

Mossbrook Primary School

Inspection report for residential special school

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| Unique reference number | SC003048 |
| Inspection date | 18 March 2008 |
| Inspector | Robert Curr / Debbie Foster |
| Type of Inspection | Key |

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| Date of last inspection | 7 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

Mosshouse is the residential unit of Mossbrook School which provides an extended day or one night residential accommodation for children with communication difficulties, including autism. All pupils who attend the school have a statement of special educational need. Children from other schools may use of the provision. The school is set in several acres of grounds on the southern edge of Sheffield.

Summary

At this announced full inspection, all key standards were inspected and improvements made since the last inspection were noted. It was found that the resource is outstanding in that the outcomes for children are well met and they enjoy their stay. This resource provides a flexible approach to residential provision and parents and children make their own choices when it comes to deciding if they want to stay over in Mosshouse. This service provision is viewed by the children as 'sleepovers.' Children enjoy warm and fruitful relationships with the staff team based on mutual respect and there are sufficient experienced and competent staff who are well supported. All parents spoken with declared their appreciation of the service and had every confidence that their children were well cared for in every respect. Consideration should be given to conducting quality assurance visits once every half term to monitor the welfare of the children in Mosshouse.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, the head of care was asked to improve the environment within Mosshouse so that all the facilities meet the needs of the children. Steps have been taken to progress the ongoing development plan. However, there is a need to improve the setting further to lessen the institutional aspects of the environment.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual health and intimate care needs are identified and assessed as part of the admission process. This is recorded in a clear, easily accessible plan for each child detailing how specific and general health issues are to be addressed whilst they are in Mosshouse. Particular health needs which may impact on future outcomes for children are identified at the earliest opportunity and staff actively ensure that the services needed to address these needs are met. For example, the physiotherapist or speech and language therapist. The school has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures that includes intimate and personal care guidance for staff working with the children. This ensures that children receive exceptional care that actively promotes their well-being and health. Health issues that relate to ethnicity, race or belief are fully assessed in respect of each child and these are explicitly identified in the care plan with any actions that may be needed to address them. The food provided for children shows that the staff responsible for the provision and preparation of meals have a very good understanding of what makes up a good balanced diet. Children learn about the principles of healthy eating as they enjoy an interesting and varied range of meals. Children choose and decide the menu and have a variety of dishes to choose from. Alternatives are also provided

for those children who are unable to eat the planned menu. In addition, fresh fruit is always available. Menu planning is adventurous, integrates culturally appropriate food and encourages children to try new dishes. The children are seen to treat mealtimes as enjoyable social occasions and accept good standards of behaviour as the norm. This excellent practice ensures that children's health and well-being are extensively promoted and developed. Policies and procedures are in place for the safe storage and administration of medication and the staff take full responsibility for ensuring safe practice. Children's health and welfare is safeguarded because staff are made aware of the appropriate procedures to follow. Children's well-being is further promoted as staff receive training in the safe handling and administration of medication, and all staff are trained in basic first aid. Medication is transferred to Mosshouse each day by the parents and any changes to the medication are explained to the staff on duty. The medication is then transferred back to the parents at the end of the stay and all medication further checked. Medication records are seen as key to the effective management of healthcare matters, staff are aware of the importance and necessity of them always being up to date and fully comprehensive.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Staff show a high regard for the privacy of the children and intimate care tasks are carried out in a sensitive manner ensuring that dignity and privacy is upheld. There are also clear policies in relation to maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality. Children's welfare is further promoted because the school has a well-written policy about how to make a complaint. There is an effective system in place to record any concerns made known by children. Children's welfare is fully safeguarded because the school has excellent, robust child protection policies and procedures. These policies are well established and understood by staff and there are good links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Training for staff is regularly updated. Although children choose to stay at Mosshouse, the policy on children who are absent without authority could be developed further. Children are protected from bullying as there are clear procedures in place to deal with incidents effectively, which staff are knowledgeable about. The school's overall behaviour management policy and strategies have, as their prime objective, promoted the creation of a safe, supportive learning environment. The policy aims to gain achievement of a successful learning outcome for the child in recognising and responding to their individuality. There have been no incidents of bullying in Mosshouse. Children's well-being is positively promoted. There have been no incidents of physical intervention. The school has regularly updated risk assessments for all aspects of safety of the premises and grounds including fire, and children's behaviour and activities. These assessments are taken into account in the daily activities of the school as well as Mosshouse and any activities off site. This further ensures the overall health and safety of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children receive a high and excellent degree of support. Mosshouse values, promotes and encourages all children to make the best of their educational opportunities. Children explore their potential and develop their personal interests because staff work in a very encouraging and supportive manner. Consequently the care, learning opportunities and activities are excellent. Children receive individualised assistance, with the appropriate assessments and plans in place. Considerable effort is put into creating a seamless transition from being at school and combining

social, educational, care and health needs into a package which, will not only meet identified needs but promote development within Mosshouse. Children freely initiate interaction and seek help from various staff members on duty. Children's well-being is positively promoted to ensure their continual care needs are met. Thus, children benefit from staying in Mosshouse because staff are focused on their success, needs and achievements. Children's welfare and safety is well supported because care plans and risk assessments are in place and include, in detail, children's social, sexual and health education. Children's social skills are extremely well promoted as they are encouraged to engage in a variety of activities. For example, staff share their own interests and enthusiasms with the children and encourage them to try out new activities and interests. Children's comments and conversation clearly shows that they enjoy these activities and the time they spend in Mosshouse.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Consulting with children, listening to them, discussing decisions affecting their welfare with them, talking to them about their residential stay and helping children make decisions on matters that affect them are all fully integrated into the care practices of the school and Mosshouse. Parents stated clearly that they feel listened to and are communicated with after every short stay their child has at Mosshouse. Staff demonstrate that they place great value on the views and opinions of the children in their care and every effort is made to assist with their communication. There is an evident warmth in the relationship between the children and the staff team, who have been working at Mosshouse for many years, and have built up strong bonds with the children and on occasions their siblings. Staff are very comfortable with their role of setting clearly understood boundaries while maintaining a high quality relationship between themselves and the children. Each child has a clear plan when they use Mosshouse that has been drawn up between parents, staff and the child. The plan is called 'All About Me'. This clearly details how children's needs are to be met during their overnight stays. Children only stay in residence for single nights so contact is not a major issue. However, parents or carers are encouraged to visit should they choose to do so and children are able to telephone home as and when they wish.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

The Mosshouse is on the same site as the school and is being gradually improved to meet the needs of the children. The accommodation is well decorated, maintained and furnished to a good standard and there is ample space for children to undertake a variety of activities. The kitchen is of a pleasant domestic style. Before children go to bed they can choose from a number of quiet sitting areas where they can be on their own to read, listen to music or play games if they wish. These areas offer a pleasant residential experience for children. However, the organisation are aware that the environment has some institutional characteristics that detract from its homeliness.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Mosshouse School has a prospectus that includes the philosophy of care and the expectations of the school and Mosshouse. However, it does not explain fully the admission process or the number of children it will accommodate. Children are making immense progress because of the

management systems that are in place. Their learning is effectively monitored for their continued progress and this is discussed regularly within staff meetings. Staff observe children regularly and use observations to detail their progress. Children also benefit because of staff’s commitment to regularly attend training to update and improve their knowledge and practice. The number of staff on duty is sufficient to meet the needs of the children and there has been a consistent staff team in place for some time. Having an established staff team creates a consistent approach for the children. There are a number of staff who have successfully completed the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 in caring for children and young people. Further members of staff are currently undertaking these awards. This means that currently overall the qualification recommendation is almost met and appears to be on target. Currently the service is monitored by parents and parent governors. Visits are made to Mosshouse as part of the overall monitoring of the whole school. However there is no formal process for someone who does not directly manage Mosshouse to monitor the welfare of the children and prepare a report on their findings. This practise would enhance the quality assurance process already in place.

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):

- review the policy in relation to dealing with a child missing without authority (NMS 8)
- continue to improve the layout and design of the residence to further serve the needs of the children it accommodates (NMS 23)
- review the statement of purpose to include the approved number of residents and the admission criteria (NMS 1)
- introduce a quality monitoring system (NMS 33)
- ensure a minimum ratio of 80% of all care staff complete a level 3 NVQ in Caring for Children and Young People (NMS 29).

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.