

Rossendale School

Inspection report for residential special school

Unique reference number	SC009656
Inspection date	25 September 2008
Inspector	Sue Winson
Type of Inspection	Key

Address	Moor Side Farm Bamford Road Ramsbottom BURY Lancashire BL0 0RT
Telephone number	01706 822779
Email	rossendale@priorygroup.com
Registered person	David Gordon Duncan
Head of care	David Gordon Duncan
Head / Principal	Helen Sharpe
Date of last inspection	26 September 2007

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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

Rossendale School is an independent special residential school, providing education for up to 56 pupils who display Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD). Pupils are subject to a statement of need under the 1996 Education Act. The school admits pupils of mixed gender, between the ages of eight years old to 14 years old. Boarding is provided for up to 23 pupils of mixed gender, for a maximum of five days, four nights, term time only. All boarding pupils return to their home base for weekends and school holidays. Residential provision is spread between three sites. The on site provision accommodates up to nine pupils. Bedrooms are normally shared and staffing levels are high, to cater for the individual needs of pupils. Further accommodation is located approximately four miles away from the school. The first site consists of two adjoining properties, both capable of accommodating up to three pupils. The third site is located in a different area. This is an eight bedded property, split into two units of four. Each of the off site units are staffed appropriately and organised to offer a more independent lifestyle.

Summary

The provision is outstanding and the school has a history of meeting or exceeding National Minimum Standards (NMS). There is ongoing self evaluation and a focus on improvement, which is informed by effective quality assurance systems. Outcomes for children and young people, demonstrate personalised care and staff work with parents and other professionals, to ensure that needs are met. There is a well developed implementation of equality of opportunity and valuing diversity. The managers and staff are experienced and skilled and they know individual young people well. Young people are involved in decision making and they are encouraged to attend community activities and develop life skills.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

No actions or recommendations were identified at the last inspection. The school continues to review and revise their practices for the benefit of the young people.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's health needs are met and healthy living is promoted. Comprehensive health plans are in place and they address physical, emotional and mental health needs. Young people are registered with a local doctor, dentist and optician and they access them as required. Where young people need specialist health services, the school works to ensure they have access to them and advocates on their behalf where necessary. The school provides a healthy and balanced diet, young people are involved in shopping and preparing meals and staff inform them about healthy eating and they encourage them to make appropriate choices. Young people are informed about the benefits of healthy living and staff are trained in first aid and aspects of health promotion. The school has taken all reasonable steps, to ensure that prescribed medication is safely administered and handled. Both on site and off site medication is safely stored and staff log when medication is received, administered or given to carers and parents. A stock of

non-prescription medication is not held. Not all staff have done safe administration of medication and the school has planned for training.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The welfare of young people is promoted and safeguarded by the school's policies and procedures, which are followed in practice. Staff are aware of the vulnerability of the young people and they ensure appropriate supervision is maintained. Induction training for staff includes anti-bullying, child protection, safe care and positive behaviour management. Confidential information is safely stored and it is evident that young people's privacy is respected. There is a telephone box in the school grounds, which young people can use to make private calls. In the off site residential provision, suitable arrangements are in place for them to use the house telephone privately. Young people expressed satisfaction with this. Young people know how to complain and said they can approach staff with any concerns. Young people's meetings remind them of their right to complain and include discussions on bullying. Young people are involved in compiling the bullying policy. There have been few incidents of bullying, which have been addressed, for example, through work done with all the young people involved. High levels of staff supervision are maintained and they are alert to the potential for bullying. The school maintains records of complaints, bullying, child protection incidents, sanctions and physical interventions for monitoring purposes. There have been no complaints since the last inspection. Appropriate safeguarding policies are in place, which includes safe working practices, child protection procedures and professional standards and good practice. Staff are aware of them and work within them, which ensures that young people are safe. Child protection concerns have been reported to the appropriate authorities and the designated officer has undertaken appropriate training. Policies and procedures are in place for when young people are absent without consent. Individual risk assessments includes missing from home risk assessments and full written records are maintained, which are monitored by managers. The school has a commitment to positive behaviour management, which encourages young people to take responsibility for their own actions, according to their ages and abilities. Behaviour plans are in place for each young person, which includes their history, triggers and support strategies. There is evidence of these being updated on a regular basis. Staff know the young people well and are skilled in handling situations calmly and helping and encouraging young people, to think about and reflect on their behaviour. Staff are able to spend time supporting young people, in individual work sessions or as needed. Sanctions are few and reasonable. Comprehensive written records demonstrate that physical intervention is used only when necessary for safety reasons. Managers monitor behaviour management records. There is a focus on physical safety and security. Personal risk assessments are compiled for each young person. A range of risk assessments identifies hazards and includes fire safety. Records demonstrate that all health and safety checks are carried out. Fire safety information is displayed in the buildings and young people have the opportunity to hear the fire alarm and practise leaving the buildings. Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure young people's safety, when taxis arrive to collect them or drop them off. Procedures for the selection and vetting of staff serve to protect young people. A visitors book is in use.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The school's residential provision and educational provision work together effectively, to support young people in all aspects of their lives. Young people achieve goals identified in both their education and care plans, which are regularly updated. Good communication and handovers ensures that the whole staff group are updated on young people and this provides a consistent approach. Care staff support young people in the classroom as necessary and ensure that homework tasks are completed on return from school. Young people have space and time to complete homework with assistance as necessary. Young people have access to the local library and computers. The staff are knowledgeable about facilities in the area and young people choose activities they wish to be involved with. They are supported and encouraged to attend community based groups and to build social networks, both locally and in their home area. The school has vehicles and staff to transport them, or where appropriate, young people use public transport.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Young people participate in decisions about their own lives and life at the school. Young people's meetings are held and examples were given, where changes have been made at their request. They have been involved in redecoration and refurbishment of the residential provisions and they personalise their own bedrooms. Young people are invited to add their comments to written records and do so. Care plans are compiled, which outline young people's needs and how they will be met. These are organised under the Every Child Matters outcomes. There is evidence of review and monitoring of the plans. Placement plans outline young people's global needs, identify specific targets and include strategies by which they will be achieved. A key worker system is in place for monitoring purposes and the managers audit files. Statutory reviews also monitor young people's progress. Targets are not always reflected directly in records of individual work and it is evident from discussion with staff, that more one to one work is being carried out than is recorded. The young people are in residence for weekdays only and the school staff work with parents, to meet needs and this provides consistency of approach. Regular communication with parents and carers maintains positive working relationships. Parents are involved in school events, reviews and planning meetings. They are welcome to visit the school. At the end of each year, questionnaires are sent to parents and carers, inviting their feedback. Comments from these reflect the professional elements of relationships with parents, who praise staff skills and abilities in regard to the progress made by young people. Suitable arrangements are in place for the admission of young people and parents or carers are fully involved. The criteria for admission is clear and meetings are held, to ensure all the available information about a child or young person is available for consideration. Review meetings ensure that young people remain appropriately placed.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

The school focuses on preparing young people for life after leaving school. An appropriate balance is maintained between allowing age-appropriate independence, safety issues and young people's needs for a nurturing environment. Young people are enabled and encouraged to develop life skills including cooking, washing, budgeting and using public transport. Individual sessions address life skills. Older young people have the opportunity to attend college 'taster days' and they are involved in work experience placements. A move from activities local to the school to community resources in their home areas, allows young people to build social networks

as preparation for leaving. Connexions plans are in place where appropriate. The school has a range of residential facilities, which allows for young people to live in a more independent way, as they near leaving school age. All the school's facilities are of a high standard and are well furnished and maintained. Young people personalise their rooms and take pride in their houses.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The school has a statement of purpose, which outlines the facilities and the services provided. Young people's booklets are individually made for each of the residential facilities and they include information on complaints and bullying. A parent's guide to the school is also available. These avoid unnecessary jargon. Young people's files are safely stored and provide a record of their history and progress. Due to the fact that many of the records are undated, it is difficult to see how often they are updated. They are otherwise well organised and comprehensive and they focus on young people's abilities and achievements. Records on file are cross referenced to other relevant information. The school is effectively and efficiently managed. The head of care has considerable experience and has appropriate professional qualifications. He provides effective leadership and support to the staff group. Staffing levels vary across the residential sites and are sufficient to meet the needs of the young people there. Time is available for verbal handovers, recording and spending individual time with young people. There is an experienced and skilled staff group, who have an evident commitment to improvement and achieving positive outcomes for young people. There is a focus on consistency of approach, which is achieved through effective communication. There are suitable arrangements in place for staff to consult with an on-call senior when necessary. All staff in the school receive induction training, which covers a range of issues including safe caring and child protection, in line with policies and procedures. There is a well developed and comprehensive training programme and the managers have identified some gaps in staff learning and development and they are working to remedy this. Staff are properly accountable and supported and supervised in their work. Written job descriptions outline their roles and responsibilities. Staff meetings address the school's practices and focus on the current residents. The running of the school is continuously and thoroughly monitored and a business plan for future development is in place. Visits under Standard 33 are carried out each term and written reports provided. The governing body is kept informed.

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
----------	--------	----------

Recommendations

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

- continue with plans to extend staff training on the administration of medication (NMS 14)
- ensure that 80% of staff have completed NVQ3 in the Caring for Children and Young people or equivalent qualification (NMS31).