

# Unsted Park School

Inspection report for residential special school

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	17 September 2007

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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**

Unsted Park is a new residential special school that provides day and residential provision to children and young people with Asperger's Syndrome. The school premises are a Grade II listed building in a country setting with large grounds. A sports court and a swimming pool are available. The school provides 17 residential placements in three boarding units; five bedrooms are available in two units and seven bedrooms are available in one unit. These are located on the first and second floors. Access to the boarding areas is separate from the school via a pedestrian walkway, away from vehicles accessing the grounds. A controlled access lift is available, and access to the boarding areas is managed by a key card entry system. All bedrooms are single occupancy. Twelve bedrooms are en suite with a bath or shower and WC, five bedrooms have access to a dedicated bathroom or shower room next to the room. A range of communal areas are available and include lounges, quiet rooms and therapy rooms. Parking is available away from the main building. The school provides a caring and supportive service to children with special needs.

### **Summary**

The inspection was a full 'key' inspection and announced. The inspection was the school's first key inspection since its registration in September 2007. The sections Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution and Organisation were inspected. The section Economic Wellbeing was not assessed on this occasion. The five recommendations made at the interim inspection were checked for compliance and found to be met. The school is managed and organised in a sound and professional manner, has some outstanding features and affords a high standard of care to the students.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

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

As a result of the last inspection the registered manager was asked to: ensure that sufficient storage space is available for the storage of medication. This has been achieved by relocating the medication room, which now provides a far better facility; ensure that the medication room remains a safe temperature to store medication. This has been addressed by the relocation of the medical room, which has a better regulated temperature; ensure the review of the complaints procedure and child protection procedure to ensure that they fully meet the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. The complaints procedure has been reviewed and the child protection policy and procedure has now been approved by the Surrey County Council Multi-Agency Safeguarding Board and is now consistent with the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. This will provide staff with clear and accurate details regarding the procedures; review the behaviour management procedure and the absence of a child procedure to ensure that the procedures are specific to the school. The policy has now been revised and is comprehensive in content. This will give staff a clearer and more detailed account of the school's behaviour management arrangements; and ensure that the statement of principles is updated. This has now been updated and is available to parents and significant others on request.

## Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Students' health care histories are available in the sample of students' files inspected. The histories provide comprehensive details regarding individual students health and medical backgrounds and list ongoing and current conditions. Most of the information is supplied by parents prior to admission and updated via the school's assessment process. Students are registered with a local GP practice and have a choice of doctor if they so wish. Any visits to the doctor, dentist and other health care professionals are recorded. The school has a range of health care and medical related policies and procedures including a detailed medication administration procedure. This procedure is also detailed on the school's medical cupboard for quick and easy reference by staff. Students are provided with advice regarding healthy living, sex education and alcohol and substance misuse awareness via the school's education curriculum which is reinforced by care support workers as appropriate. Signed parental consent forms are held regarding medical treatment and the administration of medication. Students' files also hold a range of reports and assessments from specialist health care professionals such as consultant psychiatrists, psychologists and therapists. Samples of students' medication administered records show clear and detailed recording and evidence no gaps in the recording process. There is evidence of students' health care plans being monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. The school's medical room has moved location since the last inspection and provides more suitable storage facilities and room temperature than the original room. Medication is securely held in a locked metal cupboard which has an additional secure storage facility for controlled drugs. Whilst two staff sign for the administration of controlled medication, the details are entered on the school's medication administration forms and not in a controlled drugs book specific for the purpose. A range of risk assessments are held regarding medication areas including a risk assessment for when students are authorised to administer their own medication; however currently no students do this. There are also procedures in place for medication errors covering administration both on and off the school site. Old or discarded medication is disposed of by an external private company. Staff receive medication training at induction and 12 staff received refresher training on 2 May 2007 and first aid training on 16 May 2007. Further training is scheduled to occur in April 2008. There are a number of first aid boxes located throughout the school and their locations are displayed on notice boards. The school's accident report book is available and shows that such recording is consistent with the Data Protection Act, holding the accident report on individual student's files, retaining only the reference slip in the report book. Students are encouraged to eat healthily and the school's menu provides for a balanced and varied diet. Specialist diets are catered for. The meals sampled at the inspection are of excellent quality, ample portions and well presented. Meal times are a well ordered social occasion and students confirm that they enjoy the meals provided. Staff also confirm the consistent high quality of the meals taken. The school has full regard for health and medical matters concerning the children and ensures these areas are subject to frequent and ongoing review. Students said in discussion that staff look after their health needs and provide appropriate advice and guidance in these areas.

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

The provision is good.

The school has a policy and procedure regarding privacy and confidentiality which provides clear guidance to staff; however the policy does not cover all details required by Standard 3.2 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. A pay phone is available

for students use without reference to staff. Students may also use the duty telephone, most students have their own cell phones. All students have a lockable facility in their bedrooms in which to keep private possessions. All bedrooms provided are single accommodation and have en suite facilities which afford an excellent degree of privacy. Students can also display 'privacy' notices on their bedroom doors. Confidential records are securely held in locked cabinets and drawers in locked offices. Students said in discussion that staff have regard for their privacy and dignity and treat them with respect and are confident staff would keep any appropriate information about them in a confidential manner. The level of student supervision is observed to be close without being intrusive and students are seen to have adequate degrees of autonomy and privacy. The school has a complaint procedure which is made available to students, their parents and significant others. A staff whistle blowing policy is held, which staff in discussion said they would be prepared to use should circumstances warrant it. Staff receive training in the area of complaints during their induction period. The school's complaints book shows that one complaint has been received since the school's registration. Recording is detailed and evidences action taken and the outcome. Students said in discussion that they know how to make a complaint and who to report any concerns to. The school's arrangements in this area allow students, parents and significant others unrestricted access to the relevant procedures and evidence that they take complaints seriously and fully investigate and record any concerns. The school has a detailed internal child protection policy and procedure which has been approved the Surrey County Council Multi-Agency Safeguarding Committee. The school also has access to the Surrey County Council Multi-Agency Safeguarding procedures. In addition the school has a range of child protection and safeguarding material available for reference and guidance. The head of care currently reviews the school's child protection arrangements every three months. The head of care is the school's designated Child Protection Liaison Officer and he received the multi agency safeguarding training in October 2007. Staff receive child protection training at induction and records confirm updated child protection training in October 2007 and such training is to be updated annually. Staff said they are aware of the procedures and where they could be accessed. The head of care said that there are no current child protection issues in the school. Students said in discussion that they felt safe and protected in the school and that staff had a high regard for their protection and well being. The school's arrangements in this areas help ensure that student's welfare is safeguarded and sound procedures are in place should any child protection issues arise. The school has a policy and procedure regarding anti-bullying. The policy is clear and detailed; however it does not contain all of the details required by Standard 6.4 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. Staff said in discussion that bullying is not an issue in the school and students interviewed are of the same opinion and added that such behaviour would be quickly identified and promptly dealt with by staff. Students are observed to get on well with each other and no significant incidents of bullying or intimidating behaviour among the students is evident. The school's arrangements and vigilance in this area help facilitate a friendly environment where students engage and interact well with each other and learn to develop and live in a non threatening environment. The school's policy and procedure regarding students who are absent without authority is available. The head of care said in discussion that no students have absconded from the school and that in the event appropriate recording and notifications would be made. Students said in interview that no one runs away and that they enjoy living at the school. The school promotes a friendly and engaging atmosphere which helps reduce the likelihood of unauthorised absences occurring. The school has a comprehensive policy and procedure regarding behaviour management, which gives clear guidance to staff. The head of care said that the students were consulted regarding the formulation of the behaviour management policy and

they played an active part in its implementation. Students have individual behaviour management plans which are in evidence regarding the sample of student files inspected. Good behaviour merit awards and certificates are also in evidence of student files. Students can choose their rewards for good conduct from the merit award catalogue dependent on how many ticks they have achieved. Such rewards include tea in bed brought to them by a member of staff, staying up later, pictures and posters, take away meals, items vouchers from £5 to £12, DVDs and play station games. The catalogue also contains pictorial images. Students said in discussion that the behaviour management system is fair and provides them with good incentives to achieve and maintain good conduct. The arrangements in place are well thought out and imaginative and easily understood by students. However the main focus of the behaviour management programme is to establish and maintain good professional working relationships between staff and students which is reinforced and supported by the token economy and related systems. The school's sanction book is available and shows that 26 sanctions have been administered since the school's registration. Sanctions are clearly recorded and evidence that only permitted sanctions are used. The school has a restraint policy and procedure and uses the 'team teach' method of behaviour management which is a recognised and approved behaviour management programme for use in residential schools and children homes. All staff received team teach training in behaviour management on 6 September 2007 and 7 September 2007 and all staff are also due to attend a refresher course in team teach methods on 27 March 2008 and 28 March 2008. The home's restraint book shows that no incidents of restraint have occurred. Students in discussion said that the standard of discipline in the school and the implementation of sanctions are fair and sensible and that staff are consistent in their approach to them. Relationships between staff and students are observed to be positive with good communication, interaction and engagement evident. Staff and students display humour and banter in their dealings with each other, though staff ensure that boundaries are clear and adhered to. Students are observed to respond well to this approach and are settled and relaxed in their environment. None of the students are observed to be a problem in terms of behaviour management or control during the period of the inspection and the head of care reports that all of the current students are within the school's remit regarding behaviour management. The school's arrangements regarding behaviour management are both imaginative and effective and evidence positive outcomes in this area for the students. The school has a health and safety policy and the health and safety 'law' poster is prominently displayed. The school has a current written fire risk assessment and all staff received fire marshal training on 14 March 2008. Fire procedures and instruction are displayed throughout the school. Weekly fire alarm tests occur, the most recent being on the day of the inspection. It is evidenced that the school has evacuated the building when the fire alarm has been set off accidentally; however to date the school has held no formal planned fire evacuation drills, though one is planned for later this month. There is evidence of fire equipment and extinguishers being serviced in September 2007 and a visit by the fire officer took place on 27 February 2008. The school has current safety test certificates for gas, mains electricity, portable electrical appliances and an asbestos test report. A legionella and hot water system test is scheduled for 2 October 2008. There is a wide range of written risk assessments including hazardous substances, the swimming pool, outdoor and indoor areas, outings, equipment and individual students, which evidence monitoring and review. Standards of cleanliness are high throughout the residential units and no safety hazards are evident in the areas of the premises accessed. The school monitors these areas on a regular basis and the school's health and safety arrangements help protect students and staff from the inherent risk of fire and other potential hazards. The school has a recruitment policy and procedure. The sample of staff personnel files inspected show that the school's recruitment and vetting

procedures are sound in that the staff files hold all required details such as application forms and curriculum vitae, interview notes, copies of qualifications and certificates, job descriptions, staff appraisals, contracts, health questionnaires two written references and current checks via the Criminal Records Bureau at enhanced level. The school's recruitment and vetting arrangements help ensure that only suitable staff are appointed to look after the students in order that their protection and wellbeing can be safeguarded.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Statements of special educational needs are available in the sample of student's files inspected. The statements cover areas such as communication, behavioural and social development, cognitive and learning, physical and sensory development and monitoring and review. Education histories are also held with evidence of monitoring and review. Care support staff have substantial input into students education and learning by being involved in classroom activities during in school time and assist teachers in enabling students education. The residential units have a range of play and learning equipment and materials which are age and ability appropriate. Care support workers also extend their education and learning role to the residential units and are actively involved in leading and participating in a range of stimulating pastimes and pursuits which students clearly enjoy. Care support workers contribute to students' education reports and reviews as appropriate. There is sound communication between teaching and care support staff and the head of education is evidenced to attend care support staff 'handover' meetings in order to ensure information is shared and acted upon by the two professions who clearly work closely with each other in order to facilitate students' all round educational and social development. Students said in discussion that care support staff are committed to their education and learning and that they support them within the classrooms and on the residential units. The school has excellent arrangements in this area of which students enjoy and appreciate. There is substantial evidence to show that students are well supported regarding all aspects of their care experience at the school. Samples of students' files evidence clear and detailed placement and care plans that staff are aware of and are committed to working towards. The plans include long term aims and objectives, current targets, domestic and social skills training and many other areas. All students are allocated key workers who meet with their allocated students formally on a weekly basis and written key worker reports are available on individual students' files which show meetings at consistent frequency and detail areas discussed. In addition, there are weekly progress reports held and achievements recorded. Students have behaviour management contracts and behaviour management plans which are closely monitored by key workers. All students also have social skills check lists which also cover a range of independence training areas. All staff receive key worker training at induction and further training in this area is provided periodically. Students said in discussion that they are closely supported by staff and that they are committed to their wellbeing and strive to give them a positive and constructive experience whilst in residence. Students mention staff providing high levels of support regarding difficulties experienced in their home life, emotional development, moods, relationships, personal problems, confidence building and achievements in education and learning. Students said staff are always available for help and advice and that they trust them. There is also evidence of specialist support and consultation being sought as appropriate. Staff are observed to form sound professional relationships with students and have an active interest in their welfare. The school has established and maintains excellent arrangements in areas of educational, social and personal support for students in which students clearly convey their appreciation and satisfaction in discussion.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The home has a range of forums for students to communicate their views, opinions and choices. This is achieved by one to one contact with key workers and other staff, student council meetings and student house meetings of which meeting minutes are available and via a students' suggestion box. Students said in discussion that the staff listen to what they have to say, discuss items and issues and act upon them as appropriate. Staff are observed to consult students during the inspection regarding choice of activities and outings and matters regarding every day life at the school. Students also said that they are consulted regarding their future plans and that they make a contribution to reviews and attend such meetings as appropriate. The school has excellent arrangements in this area and values the students contribution to school life. Written assessments, including student risk assessments, placement plans and care plans are available in the sample of student files inspected. All are comprehensive and cover key areas for the progress and planning of each students future whilst at the school. Older students embark on independence and life and social skills training. An outstanding feature at the start of the care episode is that staff visit the prospective students' homes in order that two way familiarisation may take place between staff, students and their parents and a detailed assessment is then prepared. All assessments, placement plans and care plans evidence monitoring and review and are updated as appropriate. Students said in discussion that staff have regular contact with their parents and that the school properly plans and encourages them to attain and achieve their set goals and behavioural targets. The school's arrangements regarding assessments and care planning are of an excellent standard and help ensure that only appropriate students are admitted to the school and that the school can realistically cater for the individuals needs and forge good working relationships with parents and significant others. Students' contact with parents and significant others is clearly recorded in the daily log book and detailed in other recording forums as appropriate. Students said in discussion that they have contact with their parents and that staff show an interest in communicating with their parents. Contact arrangements are also held in placement plans, care plans and review notes. The school facilitates appropriate arrangements in this area and recognises the importance of students remaining in contact with their families and significant others.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is not judged.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The school has a comprehensive Statement of Purpose and mission statement. The mission statement explains that the school aims to "Foster a responsible and positive outcome on life and achievement, through the provision of an appropriate and stimulating environment". The Statement of Purpose is detailed and informative and accurately describes the service provided. A school prospectus is also available and is given to parents and significant others. The school's documentation in this area provides staff, students and parents with the information they need about the functioning and operation of the service and such details are reviewed annually. The residential provision at the school currently has 12 staff inclusive of the head of care and deputy head of care. The staff team have a good balance in terms of gender and most of the staff team have substantial experience of working in residential schools for children with special needs. Less experienced staff are closely supported by their more experienced colleagues. The

residential unit is appropriately and proportionately staffed for the number of students in residence and is to be increased proportionately when student numbers increase. Staffing arrangements during the night include waking night staff, sleeping in staff and a senior member of staff on call. Staff duty rosters are available and give a clear account of staff on duty and duty times worked. Staff are observed to carry out their duties in a committed, caring and competent manner and the combination of their skills, experience and abilities enables them to meet the needs of the students and enable the school to meet its aims and objectives. Formal individual staff supervision occurs each half term and written notes are available. Staff in discussion also confirm the frequency of supervision sessions and express their satisfaction with the content of such sessions. All staff have supervision contracts and supervision agreements are in evidence. Regular staff meetings are held and staff handover sessions are held daily. The handover meeting attended during the inspection shows a very good level of communication with staff being attentive, taking notes and providing a thorough account of issues and events to oncoming duty staff. There are also senior staff meetings each week, the most recent being on 7 March 2008. The school has excellent supervision, support and communication arrangements and staff confirm in discussion their support for the school's management and ethos, being of the view that management are experienced, fair, approachable and have high professional standards. Currently two staff hold the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 3 and the remainder are evidenced as being booked for such training in 2008/9. The head of care holds the Diploma in Social Work and the Certificate in Social Service and has attended a wide range of other appropriate training courses. The head of care has also applied to attend the NVQ at Level 4 and also embark on management training associated with the NVQ Level four award. The school's arrangements in this area help ensure that students receive a high standard of service from a well trained and appropriately supervised staff team. The head of care and deputy head of care monitor and sign appropriate records as part of the school internal quality assurance system and Standard 33 (monthly visit) reports are available. The Regulation 33 reports are very detailed and show a high level of monitoring and scrutiny of the conduct of the school. Questionnaires are also forwarded to parents in order for them to comment on the service provided. The sample inspected for February 2008 gave positive feedback regarding the service provided by the school. The school's policies and procedures have been prepared to a high standard, are well indexed with information being easily located. The school has a current insurance liability certificate. The conduct of the school is closely monitored and affords a high level of scrutiny which helps to ensure that all areas of provision are appropriately developed and maintained and that students receive the standard of care that is consistent with the school's aims and objectives. The school is managed in a sound and professional manner.

## **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 consultation with the pharmacy regarding the appropriateness of the school using a controlled drugs book to record any controlled medication administered. (NMS 14)
- ensure the school's policy and procedure regarding privacy and confidentiality is expanded to include all details required by Standard 3.2 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. (NMS 3)
- ensure the school's policy and procedure regarding anti-bullying is expanded to include all details required by Standard 6.4 of the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. (NMS 6)
- ensure that fire evacuation drills are held at least once each half term.(NMS 26)

## 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.**