

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Inspection date</b>	16 February 2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Clare Davies
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Random

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	15 September 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**

This school provides care and accommodation for up to 76 students with autistic spectrum disorder between the ages of five to 19 years. It operates as an independent co-educational residential special school which also provides accommodation for a number of children receiving up to 44 weeks boarding and is therefore registered as a Children's Home.

Students are accommodated in six on site residential houses and one off site in a neighbouring village. The school is set around a restored country house, within many acres of parkland.

### **Summary**

This was an unannounced interim inspection, which was undertaken to assess how well the home is working to keep young people safe and to consider the actions and recommendations made at the last inspection. All key standards in staying safe were assessed. All the actions and recommendations from the last inspection have been reviewed and all but two have been met. Due to the limited nature of this inspection the overall judgement remains unchanged.

The inspection identified progress in areas of safeguarding, with improved record keeping in relation to medication and incident reports involving physical intervention. The shortfalls remain in the absence of a Registered Manager and less than 80% of care staff being trained to level 3 in National Vocational Qualifications. There are significant vacancies within the senior management of this school, despite this there has been considerable progress since the last inspection to address any shortfalls and to develop the service, striving for the best outcomes for students.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

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

There were six actions and five recommendations made at the last inspection to improve practice, primarily in the outcome areas of being healthy, staying safe and organisation. All but two of them have been satisfactorily addressed. One action relating to the appointment of a Registered Manager and a recommendation for more staff to be trained have been re-stated following this inspection.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Two standards were assessed to look at progress from the last inspection. Detailed records are made of each student's food intake and this information is available to the nursing team, a dietician and parents if required. A new recording system where staff have a folder with them throughout the day enables prompt recording with accurate details. The school arranged for a dietician to give a presentation to parents on healthy eating and how to support restricted diets.

To improve the administration of medication and associated records, a new system from a national pharmacy has been introduced. Staff and nurses report that this system works well and staff have been supported with training from a pharmacist. The nursing team are undertaking

audits within each house to identify good practice and any areas that require further training. The nursing team are being proactive to ensure best practice by supporting and training staff, visiting houses regularly and having delegated responsibilities for specific houses. The school are developing working relationships with community health professionals to ensure students have full access to dental care, optical care and mental health services.

The provider has addressed the shortfalls noted at the last inspection; this outcome judgement remains unchanged as not all the key standards have been assessed during this short inspection.

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

The provision is good.

Good staffing levels ensure that the safeguarding of students is given a high priority. Many students are supported with 1:1 staffing and this level of supervision is well balanced with the need to respect their privacy. Safe working practices support staff and students where intimate care is required. Night staff have access to surveillance monitoring of corridors to ensure students remain supervised and safe. Parents are informed of the complaints procedure and contact details of Ofsted are included. No formal complaints have been made, although some parents have expressed their concerns relating to some aspects of their child's care and the school have made suitable records and acted accordingly, providing satisfactory outcomes. Students are supported in expressing their levels of satisfaction with varied methods of communication in the absence of speech. Staff are skilled in recognising when students are not content and have developed ways of identifying and recording behaviour that is unusual suggesting a student may be dissatisfied or unhappy with something.

The headteacher is the designated person with responsibility for safeguarding. To increase the number of trained staff to take on this role, the four deputies in care and education are attending a training course delivered by the Local Safeguarding Children Board next term. This will enhance the skills of senior staff in responding to any concerns raised about a student and ensure that there is always a senior member of staff available to respond to such matters. All staff receive training on what to do if they should be concerned about a student being abused or at risk of abuse. The initial induction provides this training followed by annual updates. The child protection procedures have been reviewed and updated. To promote the safeguarding of students, daily records provide a form to note any marks or bruises observed. Staff record where a student may bump or injure themselves to document an explanation should a bruise appear at a later date. This is good practice and ensures that parents can be accurately informed about their child's welfare.

Good levels of staff supervision and gates throughout the site ensure the safety of students and reduce the opportunity for leaving site unaccompanied. There are no reports of students going absent without authority. Each student has a behaviour support plan detailing the likely behaviours to be displayed and therefore how staff can support and help reduce negative behaviours. The monitoring of individuals' behaviour is very thorough with analysis from the psychology team. Additional therapists make up the multi-disciplinary team and together with nurses, care staff and teaching staff there is a holistic approach to meeting individual needs. The positive interaction between staff and students is indicative of the staff skills, experience and understanding of complex needs associated with autistic spectrum disorders.

Staff are trained in techniques of physical intervention and de-escalation. The recording of such interventions has improved with printed bound books capturing essential information.

Records of incidents are detailed in similar bound books and these reports are easily cross referenced. This assists with the monitoring by senior managers. Due to the nature of autism students are not always able to consider the impact of their behaviour on others and therefore sanctions are not often used, there is greater emphasis on supporting students with positive behaviour through praise and reward. Comprehensive risk assessments for each student identify risks pertinent to that student and how they can be reduced.

The school site and houses are well maintained with regular monitoring by the maintenance team.

Environmental and fire risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed. Records show that fire drills and evacuations occur weekly to ensure staff and students know how to respond. The fire safety systems are tested by the maintenance team and a contractor undertakes routine servicing of equipment and appliances. Fire safety training is delivered to all staff as part of the induction programme. Thorough recruitment procedures are adopted and managed by trained key people ensuring checks have been completed before permitting new staff to care for students. Staff accompany visitors whilst on site who are required to sign in at reception and get issued with a visitors badge.

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

The provision is not judged.

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

The provision is good.

One standard was assessed under this outcome area to consider the recommendation made at the last inspection. Care plans identify individual needs and provide strategies on how to support students. The provider has addressed this shortfall; this outcome judgement remains unchanged as not all the key standards have been assessed during this short inspection.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

One standard was assessed under this outcome area to consider the recommendation made at the last inspection. Separate bathroom facilities have been installed for staff use in the off site house. The provider has addressed this shortfall; this outcome judgement remains unchanged as not all the key standards have been assessed during this short inspection.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Three standards were assessed under this outcome area to consider the actions and recommendation made at the last inspection.

There is a very large staff team, over 200 care staff and approximately 50% are qualified to level 3 in a relevant National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) with an additional 30 staff undertaking the award. The standard of 80% has not been met but the provider is committed to training its staff team and working towards this target.

The headteacher and deputy head of care monitor the performance of the home and identify where areas of monitoring are delegated. For example, the chef and a dietician monitor the

menus and food provided, whilst the nursing team monitor the healthcare and medication of students. This service does not have a Registered Manager. The deputy head of care and headteacher are working together to manage the service in the interim, supported by the senior leadership team. The provider is in the process of addressing

these shortfalls; this outcome judgement remains unchanged as not all the key standards have been assessed during this short inspection.

## **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, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Due date</b>
34	appoint an individual to be the Registered Manager of the children's home. (Regulation 7)	31 March 2010

### **Recommendations**

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

- continue to work towards a minimum of 80% of all care staff having completed their NVQ at level 3 in care or equivalent. (NMS 29.5)