

Lindsworth School

Inspection report for residential special school

Unique reference number	SC017171
Inspection date	17 June 2010
Inspector	Jackie Callaghan
Type of Inspection	Key

Address	Lindsworth School Monyhull Hall Road Kings Norton Birmingham West Midlands B30 3QA
Telephone number	0121 693 5363
Email	
Registered person	Birmingham City Council; Children, Young People and Families
Head of care	David McMahon
Head / Principal	George Smith
Date of last inspection	30 September 2009

© Crown copyright 2010

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

Lindsworth is a special school providing day, extended day and residential places. It provides up to 14 residential places if two bedrooms are shared, or 12 places if all bedrooms are single. All the students have a statement of special educational needs and their predominant difficulties are social, emotional and behavioural. The school operates on two sites. The residential provision is sited on one of these, the Lindsworth 'south' site, in Kings Norton, Birmingham. Currently there are 192 students on roll of which 11 are girls. There are five boarders, all boys. Students actively contributed to the findings in this report.

Summary

This is a full announced inspection that concentrated on the key national minimum standards. The overall judgement in this report is based on the standards inspected within the relevant Every Child Matters outcome groups.

The overall quality rating for this setting is good. Students continue to receive good quality care, guidance and support. They are happy and they show trust with the adults around them. Four recommendations have been raised as a result of this inspection, in the staying safe and organisation outcome groups. However, the recommendations set are minor shortfalls that are not currently having a direct impact on the welfare of pupils.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection highlighted four areas in need of development. These were medication, behaviour management systems and governors' monitoring processes. The school has responded to these and all but one has been fully completed.

Staff now ensure that practice for administering and storing medication is in-line with pharmaceutical guidance. They also make sure that the school medication policies are adhered to at all times. Governing body monitoring visits now cover all the areas defined by national minimum standards. All of these areas are now providing further effective safeguards for students.

Physical intervention documentation is still not being consistently completed as staff are not on every occasion recording interventions within the bound book. This has the potential to impact on the monitoring of trends and assessing patterns in students' behaviour.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The health needs of students are well supported by the staff. Specific health needs of students are assessed on admission and then monitored throughout their time at the school. Each student has a health plan that is in line with the expectations of the standard. The school has developed good links with additional external health services, giving a continuity of health provision for students. As a result, students' health and emotional well-being are addressed well.

Medicines are safely managed. Staff are very familiar with the policies and procedures for the administration of medicines and there is a drive to ensure that this is improved at every opportunity. The process is well monitored and overseen by a designated member of staff to ensure that staff are vigilant. The school ensures that all necessary staff have completed training in medication administration. Controlled drugs are appropriately administered and an audit is undertaken every time this medication is given. This means that students are being actively protected.

Students eat healthy food during their stay. There are lots of opportunities to encourage students in their healthy choices and they are involved in menu planning. This encourages them to try new foods and helps them to understand about good nutrition. The healthy food is also complemented by a broad physical activity programme which ensures that students' good health is promoted.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Students enjoy a high level of privacy and confidentiality in all aspects of their daily living; this helps them to feel safe and protected. Personal care and particular health issues are dealt with very sensitively and staff recognise that the dignity of students is of great importance.

The complaints procedure is easily accessible to students. There are good relationships between students and staff. These relationships and an open culture, encourage students to raise any issues they have easily with staff members on a day-to-day basis. Students say they can easily talk to staff and they sort out concerns. They talk to staff about bullying issues. Staff have a clear understanding and commitment to implementing the school's anti-bullying policy and in ensuring and enabling students to express any concerns they may have. Students are exceptionally well supported in this area with innovative ideas such as a school internet page where students can and do raise concerns or issues. This is working really well and helps students to learn about bullying and to take responsibility for their actions.

Incidents of absence without permission are reducing, but when they do occur, are responded to and recorded within the school systems. However, these recordings on some occasions are not completed fully which can impact on any analysis that considers patterns or trends. The school has a policy in place to support staff and students regarding absence without permission. This has been developed in-line with local police protocols.

The safety and welfare of students has a very high priority in the school and they feel safe during their stay. Staff understand and are clear about what they should do if there is a safeguarding issue. Staff are also very familiar with the referral process to the Local Safeguarding Children Board. They are trained in safeguarding issues and are therefore very aware of vulnerability issues for students in residential care. Each student has their needs and risks identified in documents providing detailed, clear information to staff about how risks can be minimised as far as possible. These risk assessment documents work very well in practice and help to keep students safe.

Students' behaviour is well understood by staff and they know what the 'triggers' are for more challenging behaviour for individuals. Staff have completed training and are competent in diffusing situations to try to avoid the use of physical intervention. Incidents of physical intervention are reducing. However, the bound book that records these is not on every occasion

completed as required by the national minimum standard. Separate sheets that accompany the bound book are in place and it is acknowledged this limits the impact of this shortfall.

Behaviour management is something that the residential staff team are consistently good at. They have built up good relationships with students and see them in an extremely positive light. The emphasis is on positive intervention with rewards that are achievable for students. This helps them to progress in their overall behaviour.

The building is safe for students, staff and visitors. Fire drills take place regularly as do tests on all fire equipment in the building. Staff and students are very confident about what they need to do should there be a fire. Inspection of the gas and portable appliance testing are all up to date ensuring the safety of all who use the building.

There is a robust recruitment system in the school which maintains good levels of safety for students. This includes Criminal Records Bureau checks at enhanced level, proof of identity and references prior to employment. The overall management of the system is effective and therefore the students are well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Effective links between the school and residential provision ensure continuous holistic development of students. Physical, emotional and social needs have a very high priority and all students have targets to work on during their stays. As a result, the extended day and residential provision proficiently enables students to develop in confidence. The students really enjoy a wide range of excellent activities both in the school and out in the community. This gives them the opportunity to have new experiences and learn new skills. Evening activities are well organised and students are able to discuss a whole range of things that they do. Care staff actively contribute to educational reviews and student's annual reports. There are appropriate areas within the residential provision that allow for private study and additionally students can use the school facilities in the evenings.

There is an excellent range of structures in place to support students in the residential areas of the school. Students are able to identify different staff that they would talk to if they wished for support. The school has a designated person who is able to respond to specific needs and if necessary make referrals to external support agencies. The school ensures that there is an independent person available for students to access if they want to.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Assessment and care planning inform staff about how to meet each student's needs on a day-to-day basis. The documents set out the needs, which the staff are fully conversant with. They know the students extremely well and as a consequence the quality of care is good.

Students are supported when they move into residence. They stay because they want to and as a result enjoy the experience. They receive a welcome pack which sets out the rules, how to complain and what to expect. Staff also sit with them and spend time explaining what to expect so they are as prepared as they can be.

Contact with families is very good and parents feel that staff are approachable. They feel very able to talk to staff and to their child whenever they choose during their time in residence. Most students have mobile phones; however, the school still provides access to a telephone that students can use freely ensuring that they can speak to their family whenever they wish.

The staff ratio is good and therefore time is spent with students. This helps to ensure that their views about life at the school can be established. A lot of time is spent planning activities and outings with the students to ensure that their needs are fulfilled and that their stay is enjoyable.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

The school has developed effective systems for improving life skills which will support students after leaving the school. This transition development is constantly being used throughout students' school life. Both care and education staff are fully involved with developing each student's independence and projects such as a careers day held at the school enable students to make active choices about their futures.

The residential accommodation for students is of an overall satisfactory standard. However, homeliness, by the very nature of the unit, is quite difficult to achieve. Decoration is being carried out within the residential area on a rolling programme. The grounds of the school offer a good range of areas for students to relax or play. The vast majority of students spoken to are happy with the accommodation. As a result, students feel comfortable and safe in their environment.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The school has a Statement of Purpose that is in a clear format, without jargon and understandable for parents and social workers. The statement is reviewed and updated on a regular basis. There have been some changes to the management team during the last year with the introduction of a new headteacher.

The school has an appropriate staffing policy detailing the required levels of staff within the residential areas. All staff have completed an induction course at the school and there is a good range of training courses undertaken by the staff team. The staff team is made up of a good range of experienced and trained staff. All of the staff have the National Vocational Qualification in Caring for Children and Young People at level 3. This means that the school currently have a 100% completion rate.

Staff are supported through a range of meetings with senior staff. All staff appear to have regular supervision meetings. However, these sessions are not being recorded in-line with national minimum standards. The minutes of pastoral meetings and care staff meetings show that staff are able to develop a good awareness of ongoing issues with students and life in the school.

Monitoring is completed on a half termly basis by the school governors. All pertinent school records are monitored by the senior management team. However, current appraisals of the boarding provision are not exploiting opportunities for any analysis to develop practice.

The promotion of equality and diversity in the school is good. Staff ensure that each student is seen as an individual and is treated as such. Care plans develop an awareness of each student's religion and how this can be supported within the school and care side.

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 documentation records all information as required by national minimum standard 8
- ensure the physical intervention recording is consistently completed as required by national minimum standard 10.4
- develop the staff supervision records to fully detail all points in national minimum standard 30.4
- develop the internal monitoring processes to evidence action taken if necessary in relation to any concentration, trend or pattern in recorded issues or events. (national minimum standard 32.3)