

Osborne School

Inspection report for Residential Special School

Unique reference number	SC012457
Inspection date	09/03/2011
Inspector	Brian Mcquoid
Type of inspection	Key

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Date of last inspection	15/12/2009

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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

Osborne School is a secondary school owned and managed by Hampshire County Council. It provides education for young people with a range of special educational needs and complex learning difficulties. The school has a 10-bed residential unit, Osborne House, which like the rest of the school is purpose built, and is fully accessible for pupils with disabilities and wheelchair users. Osborne House also contains the post 16 provision and at the time of the inspection all of the residential students were attending this unit. The school is located near to the centre of Winchester and admits pupils from a wide geographical area within Hampshire. The school provides weekly term time only boarding.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

The inspection was carried out at short notice and the school's residential provision was inspected against all of the key national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Osborne School continues to operate its residential provision to a very high standard with outcomes for boarding students outstanding in all areas assessed. Osborne House contains both the residential accommodation and the post 16 provision. This co-location contributes remarkably to providing an environment which supports the school's aims for its students. There is excellent provision for promoting the physical and emotional well-being of students, and for addressing their individual health care needs. Established systems across the school support and promote good practice and help to ensure the safety of students at all times. Staffing is a real strength of the school. An enthusiastic and skilled staff group provide outstanding consistency in the delivery of an individualised waking hours curriculum across both education and residential settings. Residential students clearly enjoy their time at the school. They engage positively with staff and make significant progress in areas of their lives while there. Staff receive excellent support and there is strong leadership overseeing and monitoring all aspects of the care provided.

The one recommendation arising from the inspection relates to the format being used for monitoring visits carried out by members of the school's governing body.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection the school has produced a very informative booklet for new residential students which provides valuable information in an accessible format. In addition all care staff are now receiving supervision at the required intervals.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The school makes excellent provision for promoting the physical and emotional well-being of students, and for addressing specific health care needs. Healthy lifestyles are promoted and students receive information and guidance relating to major risks to health such as alcohol and drugs. There are lots of opportunities provided for physical activities and extremely good support from a range of therapists and external agencies which support and promote the physical and emotional health of students. Individual therapy programmes devised for students may include access to hydrotherapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, and music therapy. Good support is also provided by the school's educational psychologist as necessary, and from the school nurse who carries out annual medicals on all of the school's students. Individual health care plans are in place for students and care staff are trained in tube feeding, the administration of emergency medication and in supporting some aspects of individual therapy programmes. Robust systems are applied to the management and administration of medication which ensure the welfare of students is appropriately safeguarded. There is a suitably qualified first aid person on duty at all times within the residential provision.

Students benefit greatly from the provision of meals within the residential provision. They are totally involved in menu planning, shopping, and meal preparation. Staff promote healthy eating and menus show a varied and balanced diet is being provided. Fresh ingredients are used and meals were seen to be of a very good quality. Mealtimes are informal social occasions with students helping with all aspects of preparation and clearing away afterwards. Special dietary needs are very well catered for, fresh fruit is always available and students are able to make drinks and snacks for themselves. One student was observed preparing ingredients and cooking their evening meal wholly independently of staff apart from supervision for safety purposes. Staff are trained in food handling and the school received an excellent rating from their most recent environmental health inspection carried out in January 2011. Staff are trained in food hygiene.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Residential students benefit from living in a safe and secure environment where there is excellent provision for the management of risk and where they are suitably protected from harm at all times. Safeguarding has a high priority across the school. All staff cover safeguarding and child protection during their induction and sign the

relevant policies to acknowledge reading and an understanding of them. There are three designated senior staff with responsibility for child protection who have undertaken training specific to the role and who provide staff with annual refreshers during inset days. There have been no child protection concerns at the school since the previous inspection carried out during December 2009.

Students all have individual bedrooms where they can choose to spend time and they have their privacy duly respected. An inclusive culture within Osborne House sees students valued as individuals and being encouraged and supported to express their feelings. Staff have an acute understanding of individual students and develop extremely positive relationships with them. Social interaction is encouraged and facilitated by staff, and the behaviour of students was seen to be exemplary, with no concerns about bullying or challenging behaviours. Sanctions are not used and the staff group are skilled in encouraging and supporting students to manage their own behaviour. Personal safety at home and in the community is covered specifically with students as part of the curriculum, and promoted during their everyday lives at the school by staff.

Robust systems in operation ensure the safety of students at all times. Comprehensive risk assessments identify strategies for managing identified risks associated with individual students and the activities they undertake both on and off site. The premises are inspected daily and provide a safe environment with excellent security arrangements. Provision for fire safety is extremely good with all staff completing online training and all tests and checks of fire safety equipment being carried out as required. Practice evacuations take place regularly, with personal evacuation plans in place where necessary for some students.

Recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of staff and provide suitable safeguards for the welfare of students. Staff have completed safer recruitment training and the process is closely monitored by the school's headteacher.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Students benefit from outstanding provision at the school for supporting their education across the classroom and residential settings. Care staff and teachers are part of one team delivering a personalised waking-hours curriculum to students. This staffing arrangement provides a remarkable consistency of staffing which enables individual education plans and the targets set for students to be worked towards outside of the school day. Teaching staff and student's key workers work extremely closely together on a daily basis and meet every half term to review individual student's targets and their progress. The co-location of the post 16 provision and residential accommodation has created an environment ideally suited to enabling and supporting the acquisition of life skills for students and increasing their levels of independence. Having a break time café where students are able to purchase drinks and snacks is one example of this. Access to school and community facilities outside of the school day is excellent and fully complements the work being carried out with

students. Established links with a local youth action group, the local university and colleges in the area are examples. Others are the involvement of students in a local environmental project and going to the cinema and local leisure centre.

The school provides its residential students with excellent levels of individual support according to their need. All students have designated key workers who meet with them regularly and monitor their progress towards individual education plan targets. Increasing levels of independence, encouraging self-occupation and self-management of behaviour are all areas central to the work being carried out with individual students. Individual plans reflect this and the levels of support provided. All residential students reported positively on the help they receive to become more independent. Where necessary staffing levels are increased to provide the necessary individual support for students. Accessing the community and the monitoring of specific health care needs are examples of this. Access to specialist services for students is excellent with individual programmes of therapy being implemented whenever the need is identified.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The school makes excellent provision for consulting with students and involving them in all aspects of their daily lives. There is a school council which operates effectively, student group meetings are held within Osborne House, and students meet regularly with their individual key workers. Students routinely contribute to their annual reviews, and in addition there is a student comments book and an accessible complaints procedure available to them. Choices are provided for everyday matters such as meals and activities and students are fully involved in the evaluation of their individual targets being worked towards. Residential students reported feeling 'listened to' by staff when responding via the pre-inspection questionnaires. Improving security arrangements and forming a 'leavers group' are examples of responses the school has made as a direct result of listening to students.

There is a clearly planned approach to admitting new students to the residential provision which is supported by excellent information and a process of induction. Transition arrangements are discussed at an early stage during annual reviews and the school work very closely with external supporting agencies to ensure students enjoy a smooth transition when moving on from the school.

Established systems provide extremely well for ensuring written plans identify how the assessed needs of students are to be met while at the school. Statements of special educational need, residential placement plans, individual education plans, individual support plans, behaviour plans, and health care plans all contribute effectively to a process which makes excellent provision for meeting the individual needs of students. Plans are monitored closely by key workers and reviewed on a regular basis in consultation with students.

The school works extremely closely with parents and makes excellent provision for communicating with them. Weekly feedback forms are produced by key workers and sent home detailing the student's week, and in addition a weekly newsletter is produced by students and goes home with them. Home/school communication books are also used. Parents describe having excellent communication with the school and being able to call at any time to discuss their child. A telephone is available for students to use in private.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

Osborne House is purpose built and provides an excellent environment which well suited to meeting the school's aims and objectives it has for its residential students. The accommodation and facilities are of a high standard and are being extremely well maintained. All students have their own rooms which are spacious and well furnished and able to be personalised. The building is centrally heated with lots of natural light and has been made as homely as possible with lots of student artwork and photographs displayed. Students are consulted about the general décor and are actively involved in carrying out household tasks around the building. Excellent kitchen and laundry facilities are routinely used by students and facilitate their ability to improve levels of independence. Two communal areas encourage social interaction while also providing opportunities for students to get away from the main group if they wish to and spend time in private. The accommodation is totally accessible to students with a physical disability. A lift provides access to upstairs and specialist equipment, such as overhead hoists, are fitted. There are sufficient baths, showers and toilets to meet the needs of students and provide appropriate privacy. Staff sleeping-in have separate accommodation and facilities which are located centrally within the house.

Students benefit greatly from having excellent access to a range of school and community facilities outside of the school day. Classrooms which facilitate cooking, an occupational therapy suite, sensory room, outside play areas, and a hydrotherapy pool are examples of the school facilities regularly used. In addition there are a number of after school clubs which students take advantage of. Shopping, trips to the cinema, theatre, local leisure centre, local pub, and attending community groups are examples of the access provided to community facilities.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

There is strong leadership of the school and a clear staffing structure which contributes remarkably well to the provision for residential students. Staffing is a real strength, with a skilled and highly motivated staff group delivering a waking hours curriculum across both the classroom and residential settings. This consistency of staffing benefits students greatly, enabling them to develop really positive

relationships with staff and to make significant progress in areas of their lives. Staffing levels ensure the needs of students are able to be well met at all times and there is excellent provision for obtaining additional support from the senior management team should it be necessary. The staff group receive excellent support in the form of regular supervision and training provision which ensures they are well able to meet the needs of students. There are regular staff meetings and a residential handbook provides easy access to policies and procedures which support and promote good practice across the school. Communication across the school is excellent and contributes very effectively to the welfare of individual students.

The school provides excellent information for students and their parents, including a student induction booklet which contains details about the residential setting in an accessible format.

The welfare of individual students and the progress they make is extremely closely monitored by both teaching and care staff. Established systems also provide for very effective overall monitoring of the provision by the headteacher and the head of care. Audits against the national minimum standards are being carried out and there is ongoing monitoring of staff competency in certain key areas. A development plan for the residential provision is in place and highlights the emphasis on continuing to improve the services the school provides for its residential and post 16 students. Members of the school's governing body carry out regular monitoring visits to the residential provision. The reports of these visits, however, do not accord with the requirements of the national minimum standards.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. School documentation shows a clear commitment to providing equal opportunities, promoting diversity and tackling any form of discrimination. A diverse range of needs presented by students are extremely well met, and they are provided with equal access to opportunities both within the school and within the community. The school and its residential provision provide an inclusive environment where students learn about and celebrate other cultures, and where there is no form of discrimination. Students regularly participate in community and environmental projects and take part in national fundraising events.

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...

- ensure that reports of monitoring visits carried out by members of the governing body are in accord with the requirements of the standards. NMS 33.3