

Mossbrook Primary School

Inspection report for residential special school

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Inspector	Sarah Oldham
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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 residential service is attached to the school which provides a one night stay in the residential accommodation for children with communication difficulties, including autism.

All pupils who attend the school have a statement of special educational need. Children from other schools may use the provision.

The school admits pupils of mixed gender, between the ages of four years old and 11 years old.

The school is set in several acres of grounds on the southern edge of a large city.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This full key inspection was announced and all key standards were inspected. The three recommendations made at the previous inspection in January 2010 have also been inspected and reported on within the improvement section of this report.

This is an outstanding service which provides positive outcomes for the young people. They are enthusiastic about their stay and benefit from excellent relationships with their peers and staff. They also say that they feel safe and that staff listen well, responding appropriately. Individual plans in place clearly identify targets to enable them to progress with their individual development of social and independence life skills. It is notable that there have been no incidents resulting in sanctions or any concerns since the last inspection. Parents are positive about the service and can see the progress that their children make. They are confident that their children are safe and well cared for during their stay.

Clear monitoring systems are in place to ensure that the service is effective and continues to further develop the services provided to young people.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection three recommendations were made. These were in relation to ensuring that risk assessments detailed the full action to take to reduce or eliminate identified risks, to continue to improve the furnishings and fittings within bedrooms and to provide refresher first aid training to all staff. Risk assessments have been reviewed in full and contain appropriate detail with regards managing risks and the action to take to reduce the risks identified. The furnishings and fittings within the bedroom areas continue to be updated and improved. Curtains and

furnishings have been updated and young people continue to be encouraged to personalise their room during their overnight stay with pictures and personal items. All staff have appropriate first aid training. A training matrix is in place that identifies when training has been completed and when refresher training is due. This enables the head teacher to ensure that training is kept up-to-date for all staff to enable them to provide a high level of care and support to the young people.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people stay one night per week during term time only; therefore the health care needs remain the responsibility of the parents. However, staff actively support, promote and assist the young people with their individual health care needs during their stay. Detailed care plans identifying individual health care needs and how these are to be met are in place. This ensures that staff are provided with the appropriate information to enable them to effectively support the young people. There are excellent working arrangements between health, parents and staff to ensure that the continuity of care is provided for the children during their overnight stays. In addition, paediatric clinics are held on site and there is access to a speech and language therapist based at the school. There is a medication policy and procedure in place to ensure that all young people who require medication are supported appropriately. All staff responsible for the administration of medication have received appropriate training. Storage of medication is secure and administration records are clearly signed. There are excellent links between school and care staff. Care staff are aware of whether medication has been given to a young person during the day, this includes non prescribed medication and this further ensures a continuity of health care for young people.

Young people are enthusiastic about meals, both within boarding and at school. One young person said: 'we choose our meals at residential and we choose healthily.' Menus are varied both culturally and in terms of ingredients. Staff ensure there is always plenty of fruit and vegetables. Communication boards have been developed to enable all young people to choose their meals and this ensures that all young people are included with decision making. Young people take it in turns to choose a meal each week for their overnight stay. Alternative choices are available, including vegetarian options. Staff encourage young people to try different foods to enable them to have a wider choice. This means the young people's development is supported by excellent nutrition.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Staff promote young people's privacy well. All confidential information is stored securely and staff are aware of the importance in ensuring that information recorded is clear and factually correct. When staff support young people with personal care, they ensure the privacy and dignity of the young person is supported at all times.

Policies, procedures and training for staff underpin this practice and staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of this.

Although young people have accessible ways of complaining, there have been no complaints since the last inspection.

All staff are highly committed to safeguarding the young people in their care and are knowledgeable about procedures to follow. All staff, including ancillary staff, receive regular training appropriate to their levels of responsibility. There have been no child protection concerns in the residential service over the last year. There is such good communication between all staff that it provides a high background level of protection. Also staff understand the young people well and are confident they would notice any sudden changes in behaviour that might indicate abuse. Good links are maintained with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

There are clear policies and procedures with regard to children who are absent without authority which staff are aware of. There have not been any incidents of children going missing since the last inspection.

Children are protected from bullying. There is a strong ethos in promoting the rights of individual children. Staff are aware that bullying can take place in a number of formats and they ensure that any concerns raised by young people are clearly explored and appropriate action is taken to address this.

There is a well thought out behaviour management policy in place. The ethos of the school is to promote positive and acceptable behaviours and young people spoken to say that they really enjoy their time at the school. This is reflected in their positive behaviour and interaction with other each other and staff. There have been no incidents of physical intervention or sanctions made.

There is a comprehensive range of risk assessments in place to underpin and promote the safety and well-being of the young people. Since the last inspection, these have been updated to fully detail the action to be taken to reduce or eliminate risks. The risk assessments include safety of premises, safety of children undertaking a range of activities both within the school and the residential setting and fire safety procedures. Staff have a clear understanding of the risk assessments and this ensures that safety and welfare of young people is actively promoted.

Fire records indicate that weekly checks on the system and appropriate fire instruction and drills have taken place, to ensure appropriate measures are in place, to keep children safe.

The school has robust security arrangements in place for all visitors to the school and residence. All staff employed undergo rigorous checks to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people are very enthusiastic and positive about their overnight stays and enjoy taking part in a number of activities. These include using local leisure facilities, trips to local parks and the use of the facilities within the school. They are encouraged and supported to try different activities to explore their full potential. Group activities and games are available to enable young people to play together and to develop social skills. Parents spoken with and those who responded to surveys say that their children have gained and developed additional skills and enjoy time spent with other children. All parents said that their children are provided with a range of activities and opportunities when at the school. Young people say they really enjoy their time during their stay. Comments include: 'I really enjoy coming here and there is always lots of things to do.' Young people were observed throughout the inspection taking part in a range of activities. They were provided with high levels of support and supervision and were able to take part in the activities at their own pace. Excellent links are maintained between educational and care staff to create an environment where each child can achieve positive outcomes.

All young people have individual care plans in place. These clearly identify the individual support that they need to achieve positive outcomes. Excellent communication between educational staff, care staff and parents ensures that the individual needs of young people are supported in all aspects of their care. This ensures that young people receive positive and consistent levels of care and support to enable them to achieve their individual goals. A range of communication methods are used to ensure that all young people are enabled to contribute their wishes and views. These are used consistently within school and in the residential unit to further support and promote individual needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Young people are fully engaged in making decisions. One young person said: 'we take it in turns to plan what we are going to eat. This is fair because everyone then has a choice. We also can choose the games and things that we do when we are here. I really enjoy coming here. It's fun.' Staff members confirmed that the young people are involved in planning what activities they would like to take part in and as each young person has a designated night when they stay at the residential service this is planned a week in advance. Various communication methods are used with young people to ensure that all children have the opportunity to have their say.

Individual care plans are completed in consultation with parents. These are detailed containing full information relating to individual needs. These include all aspects of care including individual health care needs, personal care, how they are supported to stay safe, activities that they enjoy and any particular routines that they have, including bedtime routines. This ensures that staff have a clear understanding of the

individual needs of the young people to enable them to effectively support them during their stay. Prior to commencement of overnight stays, a clear transition plan is followed to introduce the young people to the overnight stays. This includes visiting for tea and involvement with activities. Staff also encourage and support young people to choose bedding that they would like when they stay over and this enables young people to feel involved in planning for their stays. Parents say that the planning is excellent and this enabled the young people to settle in to the routine of an overnight stay.

Parents say that communication between the residential school and home is very positive. They feel involved and say that if they had any concerns they are able to raise these with staff. Parents spoken to said that the experience for the children is a very positive one. As the stay for each child is only overnight, contact is not an issue. Parents say that they can visit or contact by phone if they wish to do so. Children are able to contact their parents by phone if they so wish.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Children have the opportunity to develop life skills that assist in preparing them for adulthood and independence. Individual young people's files demonstrate progress that they have made and the skills that they have gained. These include attending to their personal care, developing positive behaviours, gaining confidence in their abilities, and undertaking activities as a group and individually. Staff work hard to ensure that young people have the opportunity to make informed choices.

Residency is on the same site as the school and improvements to the environment have continued to meet the needs of the children. The accommodation is well decorated, maintained and furnished to a good standard and there is ample space for children to undertake a variety of activities. The kitchenette, dining and lounge areas are pleasant and domestic in style. New settees have been purchased for one lounge. The bathrooms have been fully refurbished and additional equipment is in place to meet the needs of children with mobility difficulties. The young people have personalised their rooms with posters and photographs. The service continues to improve the environment further for children.

Since the last inspection, further development of play areas has been completed and this provides young people with a greater range of activities to take part in. This includes a quite play area with various games and dressing up boxes. Young people enjoy the additional space and activities available.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The philosophy of the school and residential services are clearly outlined within an appropriate prospectus. This provides clear information about the service. This

document is kept up-to-date and reviewed on an annual basis. It is made available to all parents prior to the first visit. Information is also provided to children in appropriate formats to enable them to have an understanding of what it is like staying there.

The staff team are an established team and provide continuity of care and support to the young people. They have a wealth of experience and have appropriate qualifications to undertake their role. All residential staff have successfully completed the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at level 3 in caring for children and young people, exceeding the minimum target of 80% of the care team. Staff have access to a training and development programme to enable them to continue their professional development and to ensure that they have up-to-date knowledge to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people. All staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals. In addition, regular staff meetings, daily handovers and informal meetings enable staff to have clear information, support and guidance.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. This is evidenced through practice, supporting policies, procedures and the individual placement plans.

There are a number of quality assurance processes, including monitoring by an independent person acting on behalf of the board of governors. Visits are made to residence as part of the overall monitoring of the whole school. The head teacher, in charge of care in residence, monitors the service and care provided and produces a report each term on the findings. The senior care office also undertakes monitoring of records to ensure that they are clear and consistently recorded. This practise enhances the quality assurance processes already in place.