sought.

## 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 records monitored are signed and dated by senior staff (NMS 32)
- ensure monitoring visits are half termly and the report is more comprehensive to assist the school in making improvements (NMS 33)
- ensure recruitment of staff is robust to safeguard children (NMS 27)

- ensure that accidents are clearly recorded (NMS 14)
- ensure confidential information on wall relating to dietary needs is removed (NMS 3)
- update policies in relation to absence without authority (NMS 8).



## 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.**