

Field Heath School

Inspection report for residential special school

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Inspector	Muhammed Harunur Rashid / Paula Eaton
Type of Inspection	Key

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Date of last inspection	27 January 2009

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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

Pield Heath School is a non-maintained day and residential special school for boys and girls between the ages of seven to 19 years with moderate/severe learning difficulties and associated communication problems. Boarding provision is available from Monday to Thursday in addition to overnight respite care. The majority of the young people who use the service stay for one night per week.

The boarding accommodation is located in the school grounds and called St Joseph's House. It is a self contained building with sleeping accommodation on the first floor separated by gender. The school was founded by the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus of Mary and they remain the Trustees. A convent and nursing home are also located in the grounds of the school in Uxbridge, Middlesex.

Summary

This was a full announced inspection that focused on the key national minimum standards. All outcome areas were inspected. Four boarders participated in the inspection process. The inspectors interviewed the head of school, head of care and other members of staff.

Pield Heath Residential Special School is outstanding. The school provides excellent standards of care. Staff closely work with the health professionals, therapists and external agencies to meet young people's holistic needs. Excellent relationships exist between staff, young people and their family members. The school provides a safe and pleasant environment to young people. Staff promote young people's educational progress at the school through excellent communication methods between the school and the residential provision. Young people are supported by a dedicated staff team who focus on improvement. Staff are provided with various training to develop their knowledge and skills in order to meet young people's complex assessed needs.

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 made at the previous inspection dated 27 January 2009.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's health care needs are well identified and individual health care plans are in place to meet these assessed needs. The staff handbook, policies on promoting young people's health and staff training enable staff to meet young people's health care needs in full. Staff are well trained and supported by the school nurse, doctor and local health services. The health professionals and therapists work within well established partnerships that link with teachers, care staff and families. Where necessary care staff support young people to attend routine checks. For example, dental and optician appointments.

There are effective systems in place for storing, administering, recording and monitoring young people's medication. Staff have attended medication administration and first aid training. Medication is stored safely in a locked cabinet in the boarding house and two staff administer medication to avoid any mistakes. First aid boxes are provided in the house.

Young people are provided with varied, balanced and healthy meals. The menu plan is developed in consultation with young people. The school ensures that young people's dietary requirements are met in accordance with their religious, cultural and health needs. Staff are aware of dietary needs of young people. For example, Halal and vegetarian meals are provided for young people who need these. Staff encourage young people to take part in preparation of healthy meals and also to improve their independent living skills. Staff and young people eat together in the dining room. Dining rooms and the furnishings are suitable for the numbers and needs of young people and staff dining in them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's privacy and confidentiality is well promoted. Young people are encouraged to be as independent as possible, for example in relation to their personal care. Young people's records are kept safely and securely in the boarding house.

There is a comprehensive complaints procedure in a suitable format for young people which uses various symbols. The procedure is as it is displayed in the premises. There is an effective system in place to record any concerns made known by young people and others. For example, young people can write down suggestions, concerns and complaints in their communication book. This information is then collated and responded to. There have not been any formal complaints since the last inspection.

Young people are well protected by the school's child protection systems, providing a safe and secure environment for them. A comprehensive child protection policy and procedure is in place and this is kept under constant review. All staff, including volunteers, receive yearly child protection training to develop their knowledge and skills in this area. The school has built good links with the London Borough of Hillingdon safeguarding team and call them if they have any concerns. There is a whistle blowing policy in place that was reviewed recently.

The school has an up-to-date anti-bullying policy in place. The head of care advised the inspectors that there was not a current issue with bullying in the school. Staff monitor relationships between young people closely and there is excellent communication between the school and boarding house so that if there are any concerns these are addressed promptly.

It is unlikely that a young person will go missing from the boarding house due to the high level of supervision in place. However, an appropriate policy and procedure is in place for dealing with such an incident.

Young people who exhibit challenging behaviour are supported through positive reinforcement to make changes in their behaviour. There is a behaviour management policy for the school that incorporates education and the boarding provision. Every student has a behaviour management plan and risk assessment in place and this includes specific information that is relevant to the residential setting. Behaviour management support plans are reviewed annually or as needed if needs change. The emphasis is on prevention of unacceptable behaviour and

the school has incentive and reward schemes which encourage positive behaviour. For example, in the residential house there is a 'positive tree' on the lounge wall. Young people are awarded a leaf for positive behaviour with their name on that is added to the tree. At the end of the week the young person with the most leaves is given a reward/small prize. At the end of the month the young person with the most leaves is given a bigger prize and a certificate.

Comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures are in place and there is a general policy in place in the staff handbook regarding responsibilities and duties. Staff have attended health and safety training. They take appropriate steps to keep young people, visitors and themselves safe from risk of fire and other hazards. Comprehensive risk assessments of the premises are in place. Staff carry out regular fire alarm testing and fire drills. Current gas and electric test certificates are available for inspection.

The school has a robust recruitment policy and procedure in place and they ensure that all necessary information is obtained prior to staff commencing work. Staff files examined included photocopies of their passports, two written reference letters and an enhanced criminal records bureau disclosure.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Each young person has an individual education plan in place which is regularly reviewed. Young people's educational progress at the school is promoted through excellent communication methods between the school and the residential provision. Independence training programmes linked to ASDAN are developed to promote various life skills for young people. The school works closely with parents to ensure consistency in this area. Various resources are provided in the boarding house to support learning. For example, information is displayed using pictorial signs.

Young people receive individualised support. Considerable effort is put into combining social, education, care and health needs into a package that meets young people's individual needs.

The school values diversity. Staff and pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds and faiths. Although this is a Roman Catholic School the school ensures that the arrangements for worship are suitable for multi-faith assemblies and prayers. The school arranges themed activities days. For example, the school had a 'one world' day in which different rooms celebrated different cultures. There have been school trips to different worship places and different faith leaders have also visited the school.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Young people are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run. There are various ways how the school consult with the young people. For example, the results of 'You said, we did', a consultation survey, showed that young people wanted more lunchtime activities and the school acted upon this. Regular house meetings take place to consult with young people. There is a parents forum in action and they are consulted in the decision making process including decisions around behaviour management. They are invited to young people's review meetings and the school also arranges parents workshops.

There are clear policies in place for both respite and general admissions. The application forms completed are detailed with information about young people's likes and dislikes. Young people's family members are encouraged to visit the boarding house and the arrangements for a placement are made taking into account the individual needs of the young person and what will work best for them. The school has employed a transitions worker who supports young people with the transition to adult services. Transition plans are also discussed and minuted during review meetings.

The comprehensive care plans are regularly reviewed. These cover all aspects of the young people's care needs in conjunction with the health and medical information. The residential life skills programme set the goals for young people to achieve and breaks down them into smaller goals. The school has a speech and language therapist on site and all young people are supported to develop communication skills. This means that they are able to make choices and make known their views. Senior management staff attend reviews for young people. Other members of staff, such as the school nurse, also attend reviews where this is relevant.

The boarding house has an open door policy. For example, young people are able to contact parents when they wish and can invite them to visit the home. Parents are kept informed of welfare concerns and about the progress of their children.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

Young people enjoy living in well designed and pleasant premises. Sufficient space and facilities are available to meet their needs. The school has been operating since 1901. The old property is very well maintained. The communal areas are furnished to a very high standard. Comfortable sofas in the lounge, toys, lots of bright pictures on the wall and photographs are provided. Bedrooms have all required furniture and have new carpets fitted. Bedrooms are personalised for young people who board weekly and young people who come for respite use the same room each time and are encouraged to bring their own belongings. There are two kitchens in the communal area downstairs, one is used more than the other. They are well-equipped, safe and well-maintained. Five bathrooms are provided in the boarding house.

The grounds are large and there is lots of outdoor space including a sensory garden. The school operates CCTV cameras for the purpose of welfare and security of the young people. These do not intrude young people's privacy. The school has developed links with other local schools and the choir visits older people's homes in the local community. The school has a plan to redevelop an area of land to the rear to provide 'fresh air fitness' (outdoor gymnasium equipment).

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Young people and all other relevant parties have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding students. The welcome guide for young people has been developed in an appropriate format. This provides information about the facilities available to them.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding through the exceptional contribution the school makes towards meeting young people's diverse care and learning needs.

Sufficient numbers of staff are on duty at all times to meet young people's complex assessed needs. Young people are supported by a dedicated and stable staff team. The staff team understand their roles and responsibilities and take a special interest in the young people's welfare. Excellent relationships exist between young people and staff. Young people are overall happy with their care. They benefit from living in a school that is effectively managed and well run.

The staff team receive various training for their professional development. Care staff are trained in de-escalation techniques, safeguarding, communication techniques, health and safety, first aid and a National Vocational Qualification at level 3. All staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals from their line manager. There is an excellent internal self evaluation that helps to enhance the quality of care for young people. Young people are able to see governors and express their views and opinions about life at school.

The head of school, head of care and the staff team have a focus on improving various aspects of the care and learning needs of young people.

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

There are no recommendations.