

The Grange Therapeutic School

Welfare inspection report for a residential special school

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools, in order to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided.^{1,2}

Information about the school

The Grange School is an independent residential special school for up to 73 boys aged between 10 and 16 years of age. All the pupils have a statement of special educational needs to address their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Some pupils have additional learning difficulties. Most of the school's facilities are in Knossington, a rural village in Leicestershire. There are four boarding houses, three on or very close to the school campus and one senior house in the nearby town of Oakham. There are currently 33 boarders, with an additional 40 day boys on the roll of the school. The boarding provision was last inspected in March 2011.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

² www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for residential pupils	outstanding
Quality of residential provision and care	good
Residential pupils' safety	outstanding
Leadership and management of the residential provision	good

Overall effectiveness

The key findings of the residential inspection are as follows.

- The school's ethos and underpinning philosophy is strong throughout, ensuring residential pupils are in a supportive and caring community within which they are valued and safe. Residential pupils develop good relationships with each other and with staff. They enjoy boarding at the school.
- Residential pupils share communal areas well, showing acceptance of one another's differences. There are good levels of supervision which ensures residential pupils are supported at all times by staff who understand their individual and complex needs.
- Safeguarding is a priority at this school. Residential pupils feel safe and are safe.
- The school has met all the national minimum standards. There were no recommendations made at the previous inspection. However the school continues to improve especially with regard to providing a whole school approach to care and education and communication between all staff.

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outcomes for residential pupils are outstanding. Residential pupils are polite, helpful and well behaved. They have good relationships with staff and each other. They are happy and enjoy boarding. They thoroughly enjoy the activities provided.

Activities include outdoor pursuits such as fishing, canoeing and swimming, to more sedate activities such as: woodland walks; the cinema; bowling playing on games consoles and watching movies. Pupils have recently entered a competition run by a

national organisation whereby a small selection of pupils have completed a four day workshop where they climbed mountains in the Brecon Beacons in order to be selected for a trip known as 'The Hottest Classroom on Earth.' The pupils are very enthusiastic about this venture and looking forward to the results this week in the hope that they will be accepted for the main challenge.

Pupils are provided with a holistic service which extends to their homes, thereby ensuring parents and carers are guided to provide good parenting consistent with the school practice for their child. This may include guidance on managing a child's behaviour by providing an incentive scheme similar to that of the schools. Furthermore, pupils are provided with exceptional support for their college placements. Staff support pupils in a college placement until they feel able to manage by themselves. This increases the chances of the college placement being a success for the pupil.

Pupils receive highly individualised care and support to enable them to achieve at school and develop their confidence and self-esteem. For example, residential pupils are supported to develop their independent skills such as travel and meal preparation. A carer said in a pre-review meeting questionnaire, 'In my opinion I think the care given is outstanding.' Additionally, residential pupils are able to change their personal support worker if they wish, so they can have someone they feel able to talk to. Furthermore, they can choose staff they feel most comfortable with, for example, to talk to after an incident. This ensures pupils can be open and honest with staff thereby enabling staff to provide the best service for them.

Quality of residential provision and care

The quality of residential provision and care is good. A carer said of the residential provision, 'It's a warm atmosphere, caring staff and we are always able to talk to (their child) when needed.' They also said he especially enjoys the food and likes things the way they are.

Staff know and understand the residential pupils well. The planning documentation clearly highlights a child's needs and sets out the objectives from their Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN). Targets are specific and address the objectives within the SEN. However, planning documentation does not tell staff how to care for a residential pupil on a day-to-day basis therefore any new staff would not know how to address a child's needs and promote their welfare.

Residential pupils feel well looked after when they are ill. They understand what helps them to stay healthy. They have access to a qualified nurse and counsellors. Furthermore, staff will take residential pupils for healthcare appointments to the dentist, doctor and optician. However, medication procedures are not robust. The school nurse no longer has the support she requires to carry out medication audits in each of the boarding houses and practice in some houses is poor. However, as staff know the residential pupils well, the risk to pupils is much reduced. Additionally, the

head of care immediately addressed any poor practice observed.

Most residential pupils said they enjoy the meals provided. Meals, especially those provided at lunch times, are healthy, nutritious and of sufficient quantity and quality. Pupils who require a special diet are appropriately catered for. Residential pupils are provided with opportunities to shop for and prepare food. One group said they mostly bake cakes but are going to start cooking meals soon, and another made pizzas and other bread based food.

Good communication between staff across the school ensures consistent proactive approaches towards pupils. Care, education and therapy staff meet before and after school to communicate any difficulties or vulnerabilities for pupils. Staff said this helps to reduce anxiety in pupils enabling them to access their education. The views and opinions of pupils are important to staff. They listen and, where possible, implement their ideas. Pupils take an active role in the running of the school. They feel passionately about maintaining good relationships with the local community. Additionally, they actively fund raise for local projects such as the local church which was recently been damaged and charities further afield. Residential pupils are proud to be part of the school and the local community.

Residential pupils have good access to phones around the boarding houses. They are able to contact their families and friends. Staff regularly make contact with parents and carers to ensure they are kept up to date with their child's progress. Additionally, contact numbers for other services such as Child Line and Ofsted are posted next to phones. Residential pupils know who their independent visitor is and how to contact him. Therefore, residential pupils can easily access an external independent person if they are unhappy with the school and do not wish to talk to someone there. However, all residential pupils felt there is someone at the school they can talk to if they are unhappy. The four boarding houses are homely, warm and comfortable. They are clean and well maintained. There are photographs of the residential pupils on the walls participating in a variety of activities. Residential pupils like their rooms, some of which are single or en-suite. Bedrooms are highly personalised.

Residential pupils' safety

Residential pupil's safety is outstanding. Safeguarding pupils is a priority at this school. Pupils feel safe and are safe in this school. Residential pupils say that staff help them to feel safe. All staff, including auxiliary staff, receive training in safeguarding children and approaches to physical intervention. This ensures that everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding pupils at the school. Managers responsible for safeguarding pupils have an in-depth knowledge and good links with local safeguarding agencies. Safeguarding concerns are managed well, following local authority procedures, so that pupils are protected from harm.

Bullying is managed quickly and effectively. Most residential pupils state that bullying is not an issue at the school but they all have someone they can go to if they are

concerned about anything. Pupils have a good understanding of bullying as staff discuss this regularly with them either as a group or individually. Currently, pupils are reviewing the school's Code of Conduct through the School Council. Residential pupils rarely go missing during boarding time, and those that do are generally not missing for long periods of time. Staff have good procedures which they follow if pupils go missing. Pupils are always encouraged to say why they went missing upon their return.

Positive behaviour in pupils is promoted through incentive schemes, firm rules and boundaries, as well as consistent practice across the school. The rules, and consequences of breaking the rules, are known by the residential pupils and they say these are fair. Residential pupils behave well in boarding time and the need for physical intervention is rare. Staff are well trained in physical intervention but are also fully equipped to de-escalate situations. Staff know what helps to reduce anxiety, frustration and anger in each individual pupil and are generally successful at averting the need for physical intervention. Pupils discuss and reflect on incidents with staff to help them better understand how to manage their own behaviour more effectively. All incidents are discussed by the behaviour management panel who meet every two to three weeks. The panel includes staff from care, education and therapy and therefore promotes a whole school approach. The panel evaluates patterns and trends of behaviour, reviews policies and current strategies and provides a proactive whole school approach to managing behaviour. Therefore, pupils are consistently and effectively supported to manage their own behaviour.

The school effectively implement a safer recruitment policy to ensure staff are properly vetted before working with pupils. There are robust health and safety procedures in place including fire. Residential pupils know what to do if the fire alarm sounds. Practice for recruitment and health and safety procedures promote the wellbeing of pupils.

Leadership and management of the residential provision

The leadership and management are good. The residential provision is an integral part of the school, which has clear aims that are translated into practice. Staff are passionate and committed to providing a high-quality service to the benefit of residential pupils, ensuring their health, wellbeing and educational achievement. Information provided to parents and pupils is comprehensive and is explicit about issues of equality and diversity throughout.

Staff are qualified, competent and feel well supported. Staffing is stable, therefore staff and pupils know each other well. Staff deployment is well organised to ensure pupils are properly supported and supervised. Although one of the boarding houses has recently closed, the movement of residential pupils has been well managed to ensure any disruption has been minimised.

Staff are qualified to at least a National Vocational Qualification level 3 in Health and

Social Care. They complete all mandatory training such as first aid and food hygiene. They also complete more specialised training such as the social and emotional aspects of learning, smoking cessation, and planned for this year is attachment disorders. The leadership team has a strong commitment to improving practice and ensuring the quality of the service provided. The monitoring of activities across the school such as physical intervention, incidents, accidents and risk assessments is rigorous and ensures standards are continually enhanced.

National minimum standards

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

What should the school do to improve further?

- conduct audits of medication policy, procedure and administration to ensure consistent good practice
- improve how the placement plan describes the child's day to day care

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



30/01/2012

Residential Pupils

Inspection of The Grange Therapeutic School

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection of boarding houses at your school. We enjoyed meeting and chatting with you all.

As a result of the inspection the overall judgement for boarding is good.

You told us you enjoy boarding and particularly enjoy the activities. We can see you are safe and that you get on well with staff. You said that very little bullying goes on and that staff are quick to stop bullying. You said the rules are fair and you know what happens if you break the rules. You also understand the points system you have for when you are good in school.

Staff help you to stay healthy and make sure you eat well. You mostly like the meals you have. Also staff take some of you to see the dentist and optician. Others go when they are home.

Staff need to improve some things. They need to improve the way they give you medication to make sure it is given correctly. They also need to write a bit more about you on the placement plan so that any new staff can know you as well as they do.

When an inspector next visits you will be able to discuss how things are going for you again.

Yours sincerely,

Joanne Vyas / Gwen Buckley