

St. Andrew's School

Inspection report for residential special school

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Inspector	Katarina Djordjevic
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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 Andrew's School is a local authority co-educational special school for students aged between 11–19 years old, which offers residential facilities. The aim of the residential provision is to provide opportunities for students with severe learning difficulties and/or autism to develop further independence skills based on the 24 hour curriculum. The residential service operates from Monday to Friday and students can access this on a full-time or a part-time basis dependent upon their identified needs. The residential provision can provide services for a maximum of 17 students and consists of three areas in the main building and a three bedroom bungalow. All areas have their own communal dining and living space, toilets and bathing facilities. All bedrooms are currently single occupancy. The school is set in a suburb of Derby city and has good transport links. There is a school minibus available for students to use where it is not possible to walk or use public transport to access community facilities. Staffing levels are based on the needs of the students. There are a minimum of four care staff on the morning shifts and a minimum of five care staff on duty on the evening shifts. The head of care works alongside staff to offer additional support where needed. During the night there are two waking night staff and two staff on sleep-in duty which includes one staff member sleeping-in, in the bungalow.

Summary

This was a key announced inspection and was carried out by one inspector over four days. The purpose of this inspection was to meet the statutory requirement of one announced inspection visit each year and to check on the progress made in meeting the recommendations made in the last inspection report for 4 December 2006. The recommendations made were: to keep written evidence to support that catering and ancillary staff have received child protection training/instruction; take action to ensure safe hot water temperatures in the residential bungalow; for the head teacher to check with the fire officer the required frequency of fire safety training for all staff; to keep written evidence to support that Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks have been seen by the head teacher for visitors who come into school to work with students. Since the last inspection a new head teacher has been appointed. All standards were inspected except standards 7, 11, 19 and 21. Students receive a high level of care based on their individual assessed needs which can be attributed to the skills and continued commitment of the staff team. Staff work hard to provide every opportunity to students to enable them to increase their independence skills and to reach their full potential. There continues to be a very low incidence of measures of control used. Staff are skilled in communicating with the differing levels of abilities of the students. They work hard to empower students and make every effort to enable students to make choices and decisions about their day-to-day life wherever possible. Parents are very happy with the education and care their children receive at the school and are full of praise for staff. Parents commented on the progress their children have made since using the residential provision and appreciate the commitment of the staff team. A number of maintenance and repairs, and recommendations from inspections carried out by other agencies are outstanding. Staff at the school have put in safeguards to reduce the level of risks posed. However, the lack of progress is due to the lack of action taken by other departments in the local authority. The lack of progress made in addressing these issues pose potential health and safety risks to students and staff working at the school.

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's prospectus has been reviewed since the last inspection. This accurately describes what the school sets out to do for students and how they will meet the needs of the students. The school has been designated as a specialist school in the area of cognition and learning by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The school has bought in a speech and language therapy package which enables staff to work more effectively with students with communication difficulties. A programme is now in place to ensure catering and ancillary staff receive child protection training. Staff now receive fire safety training at the required intervals as determined by the fire authority. Written evidence is now kept to support that visitors who come into school to work with students have received a satisfactory CRB check. The profile of residential provision has been raised since the new head teacher was appointed, resulting in more consistent working between care and educational staff. Residential staff are part of the development groups which feed into the school improvement plan. A new document called 'All about me' has recently been introduced which students and staff are working on to build up a profile for each student. Students have been actively supported and encouraged to personalise their bedrooms resulting in a more homely and comfortable environment for students to stay in.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Students live with their parents and carers, who have overall responsibility for their child's health needs. Staff are committed to promoting a healthy lifestyle ensuring the health needs of students are met whilst staying in the residential unit. Due to the nature of the students' disabilities and challenging behaviours, it is of paramount importance that staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure health needs are met. Staff advocate on behalf of students where there are difficulties in accessing services to meet individual specific needs. Parents are confident that staff are competent in meeting the needs of their children and confirm that staff work closely with them. Care records contain details of health needs although more detail is required in some areas to inform staff how to meet needs. For example, details of specific dietary needs are included but not likes and dislikes. Accidents are recorded in the students' health records kept in the nurse's room. Accident report forms are not routinely completed. This makes it potentially difficult to gain an overall view of the number of accidents and identify any patterns that may emerge. Procedures are in place to ensure that medicines are appropriately handled and stored to safeguard students' welfare. Staff receive training on the administration of medication. Medicines are stored appropriately. Medication administration record (MAR) sheets are kept. The recording of medication is good and records and practice is monitored by members of the school's management team. All staff receive first aid training. Students have lunch in the school dining hall which is provided by the school's catering staff. Catering staff work enthusiastically and communicate well with students and staff to ensure dietary needs are met. Students are actively encouraged by all staff to try various foods in order to improve their diet and promote healthy eating. Parents are pleased with progress made by their children in extending the variety of nutritious foods they will eat. There are separate menus for the main lunchtime meals in school and the teatime meals provided in the residential unit. These menus compliment each other and there is always a choice of two main meals. Meals provided are varied and nutritionally well balanced ensuring students' dietary needs are met. The choice of meals for students who have specific cultural dietary needs is limited. Halal meat

is not provided which results in some students only accessing vegetarian meals. There are plans to provide halal meat. Some students who are on specific diets provide some of their own food. Students have breakfast and tea on the residential units. Staff are committed to enabling students to make choices and support them to acquire independence skills as much as possible. This involves risks and staff take appropriate actions to reduce levels of risk to ensure students can develop and achieve in a safe environment. Students are supported to choose their meals, are involved in shopping and the preparation of some meals. Students enjoy meal times which are relaxed social occasions where students and staff interact well. Students are well mannered and supportive of each other. Staff support students where necessary. Students are happy with the meals they receive. Staff receive training in basic food hygiene. Some of the recommendations from the environmental health officer's report from July 2007 are outstanding.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Students are cared for in a safe and secure environment, by a skilled and experienced staff team which helps to promote and protect the well-being of students. Staff work with students in a sensitive manner ensuring privacy and dignity is maintained. Staff understand the need for confidentiality and records are kept securely. The complaints procedure which is in pictorial form is on display in the residential units including students' bedrooms. However, the procedure refers to the previous regulatory body and not Ofsted. There are various ways in which students are supported to raise any concerns which take into account their communication difficulties. Students who are able to express an opinion know who to go to if they are unhappy or sad. The school receives very few complaints. Complaints are dealt with promptly and effectively. Parents are confident that any concerns they may have will be dealt with appropriately. Written confirmation is not sent out to complainants acknowledging receipt of a complaint or detailing the outcome of the investigation. A central record of complaints received is not kept which makes it potentially difficult to monitor as part of the school's quality assurance systems. All staff and other people who have direct involvement with the students receive child protection training and instruction and are clear about their responsibilities to report any concerns. There are clear safeguarding policies in place and the school has a copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures. The school has an anti-bullying policy. Any perceived incidents of bullying are dealt with. However, not all staff are clear about what constitutes bullying. There is a procedure to follow in the event of a student going missing. However, due to high staffing and supervision levels and security systems within the school, students have little opportunity to go missing. Risk assessments are in place for each individual student for trips out of the school. Staff are skilled in managing students' behaviours and work with students in a calm and sensitive manner, ensuring individual's dignity and privacy are not compromised. Staff receive training in 'Strategy for crisis intervention and prevention' (SCIP). There is a low incidence of measures of control and discipline used, which is testament to the skills of the staff team. Not all students have behaviour management plans and not all incidents are recorded in sufficient detail. Although residential and education staff work together, the absence of agreed behaviour management plans has the potential to affect the provision of consistent behaviour management which may be confusing to students. Records of restraint and sanctions are kept. Records of sanctions do not always give sufficient detail of what actually happened and the time of the sanction. The management of health and safety within the school is good which helps to protect students and staff from the risk of harm or injury. However, a lack of action by the local authority to address issues and recommendations from other agencies potentially poses risk to students and staff. Actions from the fire risk assessment which was

carried out in March 2007 have not been completed. Although the school has put safeguards in place regarding the hot water temperature in the bungalow, the issue has not been addressed by the local authority. There are also problems with the water pipes in the school which, although being monitored, pose possible disruptions and a potential risk to students. Individual risk assessments are in place. These do not always give adequate detail of the types of risk and do not give clear details about what actions to take. There are clear procedures for the recruitment of staff and effective and safe recruitment practices help to protect students from the risk of harm. However, gaps in employment history are not always explored and proof of identity and a person's qualifications are not always obtained. Reference request forms do not ask referees to state any known reason why the person should not be employed to work with children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Students receive a high level of individualised support based on their assessed needs and likes. Staff ensure that students are given every opportunity for enjoyment and achieving by the provision of educational support and a range of activities. Staff have an in-depth knowledge of students' needs and know how to support them. Staff work tenaciously to enable students to reach their full potential and to get the best out of life. Students are praised by staff for their achievements which increases students' confidence. Students make good progress whilst staying in the residential unit in terms of acquiring independence skills, increasing their self-confidence and learning to integrate with their peers and members of the public. Care and education staff continue to work closely together resulting in positive outcomes for students. Care records support that care needs are also identified within the 24 hour curriculum and targets set accordingly. Individual Education Plans (IEP) targets are based on the objectives of the Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN). Staff are skilled in communicating with students, using alternative methods of communications where needed. Students are provided with a range of activities, both in-house and in the community, based on their individual needs and preferences. Students are given opportunities to learn new skills and try out new activities including accessing community activities and resources which helps to increase students' self-confidence. Students are encouraged to bring in their own CDs and DVDs from home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Many of the students have communication difficulties, which potentially makes it difficult to obtain their views, opinions and choices. However, staff are proactive in developing and providing different opportunities and systems to involve students as much as possible in decision making. Students are able to contribute their views in a number of ways including the student council meetings. Students' views and suggestions are listened to and acted upon where appropriate. Staff proactively seek to enable students to become involved in youth organisations which enables students to contribute in society and citizenship. For example, some students are part of the 'Voices in action children and young people's shadow board'. Students are supported to learn about and respect different faiths and cultures. Not all students' cultural and religious needs are met. Staff communicate and consult effectively with parents and other relevant professionals to ensure students' needs are met and that they receive the best possible care. All students have home-school link books and parents appreciate being kept informed about their child's well-being and progress. Students are supported by staff to contact parents and carers where appropriate. Excellent relationships exist between staff and students. Staff work

with patience, determination and sensitivity in trying to enable and empower students to reach their full potential. Staffing levels and the deployment of staff enable staff to provide high levels of consistent support to meet students' needs. Students at the school need clear structures and routines to ensure their safety, well-being and development. The remit of the residential provision is very clear about providing the opportunity for students to acquire skills, including decision making skills and experience to maximise the individual's independence. There are good assessment and monitoring records for each student which enables staff to monitor and review a students' progress. However, care files lack some basic information in terms of students' likes, preferred routines and details of other services accessed by the student. For example, the student profile which is kept at the front of the file does not inform staff that a student may receive respite care from another service, which is important in terms of working consistently with other professionals. Individual daily recording sheets are in place and reflect a positive approach by staff and show that students are regularly praised for their efforts and achievements. However, the daily recording sheets do not always give sufficient detail of what actually happened and the outcome of an event or incident.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Staff work hard to provide a homely and pleasant environment for students to achieve as much independence as possible, within the limitations of the physical environment. However, requests for maintenance and repairs to be carried out by other local authority departments and recommendations from made by other agencies are not carried out in timely manner. This poses potential risks to students and staff working at the school. Students are supported to maintain their individuality and personal preferences in terms of clothing and personal requisites. Communal areas are decorated to a good standard and are well furnished. Students are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms. There are sufficient bathrooms and toilets to meet the needs of the students. Bathing facilities allow students' privacy to be respected.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The school's management team provide clear direction and leadership which results in a well-motivated staff team. The staff team are experienced and skilled in meeting the complex needs of the students, helping students to feel safe and valued. Staff feel valued by the school's management team who are approachable. Staff are consulted on different issues and are included in the development and day-to-day running of the school. Their views and suggestions are considered and acted upon where appropriate. Staff turnover remains low enabling a consistent provision of care to students which helps them develop their skills and confidence. Parents are very happy with the education and care their children receive at the school and are full of praise for staff. Parents appreciate the support they as families get from staff. The school is committed to providing staff with appropriate training and staff are encouraged and supported to attend training courses. All care staff have the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. The head of care has many years experience of working with children with learning disabilities in a school setting and has various qualifications. However, the head of care does not have the registered manager's award. Staff are well supported by the management team. However, staff are not receiving supervision as required. New staff do not receive one-to-one fortnightly supervision during the first two terms of their employment. All staff have a personal development plan. Weekly care staff meetings are held

and records kept. Records support that, where shortfalls in practice have been identified, these are discussed to ensure improvements are made. A weekly records file is kept which includes staffing rotas, daily recording sheets for students, handover sheets, a students' register, night staff records and communication sheets. This enables effective communication between staff informing them on a daily basis about the needs of each student. Some systems are in place to monitor records and practices. However, the systems are not robust enough in identifying shortfalls in practice and procedures. It is unclear how the monitoring of records links in to the overall quality assurance system and some of the existing recording systems make it potentially difficult to monitor and identify patterns as part of this process. A representative from the local authority visits the school every half term as required by Standard 33. A report is produced for each visit.

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):

- improve the range of information included in students' health care plans to give a clearer picture of all health and dietary needs. (NMS 14)
- ensure the school meets all students' dietary needs including cultural diets and the provision of appropriate foods. (NMS 15)
- review the system for the recording of accidents to students to make it easier to monitor and review students' health. (NMS 14)
- address the recommendations made in the environmental officer's report from July 2007. (NMS 23)
- discuss and explore staff's understanding of what constitutes bullying to ensure further safeguards for students. (NMS 6)
- ensure behaviour management plans are in place for all students who present challenging behaviours and ensure all incidents are recorded in sufficient detail in order to monitor a student's behaviour. (NMS 10)
- ensure records of sanctions give sufficient detail about the nature of the sanction imposed and the time the sanction was imposed. (NMS 10)
- ensure students' individual risk assessments give adequate detail of the types of risk presented and give clear details about what actions to take. (NMS 26)
- ensure the outstanding recommendations from the school's fire risk assessment are carried out. (NMS 26)

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- make improvements to recruitment practices of staff to ensure further safeguards are in place to protect students from the risk of harm or abuse. (NMS 27)
 - address the issues relating to the water pipes in the school to ensure the safety of students. (NMS 26)
 - ensure all information as detailed in Standard 17.5 is included in the student's care records and is easily accessible. (NMS 17)
 - ensure students' daily recording sheets give sufficient detail of what actually happened and the outcome of an event or incident. (NMS 18)
 - ensure all staff are receiving supervision as detailed in Standard 30. (NMS 30)
 - ensure the head of care enrolls on the registered manager's award. (NMS 31)
 - ensure internal quality assurance systems are robust enough and effective in identifying shortfalls in practice and that remedial action is taken. (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)

- 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.