

# Rossendale School

Inspection report for Residential Special School

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<b>Inspector</b>	Leonard Hird
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<b>Head/ Principal</b>	David Gordon Duncan
<b>Nominated person</b>	Helen Sharpe
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	25/09/2009

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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**

This setting is an independent residential special school, providing education for pupils who display social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils are subject to a statement of need under the 1996 Education Act. The school admits pupils of mixed gender, between the ages of 8 years old and 15 years old. The residential provision is spread between two sites approximately four miles away from the school. The accommodation consists of single bedrooms and each house offers communal areas for eating, studying and relaxing.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This announced, key inspection looked at all of the key national minimum standards for residential special schools. The school provides an excellent range of residential and educational services for its residential pupils, particularly in preparing them for life after school. The very experienced care staff team work closely with the many partner agencies for the benefit of the young people. A comprehensive planning process is in place for individual young people and this helps to address their many different needs. Young people can access a number of different activities while residing at the school such as taking part in badminton matches at the local health centre or attending the local library. The care staff team are very well managed and trained. Staff ensure the welfare of the young people is always to the forefront of their care practice. The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

At the last inspection two recommendations were made regarding the self administration of medication by young people and staff obtaining the appropriate National Vocational Qualification for their care role. Both of these recommendations have been addressed by the school. Suitable risk assessments and lockable storage in bedrooms promotes young people's self administration, where appropriate. Staff are suitably qualified in line with standards.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The day-to-day health needs of the young people are well managed by the residential staff. The health needs of the young person are clearly recorded in the young person's health plan. This comprehensive plan details how health needs will

be met from when the young person joins the residential community.

Continuity of health care for young people is ensured by regular liaison between the school and local health services. The school makes very good use of external health support agencies such as clinical psychologists and other more specialist health services. Thereby ensuring young people receive the high levels of specialist health care services they may require. The school has comprehensive policies and procedures relating to health in place. These include guidance and information for staff on working with young people from different cultural backgrounds.

The health of young people is protected and promoted by the safe storage, management and administration of medication. Members of staff are aware of the need for meticulous recording in this important area of healthcare to ensure young people are not placed at risk. However, some young people who regularly stay at the school do not have pre arranged prescriptions accompanying their medication during stays and this potentially could lead to some confusion or missing medication.

Members of staff receive training in first aid and the safe handling of medication. Records and procedures are comprehensive and accidents are fully recorded and monitored. On each young person's health plan there is an appropriate medical consent form from parents to ensure that the school is authorised to administer medication or emergency medical treatment. Young people confirm they are very happy with the health provision at the school.

Members of the well-qualified catering staff team prepare and cook all of the daytime meals and these are taken in the school's modern, well-decorated and furnished dining room. The kitchens in the different houses are well equipped and young people, assisted by staff, often cook their own meals in preparation for their independence. The menus indicate there is a varied, healthy and nutritional diet available. The school's menu provides a wide choice of meals to choose from as well as providing opportunities for young people to experience different types of healthy food. Specialist dietary requirements along with different cultural requirements can be catered for as necessary. Young people confirm that the standard of food provided is very good and that it is very healthy in content.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The school's comprehensive anti-bullying policy is followed in practice with young people and staff having very clear understandings of what they should do if they have any concerns. Young people report very low levels of bullying incidents occurring at the school and confirm that any incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively by staff. Young people are aware that they can contact outside independent agencies for support with any bullying, if needed. Young people are very well protected through the school's positive approach to addressing any form of bullying behaviour.

Young peoples' welfare is protected through clear and robust safeguarding policies and procedures which are consistent with the Local Children's Safeguarding Board procedures. The school is following the correct procedures in regard to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of young people. Members of staff receive safeguarding training at appropriate intervals and have a clear understanding about their responsibilities in respect of keeping young people safe. The designated safeguarding officer demonstrates excellent awareness of the key legislation in respect of safeguarding. All of the young people confirm they feel very safe.

Young people develop positively through the caring culture of the school to genuinely care and have concern for others. Reward incentives include a rewards scheme for achievement or good behaviour of an individual or the group. The school has clear policies, procedures, guidance and practice on behaviour and discipline. Very few sanctions are given. Young people are aware of the sanction system and feel it is both fair and appropriate. Young people benefit from the positive and caring relationships that are engendered by staff throughout the residential houses.

Young people's welfare is protected through a robust complaints procedure. There is a clear understanding amongst the care staff team that any concern or complaint that a young person may have will be taken seriously and properly addressed. Young people confirm they know how to raise a concern and that they would be listened to and the issue dealt with appropriately. There have been no formal complaints since the last full inspection carried out in March 2010.

Young people are protected from the risk of fire by robust fire safety precautions and well trained staff. Regular fire evacuations take place and all fire safety equipment is checked and serviced in line with the requirements of the fire and rescue service. Records of these are accurately maintained and monitored. Fire risk assessments are comprehensive and are regularly reviewed. There are no outstanding recommendations from the fire and rescue service. Young people demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the school's evacuation procedures.

Young people's privacy is respected by staff who are aware of their responsibilities in this area particularly when entering bathrooms or bedrooms. All bathrooms, toilets and showers have appropriate locks and are private. Young people have lockable storage facilities in which they can store their valuables. Young people have access to private telephones should they need to make or receive a private call from their family or friends.

Young people's welfare is protected by a rigorous staff recruitment process. The school follows a very clear policy on recruitment in line with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance. A detailed record of the employment process showing Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks, references and the formal interview process is maintained. CRB disclosures at the enhanced level are undertaken for all personnel working in the school.

Young people's welfare is protected and safeguarded through comprehensive security measures. The school has a clear policy process on restricting public access

that is reviewed regularly. All residential areas are suitably protected by the use of window restrictors, key pads and locks. Young people residing in the different houses expressed the view that they feel safe and secure.

Young people are safeguarded by a detailed health and safety policy, comprehensive risk assessments and well-trained staff. Maintenance issues are prioritised and staff work to ensure young people are protected from hazards. Young people are protected by effective monitoring of electrical, gas appliances and the safe storage of all substances hazardous to health. Young people's welfare is further promoted by the use of comprehensive risk assessments on all activities undertaken by them including educational visits and residential activities.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Young people benefit from excellent levels of individual support provided by both the care and academic staff. Assessment and care planning arrangements which are of a high quality, are well co-ordinated by the young person's individual care worker. Young people receive excellent support from residential and education staff to address their often complex needs. Care staff play an extremely important role in ensuring the well-being of the young people. This support is further enhanced by the strong links that have been developed between the school, pupil's families and other services. Great emphasis is placed by the school on ensuring parents and carers are actively engaged in all aspects of a young person's life, including preparation for leaving school.

Young people are clear about which members of staff they can go to for personal support. Residential pupils are aware of external independent agencies such as help-lines which can offer them independent support and advice. Young people confirm they enjoy the high levels of support they receive by being part of a school that promotes a strong sense of community and friendship. The school has excellent links with local health and therapy services and this proactive approach enables young people with support to achieve high levels of success in their lives.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Young people are actively encouraged by staff to take part in the day-to-day management of the house by the use of the school council, regular house meetings and informal consultations with staff. All of the residential staff operate an open door policy so that young people can approach them on any matter. The school responds appropriately to any concerns or suggestions that young people may have. Young people indicate that they feel they can help make decisions about their lives in the residential houses. All admissions to the school are extremely well-planned with young people being fully supported by the experienced and well-qualified residential staff throughout their stay.

Regular statutory reviews take place at the correct intervals and full records of these are maintained on each young person's file. At these meetings the school ensures that up-to-date information is made available to the meeting and that the young person's own 'voice' is heard.

Parents can contact the school if they have any concerns and young people keep in regular contact with their parents or carers by telephone, where appropriate. Members of staff contact parents or carers if they have any concerns about a young person's welfare. Telephones are available in boarding house areas that afford boarders privacy, contact numbers for help-lines are displayed near telephones.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is outstanding.

Members of staff confirm that the school prides itself on offering a very supportive residential experience along with a well-structured care system which provides the young people with an enriched and varied lifestyle. All of the houses have their own individual character and have lounges, study areas and kitchens. Sleeping accommodation is in single rooms, some with individual washing facilities and others with the use of communal facilities. Young people report that this lifestyle is a positive experience which promotes friendships.

There is a rolling refurbishment programme in place at the school. All of the houses are appropriately lit and suitably furnished. Within the houses there is a high standard of cleanliness due to a dedicated team of ancillary staff.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The promotion of equality and diversity in the school is outstanding. The school has clearly written policies on disability, gender equality and racial equality. The school positively welcomes young people from different cultures and social backgrounds. Young people are encouraged to develop interpersonal skills and their detailed care plans take account of the young person's needs and individuality. The school's ethos of mutual respect, is underpinning all of the work occurring in the residential homes, encourages all pupils and staff to treat one another well and not to discriminate. All young people are offered the opportunity to reach their full potential

The Statement of Purpose is easily accessed by parents, young people, significant others and staff. In addition young people have a handbook setting out the expectations of life at the school.

Young people benefit from a very well-run service. Communication is a strength of the school and this is enhanced by strong and effective management systems. Regular meetings take place between senior staff and care staff teams to ensure the



consistency of care practice.

Young people's welfare is protected and promoted by good staffing levels, day and night, with staff having the relevant experience to meet the often complex and demanding needs of the young people. There is a staff rota which details the times that members of staff are working and young people confirm they know who is on duty at any time. There are clear arrangements for managing, supervising and appraisal of the care staff which is regularly undertaken by the head of care.

Young people confirm they enjoy the care provided by the dedicated staff team. The care staff team are competent, motivated and professional. Care staff meet regularly in different groups to ensure that there is a consistent approach to working with the young people. There is an excellent induction training package for staff and the school fully encourages and supports them to gain access to further professional development opportunities. Young people comment very favourably on the staff at the school and how well they are looked after.

## **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 prescribed medication is only given to the child to whom it is prescribed in accordance with the prescription or instructions from the pharmacy. (NMS 14.15)