

Buglawton Hall Residential Special 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

Buglawton Hall school is a residential special school maintained by Manchester City Council children's services. The school is situated within a rural area near Congleton in Cheshire. The school currently offers residential special education to 22 boys with emotional and behavioural difficulties, aged between 7 and 16 years. The school offers residential care from Sunday evenings to Friday afternoons each week during term time. The residential accommodation comprises two living groups within the main hall, and there are four residential units provided within a purpose-built building within the school's grounds. The residential provision was last inspected in January 2011, as part of an integrated inspection.

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

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

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

The key findings of the residential inspection are as follows.

- The overall effectiveness of boarding provision at Buglawton Hall School is satisfactory. The satisfactory quality of the residential provision for boarders makes a suitable impact on their lives and encourages their development.
- Keeping boarders safe is a strength of the school. The school implements robust procedures for child protection and the recruitment and vetting of staff.
- The boarding facilities are organised appropriately for the boarders. Care is managed in the best interests of the child.
- The school meets the majority of the national minimum standards and has addressed all of the welfare recommendations made at the last inspection.
- Equality and diversity is consistently promoted within school, and boarders are valued as individuals.
- Most boarders and other interested parties have positive views about the residential provision and feel that the school will take account of their suggestions for improvement.

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outcomes for boarders are satisfactory. Boarders have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect. The boarders demonstrate a clear tolerance of each other's heritage and rights. Any incidents of bullying, which might impact on another's rights, are quickly addressed by staff and the resident group. Boarders receive consistent individual support when they request or need it, to help address

their emotional difficulties. This includes personal advice from key staff and via key worker sessions, which are planned and address issues that are important to the young people.

Boarders know the difference between right and wrong. They are generally able to interact with other boarders and adults appropriately, as the group consider and respect the views of others. During their time in school, boarders make satisfactory progress in overcoming difficulties, such as managing their anger. While boarders have contributed towards their personal risk management assessments; their strategies are not routinely used to inform activity plans for evening programmes. In isolated cases, this means that boarders experience disrupted and cancelled activities, because of a lack of sufficient pre-planning by staff.

Boarders understand how to keep themselves fit and healthy. They enjoy their boarding time, and acquire a reasonable range of practical, social and life skills to prepare them for adult life.

Boarders are able to contribute meaningfully towards plans to improve the residential provision. They feel that staff listen to them and take account of their views and suggestions. There is some evidence of action following pupil suggestions, which includes a review of mobile telephone access in school, and access to the school library outside class times. The full impact of these initiatives has yet to reach the resident group.

Quality of residential provision and care

The quality of care received by the boarders is satisfactory. School staff provide boarders with appropriate pastoral care, and young people find they can approach designated staff regarding their worries and these are addressed sensitively. Communication between care and educational staff is sound, which helps to provide consistent support for boarders. In addition, communication between care staff and boarders is open and respectful.

There is a reasonable range of activities, both within and outside the school premises. In general terms, leisure activities are suitable for the ages and interests of the boarders. The views, wishes and feelings of boarders are consistently considered, both as part of regular unit meetings and contributions to the school council.

Placement plans are detailed and suitably used to inform the care of boarders. The school makes suitable arrangements to promote boarders' health. In the main, the internal procedures for the storage and administration of medication are satisfactory. However, there are shortfalls in the records of medication received and stored by school.

The accommodation for resident groups is highly domestic in style, comfortable to use and suitably maintained. Catering is well managed to enable boarders to budget for and prepare their own meals on occasions. Meal times are sociable events and make good use of the well equipped kitchen-diners within each residential unit. Older boarders have access to domestic washing machines within their living areas. This promotes the acquisition of life skills. Suitable central laundry facilities mean that linen and other clothing appear clean and are appropriately laundered.

Residential pupils' safety

The safety of boarders is good. The school's thorough and diligent approach towards safeguarding includes consistent implementation of robust recruitment procedures. No staff member commences their employment, until all checks and references are suitably verified and in place. Boarders are looked after by safe individuals.

Boarders are effectively safeguarded, because staff across all levels demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's child protection procedures. The deployment of dedicated staff for internal safeguarding duties, ensures a senior staff member is available to staff and boarders at all times. Minor concerns are as closely monitored and scrutinised as serious safeguarding issues, and the school promptly consults and notifies the local authority where necessary. The school maintains positive and professional relationships with external agencies, such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the police.

Boarders say they feel safe within the school. They attribute this to the security of the premises and the deployment of waking staff at night. The overall health and safety systems and processes in place serve to protect pupils from potential safety hazards. This is achieved through key personnel retaining clear responsibilities which are robustly monitored. Pupils know what to do in the event of a fire, and drills are regularly practised. In the main, records within this key area are clear, however, the times of fire drills are not routinely recorded.

Staff receive suitable accredited training in terms of prescribed behaviour management techniques, and the use of physical interventions is proportionate and in line with internal policy. Behaviour management plans are uniquely tailored to individual needs. However, each boarder's record includes two plans for behaviour management, in different formats, which is confusing for staff who implement agreed strategies.

Additional safeguarding policies and procedures are well known across the entire school team, and suitably implemented when necessary. Such guidance includes whistle blowing; internet safety and procedures in the event of a boarder being missing.

Boarders understand the reward and sanction policy in school. There are

discrepancies evident within the implementation of these procedures, which means there are inconsistencies for young people. The sanction policy states rewards, such as the provision of a school television set for personal use; is not interrupted by a subsequent sanction. However the sanction record refers to the removal of personal television sets.

Leadership and management of the residential provision

The leadership and management of the residential provision are satisfactory. Boarding is an important part of the school, and the care staff and leadership team are committed to their task and motivated within their practice. This common commitment is promoted by the clear vision of both the interim executive board and the school's leadership team. The school knows most of its strengths and weaknesses through suitable and sustained reflection. However, the leadership team cannot consistently demonstrate a quality assurance system that evaluates the impact on boarders.

The senior and support staff are well qualified. The school empowers a number of senior staff to engage in the quality checks on the school's records. However, this results in two separate systems, and the duplication means that any findings could be lost in the level of data. The regular and well-reported monitoring process provided by the external school visitor, is detailed and meets all of the elements of the standard, apart from routine checks on risk assessments. The school makes good use of these reports to improve boarding provision.

Planned and completed care staff rotas demonstrate sufficient staffing levels within school. These rotas include supplementary learning-support staff during morning care routines. Training for new care staff is beginning to conform with the competence standards provided by the Children's Workforce Development Council. However, senior supervising staff are not familiar with the benchmark of competency provided by this programme; which impedes its implementation within the school.

All required policies are in place in draft format, which reflects the current position of school under an interim executive board. Policy guidance is implemented effectively in practice. There are positive relationships in place between school and other agencies and statutory authorities. All significant events are notified by school to statutory parties and appropriate action is taken following the incident. This area was subject to a recommendation at the last inspection, and has been suitably addressed.

The recommendations raised at the last inspection have all been suitably addressed. This demonstrates the school's commitment to improvement and development. Health and placement plans now include details of; emotional well-being; health monitoring; dietary and support needs. Information for families regarding complaints and policy information for staff have now been shared with the relevant parties. Care staffing levels are now in line with the school's rota. Risk management and life skill programmes for boarders are now personalised and regularly updated. The recording

of administered medication and the accounts of sanctions have been developed since the last inspection.

The school makes good provision to address the diverse needs of the resident population. This means that boarders' needs relating to background and heritage, or special educational need, for example, are positively addressed by all staff. Young people are approached as individuals within this non-stigmatising care environment.

National minimum standards

The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools.

- The school has and consistently implements a written policy on managing behaviour, including promoting good behaviour. This policy includes: measures to combat bullying and to promote positive behaviour; school rules; disciplinary sanctions; when restraint is to be used; and arrangements for searching children and their possessions. (NMS 12.1)
- The records specified in Appendix 2 ('Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards') are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate. (NMS 13.3)
- There is clear leadership and management of the practice and development of residential and care provision in the school, and effective links are made between academic and residential staff. The school's governing body or proprietor has a system to monitor care and welfare provision in the school. (NMS 13.1)

What should the school do to improve further?

- The school should ensure that individual boarders' risk management strategies are readily available within the residential units; are used to inform evening activities and are regularly reviewed within the independent visitor's visits.
- The school should ensure that all senior care staff are familiar with the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction competencies for residential staff.
- The school should maintain clear and accurate records, especially in relation to behaviour management plans; fire drill records; and records of controlled drugs stored by school.

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.



11/01/2012

Dear Boarders

Inspection of Buglawton Hall Residential Special School

Thank you for your help and input at your school's recent Ofsted inspection. I spent time with a number of you and you told me about your experiences of staying in school. You were all positive and told me how care staff care about what happens to you and that you feel safe.

I also spoke with many members of staff, and I looked at many documents and records. As you will be aware, I have said in my report that your school is satisfactory. This is because you receive suitable care when you stay in school. You told me you enjoy the food and the activities provision. I found that the school is good at keeping you safe, and works with you around any risks to your safety. I know that you all understand the points system and work well to gain rewards. I have asked that school remember your policy on sanctions, when proposing to remove your reward television.

Your boarding provision has gone through a lot of changes and is continuing to improve. You contribute towards plans via the School Council and your unit meetings. I have found that the school is suitably managed and provides you with the help, care and support that you need.

I have asked that the school thinks about how it checks your care is still right for you, and writes down what it finds in one place rather than within different reports.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Forster