

# Limpsfield Grange School

Inspection report for residential special school

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC013885
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 September 2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Lucy Ansell
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Key

---

<b>Address</b>	Limpsfield Grange School 89 Bluehouse Lane OXTED Surrey RH8 0RZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01883 713928
<b>Email</b>	headofcare@limpsfield-grange.surrey.sch.uk
<b>Registered person</b>	Surrey County Council
<b>Head of care</b>	Lynis Williams
<b>Head / Principal</b>	Lynis Williams
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	21 October 2008

---

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](http://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**

The school is situated within the residential area of Limpsfield in Oxted, Surrey. According to its prospectus, it is a small Residential Special School catering for girls between the ages of 11 and 16 who would be emotionally, educationally or physically vulnerable in a mainstream setting. The school was built in the 1880's as a family home and still retains many of its original features. The boarding facilities within the school are situated on the first floor and the girls are suitably separated in terms of age groups. The grounds surrounding the school are well maintained, safe and secure. In addition, the school has a tennis court, gymnasium and swimming pool, and an award winning smallholding and gardens that are available to all of the pupils. There are currently 29 girls boarding, some of these on a shared basis for short term boarders as there are only 22 beds.

### **Summary**

This was an announced inspection completed over two days. This covered all the key standards and judged if the recommendations made at the last inspection had been completed. The outcomes for being healthy have significantly improved with the new partnership working and the overall healthy lifestyle that is encouraged by the school. The schools practice on all aspects of safeguarding is of an exceptionally high quality. The new improved 24 hour curriculum has ensured significant improvements in the development of the girls independent skills. The school has competent and committed staff who are committed to offering equality and inclusion to all girls at the school. The school has worked hard to ensure the improved paperwork and monitoring systems are of benefit to the school. The promotion of equality and diversity is good throughout the standards inspected. Three recommendations were raised, two to ensure the residential area's facilities stays at a high level and one was repeated on ensuring adequate funding for pupils requiring more support.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

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

All staff have completed medication administration training to ensure they were competent in this area. The new paperwork for the care plans is very child friendly and involves the pupils setting targets with clear review dates. All risk assessments for the grounds have now been completed. The student council produced an end of year report to show what they had achieved, and what outstanding tasks were being passed to the new council.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Individual medical care plans for each boarder are securely held in the treatment room. These are comprehensive and clear, and kept under constant review. The school provides an excellent multi disciplinary team to ensure the students' health outcomes are being met in a multi faceted approach. The new partnership social worker and children's mental health nurse specialist are able to provide staff, pupils and families consultation and professional support, prevention and early intervention and training. The girls are assisted to attend any specialist or routine appointments during the school week. The medical plan contains all relevant information, including signed parental consent forms for medical treatment and first aid. The school also

maintains a record of any allergies and the current medication being administered. Parents give the school written permission to administer homely remedies. The head of care promptly relays any dietary, medication or health information to boarding and catering staff so as to ensure that all relevant information is shared.

The care team has sufficient staff who are first aid trained and who have completed refresher or new medication administration training. Staff are competent to administer medication and clear 'cross-referencing' systems for the administration of controlled and normal medication is in place. The storage and logging of the medication and the medication administration record sheets demonstrate competent practice. The school ensures a robust safe system is in place for transporting medications to and from school and home.

The meals provided by the school's catering team continue to be of an excellent standard and the school is awaiting its Healthy Schools status. The food served is wholesome and nutritious and a variety of choices are offered, including vegetarian options. All feedback received praised the food and stated how healthy it was. The chef continues to seek regular feedback from the girls with regards to menus and quality. Snacks and drinks are provided within each residential area and the boarders are enabled to be as independent as possible in preparing their own snacks and drinks.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The school is commended for its proactive approach towards ensuring the safety and welfare of the girls. Systems are in place to enable boarders to store personal items securely and the accommodation offers good levels of privacy. Staff are aware of the need for sensitivity when responding to personal care arrangements. Confidential information is appropriately stored and shared.

Boarders say they are aware of the complaint procedure, which is advertised on notice boards throughout the boarding provision and in child friendly written literature. This is infrequently used, as their concerns and issues are satisfactorily responded to using informal routes. The head of care maintains clear, chronological records pertaining to any complaints and there have been no complaints since the last inspection.

The pupils' welfare is further safeguarded by clear and effective child protection policies and procedures and excellent training on issues relating to safeguarding. All of the staff receive the school's own annual training and the designated child protection team attend external provision. They maintain clear and professional links with the local safeguarding team. In addition, all staff and pupils understand the use and purpose of the whistle blowing procedure. One young person told me 'The staff are always around when you need them and they make sure things are safe'.

Boarders state there are very low incidents of bullying and this is supported through written records. The staff team tackles reported and suspected incidents without delay. One boarder wrote 'There is no bullying at my school'. The boarders all seem to have a good awareness of the issues around bullying. Policies and procedures are in place and followed if a child becomes absent from the school without consent. Notifications and communications are well recorded and the appropriate authorities are kept informed. Posters and advice on advocacy services are well publicised.

Behaviour management systems are in place so that good behaviour is rewarded with further opportunities/incentives and unacceptable behaviour is not. The boarders like the new system and understand that good behaviour means rewards and getting special privileges. All staff maintain written records detailing any sanctions or punishments they implement and these records are monitored by the senior management team, to ensure they remain appropriate and within the school's prescribed guidance. New robust monitoring and auditing is providing quality analysis and information for the quality assurance systems.

The physical environment offers excellent safety and security. Detailed risk assessments are adhered to and these are regularly reviewed. Any high risk activity is robustly and comprehensively risk assessed and all measures taken to minimise any risks. Fire drills are routinely practised during the day and night and all fire fighting equipment is maintained and in good order. The boarders say they feel safe within the school. The boarders are rigorously protected from any potential hazards both within and outside of the school.

A robust recruitment procedure is implemented in practice. All prospective employees undergo rigorous checks, including the telephone verification of written references and seeking detailed explanations of gaps in employment histories. All staff are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure check and the young people are involved in the recruitment process.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The school works on a 24 hour curriculum, which continues in the residential units to enhance development and independence skills. Educational achievement is supported by the residential staff and they promote pupil engagement and enjoyment of education, along with after school homework clubs. The school has two handovers a day to ensure a constant flow of information, which assists the support of all students. This is assisted by a whole team approach in identifying and setting educational and social targets for pupils.

The new wide range of evening activities also helps contribute to the encouragement of personal and social development. The quality of life for boarders is excellent and is about promoting their independence and ensuring they are always offered a choice. Appropriate and meaningful leisure activities are provided. Activities include trips to local parks and leisure facilities, Judo, running club, rock climbing, drama group and youth club. The school is hoping to introduce day pupils to the residential side, so during the week a select group can board. This would enable them to be introduced to new and unfamiliar social experiences, by way of preparing them for situations they may experience within the community.

Care files detail individual and specific needs of each boarder. This aspect is very carefully explored throughout the assessment process and thereafter through annual reviews. The school continues to provide a high level of individualised support to boarders from all multidisciplinary teams. They are a crucial element of the individualised support delivered, in order for boarders to progress. Boarders are allocated with a tutor and a key worker; however they are encouraged to develop appropriate relationships with all of their care givers.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Boarders are given ample opportunities to express their own opinions and report any issues or concerns they may have through school council and house meetings. This year they have produced an end of year report to show what they had achieved, and what outstanding tasks were being passed to the new council. It was evident that boarders' views and opinions are valued and used in an effective way around the school.

The new Person Centred Approach used in care planning, also encourages boarders to discuss their own needs and wants and is an aid to decision making. Comments received from boarders include 'the staff care for us', 'I like school there is lots to do'. Parents spoken to or comments received on the surveys, had no concerns about the welfare of their children and spoke highly of the school and its staff team, but some did feel that complex emotional behavioural issues had been an issue.

The school's new partnership therapy team is working on improving and preventing behavioural issues becoming problematic in the school. All staff receive ongoing training in various communication and behaviour management skills that meet the needs of the boarders. The school is clear about the needs for which it can and cannot provide a service. The care files detail very clearly the individual and specific needs of each boarder; targets and the reviews are clearly recorded.

Boarders enjoy regular contact with their parents through various methods, including telephone, mobile and email. Parents are free to call in at any time. Parents commend the level and degree of communication received from the school, via reports, phone contact from key workers, and communication books.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

The young people live in accommodation which is maintained to a high standard. The lack of residential space does not detract from the hard work that staff have put into making the unit comfortable and homely. Furniture and fittings are of a good quality and the boarders are consulted with regards to décor. The bedrooms have all been personalised and where possible they have furniture which provides a privacy screen in the shared rooms. There is good access to bathrooms and toilets, those seen were mainly of a good standard but one of the junior showers was not. The carpet in one of the bedrooms was also very stained.

Boarders wear their own clothing outside of the school day. Should a boarder need additional toiletries and/or sanitary protection, these can always be obtained sensitively and discreetly from any member of staff.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The school's statement of purpose contains the required information and a clear statement of the school's care principles for the residential students. The school also provides a residential pupils' handbook. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The school works hard to ensure all pupils can achieve and they are inclusive in all situations. The boarders are encouraged to try new activities, learn about different cultures and differences. The staff team work in an anti-discriminatory manner which values individuality.

A caring and committed staff team works hard to provide positive outcomes for boarders, placing much emphasis upon the development and acquisition of independent living skills. Much positive work has been completed by individual staff members across the boarding and teaching departments. However lines of communication and direction from senior management are not always clear.

The staff rota includes the senior management team and the head of care being available and on call, and waking and sleeping-in staff on duty. There are residential staff vacancies, although these have been advertised.

The training matrix in place clearly shows that all training is up to date and the staff have been on a comprehensive training programme this year. New staff receive an induction and core training period. There is no individual with specific responsibility for leading the induction process. 100% of staff have or are working towards achieving the NVQ Level 3 childcare qualifications. There are procedures for staff to follow in cases of foreseeable crisis and there is a staff procedure manual. Systems are in place to provide regular staff supervision and annual appraisals.

The head teacher has presented a case for extra funding for residential students who required additional support to ensure their and other pupils' safety. However no decision had been made by the local authority at the time of inspection, and this means lower staffing levels than would be ideal.

The regulation 33 visitor is able to provide a comprehensive and robust report which is a benefit to the head and residential team. The new monitoring systems in place are ensuring quality assurance support systems.

## **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):

- ensure the carpets in the residential area are well maintained (NMS 24)
- ensure the junior bathrooms are maintained to a high standard (NMS 25)
- ensure funding is available for one to one support to ensure the safety of the residential students (NMS 28)
- ensure one person has a designated lead in the induction process (NMS 29)