

# Chaigeley Educational Foundation

Inspection report for Residential Special School

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<b>Inspector</b>	Michelle Moss
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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	11/11/2009

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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 outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

## 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**

Chaigeley School is a non-maintained school that caters for boys between the ages of eight and 16 years who have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. The school has residential provision for a maximum of 24 students on a weekly, term-time only basis and a small weekend provision. The school is part of the Chaigeley Educational Foundation which is a registered charity.

The school consists of a number of one and two-storey buildings set in their own grounds. The residential provision is on the first and second floors of the main building and consists of three units for juniors, intermediates and senior boys.

The majority of residential students were met and contributed to the inspection. All students using the boarding provision completed a questionnaire about their residential experiences. This information has specifically informed the judgements on the provision of care.

## **Summary**

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was a stand alone inspection which was conducted announced. All key standards were assessed to form a judgement on the provision of care.

Outcomes for students are outstanding in nearly all regards. The residential care is extremely well run, led and managed and puts students at the heart of all that it does. The trustees and governors are equally supportive and play a critical friend role, which is evident from minutes of their meetings. Students judge the quality of care to be the very best and this is validated by the visible commitment of care staff that are dedicated and enthusiastic in their support of the students. There is an excellent commitment to safeguarding students.

This very positive announced inspection found only three minor areas for improvement. These relate to enhancement of the 24 hour curriculum, monitoring of hot water temperatures and securing an independent visitor. Despite these shortfalls, the ongoing outstanding features mean the school continues to put students' welfare at the top of their priorities.

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

The headteacher and head of care have worked effectively to create a school where care staff are equally ambitious to improve. This well established commitment is reflected in the depth of work undertaken to address previous shortfalls. For

instance, all students' now have comprehensive placement plans that are actively reflecting their development. These exceptional plans identify pastoral and educational needs, including all aspects of health and safeguarding. The second area of improvement is the assessment of bullying, which is now rigorously monitoring the times, places and circumstances where the risk of bullying is greatest. This information is being used to identify potential hot spots in the school day where increased surveillance is required to safeguard students.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Students have access to a designated medical co-ordinator, who have a specific responsibility to promoting their health. Medication is tightly managed and monitored to ensure students receive their prescribed medicines appropriately. Medicines are kept secure and there is a complete audit trail of medicines administered to students and when prescriptions arrive in and out of the school. Students are confident that if they are feeling poorly, care staff will look after them.

There is a terrific care plan in place for each student that covers all aspects of their physical, emotional and mental health needs. This informative document helps care staff to remain informed about specific areas of health where students may need support or medical intervention. Similarly, care staff training has a specific focus on promoting health and emotional well-being of students. For example, training undertaken by staff means students can seek support in areas of bereavement and loss, relationships and counselling. Nevertheless, more specific knowledge in areas of health is not at the same high level. However, to counter this effect, the care staff do have access to a comprehensive array of services to enable students to have their physical and emotional needs fully met.

The school is working towards the healthy school award and is promoting an interest in healthy eating by increasing students' awareness to promoting their physical well-being. The catering staff work collaboratively with the leadership and students to develop healthy menus which are aimed at building up knowledge of basic nutrition and what is a balanced diet. The school is also building into the 24-hour curriculum theme days in which meals times play an integral role in their success. This meaningful experience helps encourage students to experiment with new foods whilst increasing their appreciation of multiculturalism. Students all say that meals are always good and they always have enough food.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The students feel safe and are equally confident in the care staffs' abilities to safeguard them from harm. Care staff practices also mean students have their personal dignity and privacy respected. The school aims to provide a safe environment for students. This extends to students being well protected from

hazards to their safety through good risk assessments, vigilance and an ongoing programme of maintenance to the premises. The only slight weakness in this otherwise comprehensive practice is the monitoring of hot water to reduce the risk of scalding. For example, there are variations in water temperatures throughout the residential units.

Students say that the staff listen to and respond appropriately to their concerns and this helps them to have a reasonable trust the school's complaints procedure. Nevertheless, this does not extend to having access to someone independent of the school where they can have another option over how to take forward a concern. More positively, care staff appreciate the serious implications of bullying and its potential harm to student's welfare. There is a commitment by staff to tackle all types of bullying through initiatives and strategies that improve behaviour and increase awareness. Students are equally well informed about the impact of bullying. For example, the school council have held a bullying awareness day in which the students have taken an active role. This extends to sharing information about bullying, including using posters to increase understanding about its effect. This excellent practice is also supported by a strong commitment to ongoing monitoring undertaken by multi-professional behaviour support team. The school has a reward and incentive scheme which serves to encourage positive behaviour and a positive attitude to learning. These are implemented on a short, medium and long term basis and play a major part in school life. Students confirm they like the scheme and overall feel it is fair with realistic targets to aim for. There is a clear threshold based on risk applied if physical intervention is necessary. A hierarchy of techniques for physical intervention takes account the residential student's age and the seriousness of the situation at any given point. The support given by care staff enables students to cope with their emotions and to practise learnt strategies to help them manage their behaviour. This avoids behaviour escalating to a level where students become distressed and place themselves and others at risk of harm. Because of this highly effective approach, the use of restraint in the residential side of the school is low.

Arrangements for safeguarding students are stringent and meet all requirements. For instance, the school has a designated safeguarding officer who is known by staff and students. The relationship between the staff and the designated officer provides a strong foundation of understanding over responsibilities for the protection students within the school.

As part of the care planning process, the school carefully assesses any potential risk of students going missing, even if there is no history. This includes any indicators of people or places which are considered either unsafe or risky. There is meticulous attention paid to the recruitment of staff. This extends to senior staff and Governors undertaking safer recruitment training as a means of enhancing the school's commitment to safeguarding students under their care.

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

The provision is good.

A key mechanism for improving learning and attainment is centred on the individual educational plan. There are some striking examples of where the 24-hour curriculum is playing an integral role in meeting the plan. For instance, care staff play a key role in helping students to develop life skills. This work then enables students to gain accredited awards. However, this outstanding practice is not as equally established in other areas of supporting learning to maximise the opportunities of providing a 24-hour curriculum. This results in missed opportunities of collaborative working to enhance learning attainment.

Students enjoy being outside and have favoured activities which care staff actively support. For example, students are encouraged and supported to participate in social clubs, sports activities, both on and off the school site. Some external clubs use the facilities at the school in the evenings and the students are given opportunities to join these clubs if they wish. This is helping to sustain interest and enthusiasm among the students and to forge new links and friendships with other people in the wider community.

The care staff ensure that every residential student receives individualised support and care, personal to their needs and situation. This level of support is valued by students who speak very fondly of the staff. Nevertheless, students do not always have at least one person independent of the school who they can also consider approaching for support. This absence of a second option limits choice to how students may wish to seek support and guidance. More positively, parents recognise that the staff treat students with respect and that their children see the school as a second home.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Care staff treat students with courtesy, honesty and respect. The school has a number of mechanisms that assist the students to engage in meaningful consultation that is helping to develop the residential provision. Each student has a care plan based on a full assessment of their current and future needs, including potential risks to self or others. This careful assessment covers personal and social needs including specialist support in a holistic way. The students are very much part of the development of their care plans and are encouraged to make their views known over their contents. This level of partnership provides students with a sense of ownership over their care. Their positive contribution is not isolated to their care plan; instead it is integral to day-to-day decisions.

Admissions to the residential provision are planned effectively to meet the specific needs of individual students. Once stays commence, the comprehensive placement plan is formed to help identify pastoral and educational needs, including all aspects

of health. There are striking examples of where the school is helping particular students overcome significant barriers associated with their sexuality and behaviour traits. As a result of the excellent support, the students are making outstanding progress. This is supported by students own views on their achievements which they clearly put down to the help they have received from the school. Strong links exist between the school and families to ensure the holistic needs of students remain fully met. The care staff are particularly good at helping students sustain meaningful engagement with their families including home visits and telephone contact.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Students experience an extensive range of facilities at the school including the gymnasium, open spaces around the school, a computer club and entrainment systems including games consoles, located in the different houses. Students are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms and to participate in daily domestic chores. This gives students a sense of belonging and responsibility. The residential houses require ongoing maintenance to reflect their age. All efforts are made to ensure the houses continue to remain fit for purpose.

The school puts a strong emphasis on helping students build up life skills that better prepare them for adulthood. This gives students a sense of self-worth and self-direction in relation to the choices and challenges they will need to make in everyday adult life.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Excellent staffing levels ensure pastoral needs are consistently met. What is more, staff demonstrate through practice their commitment to the students, the management and ethos of the school. The care staff are experts in their pastoral care. This is helped by the commitment of the school to help enhance care staff knowledge in areas of counselling, anger management and bereavement counselling. These increased skills provide students with plenty of opportunities to talk to someone who can help with any personal difficulties.

Shifts start with handovers to aid care staff to receive briefings on the care of students. Staff confirm receiving regular supervisions, training and staff meetings. The head of care is very well supported by the headteacher and the bursary management team. The governing body also provides a critical friend role to the boarding provision. This includes undertaking rigorous monitoring visits that help to ensure students and staff are safe and the provision of care continues to reflect individual needs.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. The care staff treat students fairly on the basis of need and do not discriminate against students based on their



sexuality, race, culture, heritage, religion or beliefs. The school is excellent at creating links with community groups to reduce isolation and provides continuity of cultural experience as requested by students.

The school ensure students personal information is treated in strictest confidence. Information about the residential care is provided to potential students and their families in a form of a booklet. This informative document provides an excellent introduction to the school and provides the essential information to help inform decisions.

## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Compliance with national minimum standards**

The school meets all the national minimum standards, with the exception of any listed below. To ensure that the school meets the national minimum standards the school needs to...

- make sure hot water temperatures at taps accessible to vulnerable students does not exceed 43 degrees Celsius. (NMS 26.8)
- make sure at least one person independent of the school and the placing authority is identified for students to contact directly about personal problems or concerns (NMS 22.8)
- ensure care staff have strong links with teaching staff to actively contribute to individual students educational progress, development and achievement. (NMS 12.1 and NMS 12.6)