

William Henry Smith School

Inspection report for residential special school

Unique reference number	SC001038
Inspection date	4 February 2008
Inspector	Monica Hargreaves / Helen Walker
Type of Inspection	Key

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Date of last inspection	27 November 2006

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About this inspection

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

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

The inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Service information

Brief description of the service

William Henry Smith School is a non-maintained special school for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and offers education and accommodation to boys aged between eight and 16 years. Accommodation is provided in five houses. On the ground floor of each house there is a communal lounge, dining room, kitchen and staff office, with pupil bedrooms and bathroom and shower rooms on the first floor. Each pupil has his own bedroom and bathroom and shower facilities are shared. The school also offers older pupils the opportunity to live for a short time, with staff support in a small self-contained flat within one of the houses, in order to develop their independence skills. The school is set in several acres of grounds and has facilities for indoor and outdoor sporting activities, such as an adventure playground, all weather sports enclosure and indoor sports hall and gym. It is situated in a semi-rural location on the outskirts of the town of Brighouse, with good transport links to Halifax and access to other larger towns and cities. There were 56 pupils on roll at the school at the time of the visit. The majority of pupils took some part in the inspection, either by completing a questionnaire or through discussions with inspectors on the days of the inspection visit.

Summary

This was the school's annual inspection, arranged to consider all the key National Minimum Standards. The visit was announced. Five of the six outcomes were judged. Achieving Economic Well being was not judged on this visit. All of the key standards are met and many are exceeded. The school has substantial strengths and a sustained track record of providing good outcomes for its pupils. Pupils benefit greatly from the safe and supportive environment and feel respected and listened to. They also benefit from very good relationships with staff and make good progress in their social and educational development. As a result of the visit, the Principal and Head of Care have been asked to review the monitoring of medication records and the information that is contained in health plans.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were no actions or recommendations arising from the last inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Pupils' health needs are well met by the school and they are encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle. The school's nurse makes sure that all pupils are registered with a local doctor, dentist and optician, and supports pupils at appointments. The nurse visits all the houses briefly each morning to pick up any health issues from the previous day and has a good relationship with pupils. The school has ready access to specialist therapeutic services, such as music and art therapy, psychotherapy and counselling. Pupils are referred for this support as a need is identified through the reviewing process. Pupils are encouraged to take an interest in looking after their health. Staff give them good advice about developing a healthy lifestyle and issues such as substance misuse and other health matters are also discussed in Personal Social Health and Educational (PSHE) lessons. There is a range of physical activities, such as football, swimming and ice skating, in which pupils can take part, both at school and off site. This encourages them

to take regular exercise. Generally the information about a pupil's health that is contained in their Statement of Educational Need (SEN) is incorporated into their placement plan. However, the health plan which forms part of the overall placement plan, is not sufficiently detailed to enable all care staff to be fully aware of any special needs an individual pupil may have, so that they can make sure that these needs are all met. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Award and works hard to maintain this status. All staff promote the importance of a healthy diet. Pupils are provided with nutritious food and are given a choice at each meal. Fruit and drinking water is readily available. This ensures that pupils eat healthily while they are at school. Pupils are also encouraged to learn how to cook and to prepare drinks, and are able to take a part in menu planning through discussions at the school council. Staff and pupils eat together and meal times are pleasant social occasions. Medication is stored securely in locked cabinets in individual houses. The nurse checks stocks of medication that are brought into school, and also undertakes checks on the medication sheets when new stock arrives. However, there is no apparent monitoring by a senior member of staff, of those medication records that are held in houses to ensure that these are correct. All staff are trained in the delivery of first aid so that pupils are cared for safely in the event of injury or illness.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The school has robust policies and procedures for the handling of complaints, safeguarding children and bullying which ensure that pupils feel listened to and protected. All staff are trained in child protection issues and have a good understanding of their responsibilities. Training is regularly updated. The school nurse is the designated person for child protection and has developed strong links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). She also regularly attends external courses on safeguarding to make sure that her knowledge is kept up to date. She takes a lead role in providing information and training on safeguarding within the school. There is a great deal of information around the school to help pupils to understand how to make a complaint. The system for dealing with complaints is robust. It gives pupils the choice of who will investigate their complaint, and also encourages them to contact outside agencies such as Ofsted or the local authority, if they prefer. Pupils said that they feel confident about making a complaint and believe that these are dealt with fairly. The school has a strong anti bullying culture, which is a real strength. There is information throughout the school about how pupils can report bullying and young people have been involved in designing posters to reflect the school's ethos. There are regular discussions in class and in houses about bullying and staff use mediation between pupils to resolve issues that arise. Pupils report a low level of bullying, and believe that it is taken seriously and dealt with properly, which helps them to feel safe. There is a well established system of rewards to encourage pupils to develop behaviour that is socially acceptable, which in turn helps them to be able to achieve in education. Pupils feel encouraged by a system that emphasises their successes. Individual and group success is celebrated formally, at every assembly and informally through the daily life of the school. Each pupil has an individual risk and behaviour management plan that identifies strategies which staff use to manage behaviour. All staff have had training in this area of their work, including in the use of appropriate restraints. Incidents are properly recorded and records are routinely checked by a member of the senior leadership team. A report on restraints is regularly made to the board of governors. This ensures that the welfare of young people is being properly monitored. Pupils confirm that the atmosphere of the school helps them to manage their behaviour and improve their relationships with other people. This aspect of the work of the school is a real strength. All pupil records are stored securely and kept confidential. Pupils

confirm that staff respect their privacy. Staff follow a clear procedure if a pupil is missing from school. This includes searching for the pupil and contacting parents and relevant authorities. Risk and behaviour management plans include strategies which staff will employ to minimise the risk of a pupil going missing. This helps to protect pupils. The school has comprehensive and robust systems to ensure that the environment is kept safe. All equipment is regularly checked and serviced and the environment and activities are regularly assessed to minimise hazards. The school also employs an independent consultant to undertake an annual assessment of risk within the environment, and takes action on any recommendations that are made. Fire drills take place at regular intervals and pupils confirm that they understand what to do in the event of a fire. Staff recruitment policies and procedures are also robust and are reviewed annually to make sure that they are in line with changes in legislation. Procedures are followed in practice which ensures that all adults who work at the school are safe to do so.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Communication between care staff and teaching staff is good. There are very clear, well established structures which make sure that staff across the school work closely to support pupils and to promote their education. Pupils have an individual care and education plan to which both education and care staff contribute. Care and education staff meet every morning to exchange information and all staff attend the morning assembly. The hand over meeting ensures that all staff are aware of any difficulty that an individual pupil has experienced, so that an appropriate plan of support can be put in place. Assemblies are used to celebrate individual pupil, house and class successes, both in education and in care. Care staff also support individual pupils within the class. There is a system for earning points for good behaviour and for work and achievement in the class setting, which is clear and known to all pupils. Points are recorded in each pupil's book which goes between the school and boarding house. The positive approach of all the staff encourages the pupils to support one another and try to achieve. Pupils make very positive comments about how they have been helped by the school to improve their literacy and other skills, and how learning to manage difficulties appropriately in turn helps them to learn: 'I've been able to learn how to read and write much better since I've been here', 'being at this school has helped me to know what to do when I'm angry and helped me to learn more'. There is also a strong emphasis on helping pupils to prepare for further education, training and work after school. All pupils from year 10 are able to take part in a two week planned work placement, and those in their final year at school are able to spend one day a week in a work setting. This helps them to consider their options after school and to identify an area of training and work in which they are particularly interested. Staff have worked hard to develop and maintain links with local employers to make sure that this happens, and pupils value the opportunities this gives them. Young people are given a high level of individual support. There is ready access to a range of therapists on site, such as art and music therapy and substance abuse counselling. Pupils are also referred for additional services to other agencies outside the school, for example Children and Adolescent Mental Health services(CAMHS). Each pupil has an identified key worker who takes the main responsibility for ensuring that work identified within their care plan is progressed. Pupils themselves said that they feel able to talk to staff about issues that concern them and that they believe they will be helped. There are excellent facilities for activities in the school which encourages young people to take part in exercise and also to develop their social skills. Pupils are able to use the adventure play area, the all weather sports enclosure and the gym. They are also able to take part in activities off site such as swimming and ice skating. There are indoor activities, such as

cooking, arts and crafts and computers in which pupils can be involved and all houses have a pool table. All of these activities encourage pupils to learn to structure their leisure time and pupils themselves said that the large number of activities open to them is 'one of the really good things about the school'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

There are excellent structures in place to encourage pupils to make their views known, about their education, about their care and about the day to day life of the school. The school council is well established and is valued by the boys. Pupils are also asked to take part in surveys of how they think the school is doing and what could be done better. They are able to raise issues in house meetings and in individual key work sessions. Pupils feel they are listened to and that their views make a difference. They also contribute to the regular reviews of their progress at school and are encouraged to attend review meetings, so that no decision is taken about their life without their full involvement. The needs of pupils are thoroughly assessed prior to their admission to the school. Information gathered from their SEN and from the visits that staff make to a pupil's home, is incorporated into individual education and care plans and placement plans. Each pupil also has a detailed risk assessment. These documents are all reviewed regularly to make sure that information is up to date and accurate and enable staff to work consistently to meet the needs of the boys. Pupils confirm that they understand the plans that are in place for them and that they feel they have been involved in developing them. Relationships between pupils and staff are based on a respect for themselves and for each other. There is an evident warmth between staff and pupils. Young people feel they are valued, that their views count and that they are helped to succeed. They said 'school is good at helping me with my problems', 'they make sure you're not getting into bother', and 'if I wasn't at this school I wouldn't be learning'. Pupils at the school are weekly boarders and the majority return to the care of their parents or family at weekends. Staff encourage all pupils, particularly those new to boarding, to telephone family and friends, but also encourage and support them to become part of the life of the school. Where there are specific issues about family contact, the school works closely with placing authorities to make sure that contact plans are properly followed. This ensures that young people are protected and that they can maintain good links with home.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Young people benefit from being cared for in a school that is very well managed. There is a strong and experienced leadership team and communication across the school is excellent. The established staff team is competent, committed and enthusiastic. Staff work well together to care for and support the pupils and in turn are properly supported by the senior staff. They are clear about the outcomes they are helping young people to achieve, and pupils are also clear about what the school expects of them. Training opportunities for staff are excellent, so that they are able to develop the knowledge and skills they need to provide good levels of care for pupils. Levels of staffing allow individuals to undertake key work sessions with pupils, to support them in education as required and to take pupils out on activities. The Statement of Purpose gives very good information to placing authorities and is supported by the clear information

that is given to families in the parents' guide. The pupil guide to the school is well written and detailed. These documents ensure that pupils, parents and placing authorities are clear about how the school works to promote achievement and how the boys will be cared for. There is clear and systematic monitoring of the work of the school and the care of the pupils. The school's senior leadership team meets very regularly and the principal and other senior staff provide detailed reports to the board of governors. The chair of the governing body is often present at the school and undertakes routine monitoring visits and audits of records. These systems together ensure that high standards of care are maintained and the welfare of the pupils is promoted.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that all placement plans contain detailed health information (NMS 14.6)
- ensure that medication records are regularly monitored by a designated senior member of staff (NMS 14.20).

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.