

The Grange Therapeutic School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

The inspection of boarding provision 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 the government of the quality and standard of the service provided.^{3 4}

Information about the school

The Grange Therapeutic School is an independent residential special school for up to 84 boys aged between eight and 16 years. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs, mostly relating to their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Established in 1976, the school aims to promote the healthy, physical and emotional development of all of its pupils through a balanced, progressive and responsive approach to education, care and therapy. Most of the school's facilities are in Knossington, a rural village in Leicestershire. There are currently three boarding houses, two on or very close to the school campus and one in the nearby town of Oakham. There are currently 39 boarders and 42 day boys on the roll of the school. The school was last inspected in December 2009. The boarding provision was last inspected in February 2012. The Acting Principal has been in post since April 2012, having previously been the Vice-Principal at the school.

Evaluation of the school

The Grange Therapeutic School provides an outstanding quality of education and fully achieves its aims. The outstanding curriculum meets the considerable range of pupils' needs and offers a very wide range of opportunities for pupils' academic and personal development. The pupils make outstanding progress as a result of outstanding teaching and assessment. The school has comprehensive and thorough arrangements in place for the safeguarding of its pupils. It has made significant improvement since the last inspection.

The school provides an outstanding quality of residential care, characterised by its safe, integrated 24-hour care, and life skills provision. Since the last inspection, it has

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

⁴ www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools.

re-organised its boarding accommodation, which is now in mixed age groupings within houses, more fully reflecting family life. The school meets all regulations and national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Quality of education

The school provides an outstanding, broad and balanced curriculum. The curriculum policy is supported extremely well by schemes of work and appropriate individualised teaching plans. This ensures that pupils experience all areas of learning, with a particular emphasis on using information and communication technology (ICT). Progress is tracked rigorously every half-term against National Curriculum levels. Identified pieces of pupils' work are marked, and levels and grades are thoroughly checked so that assessments are highly accurate. These assessments are then used to plan work which precisely meets pupils' needs and to determine the next steps for learning. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and much care is taken by teachers to ensure that each of stated requirements are embedded fully in each pupil's individual education plans and the everyday life of the school. Teaching plans enable pupils to enjoy practical activities and provide highly regular opportunities to develop their social and communication skills. Pupils are provided with challenging individual progress targets; these are shared with parents or carers and the key worker, in the case of residential pupils. All pupils are very well supported by the personal tutor system, which helps to regularly review their progress and for them to achieve their full potential.

The development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are rigorously pursued. Boys achieve marginally better in mathematics than in English. The extra support for reading particularly in Key Stage 2 is outstanding, as it precisely addresses the areas where they need to improve and this leads to marked improvements in progress. The range of language strategies and activities used by the teachers and teaching assistants are very well informed thorough diagnostic assessment. By comparison, numeracy is less well developed. This is because it lacks a systematic and consistent approach to numerical calculation, to guide a whole school approach to mathematics teaching. The school has recognised this and further numeracy training is an area for development.

Pupils make outstanding progress from very low starting points. The most rapid academic progress is apparent in the last two secondary years as the full impact of the school's work takes effect. All pupils attain at least one A* to G GCSE pass in a core subject before leaving and the majority have achieved multiple passes. Older pupils also demonstrate success in accredited Entry Level qualifications linked to leisure, sport and vocational skills, often through well supported partnerships with local colleges and schools. This extension and life-skills provision is of high quality and develops pupils' independence, self-confidence, team work and behaviour, reflecting the school's aims and ethos. Many pupils participate in community enterprise, team building and the Duke of Edinburgh's award, so as to further challenge themselves, achieving personal success and benefiting others. Co-ordinated links with pupils' homes ensure that day pupils have equal access to this extra-curricular provision.

The school utilises a very wide range of alternative accreditation, particularly in Key Stage 4, for its vocational and life skills experiences. This is extended by study links to local colleges and the careers advice offered promotes personal enterprise and ambition. Pupils gain further competence certificates in diverse leisure activities such as cycling, fishing and sailing. The range of outdoor activities regularly on offer promotes pupils' self-esteem and is celebrated by the many images of fund-raising, expeditions and pupil participation in national activities. This is also celebrated in the school's daily assembly, where successes are shared.

The quality of teaching and assessment are outstanding and the school has an accurate view of where improvement can be made. This capacity for detailed monitoring has been developed well since the last inspection. Teachers are highly skilled and confident in their subject knowledge and assessment of pupils' needs, which helps them plan interesting and challenging lessons. Classroom management is supported by outstanding partnership with teaching assistants, who take every opportunity to assist pupils to think and learn for themselves. The very well considered pace of lessons reflects the considerable understanding teachers have of the pupils' aptitudes and abilities.

The high expectations all staff have of pupils results in pupils who take great responsibility for improving their learning and behaviour, whether individually or in groups. Such is the confidence that teachers have in this progression that older pupils in physical education act as sports leaders in teacher-planned sessions. These sports leaders also share in planning activities and practice their coaching skills with groups of younger secondary pupils. The peer-mentoring role benefits both groups as younger pupils see the outstanding control skills demonstrated by their older peers, and the coaching meets GCSE coursework requirements in sports leadership.

Any difficult classroom behaviour, which on rare occasions is exhibited by pupils, is managed extremely well. All staff are trained in a wide variety of behaviour interventions, which they use very effectively to diffuse and respond to situations. The school has a clear code of conduct for classroom behaviour and each pupil, together with their tutor, reviews their behaviour and progress on a daily basis against this code. Many pupils like the system of credits, golden time and small rewards used by staff to enhance their motivation.

Parents' questionnaires indicated that they would like the school to consider offering homework if pupils are ready for this. Pupils agree, particularly those attending as day pupils, who would like to see themselves being treated similarly as pupils at other schools.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. Pupils grow considerably in their self-confidence and self-esteem, becoming highly confident individuals, excellently prepared for the next stage of their lives. The school excels in the way in which it creates rounded individuals who take on responsibilities enthusiastically. An outstanding school assembly was observed with a

Year 11 pupil addressing the whole school on his visit to Tanzania with video clips and images linked to this experience. The half hour presentation not only revealed his confidence and public-speaking, but also had the rest of the pupils actively listening with rapt attention to the different values that African children have about education.

At the heart of the school's values are citizenship and tolerance and especially acceptance of the faiths and beliefs of others. Pupils welcome activities that engage them with others. In the words of one pupil, 'The school helps to motivate me'. This engagement makes school life purposeful and their outstanding behaviour is continually supported through very high expectations. Excellent opportunities are provided for pupils to experience local and national services and institutions, for example through trips to the theatre, the local church and places of worship, leisure activities, and national parks and waterways. Pupils and staff contribute willingly to charitable fund-raising activities. Pupils benefit from strong and nurturing relationships with staff and, as a result, their moral behaviour is outstanding and bullying rarely occurs.

In the residential houses, as well as in the school, pupils develop tolerance, accept difference and learn to live within a group. They clearly understand right from wrong and demonstrate very strong moral attitudes. They enjoy the residential experience, learning how to behave acceptably and acquiring new social and recreational skills. Residential pupils are encouraged to further develop their independent living skills with activities such as shopping, cooking a meal and household chores. The school council acts as a forum for both day and residential pupils to express their views and contribute meaningfully to the daily life of the school. Pupils benefit from the contribution of the school's outreach worker, who co-ordinates links with pupils' homes through family support and working with outside agencies.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is outstanding. All relevant policies are fully in place and detailed procedures ensure the highest level of safety and assistance for pupils. The senior leadership team and staff are passionate about the work they do, and the welfare of pupils is central to all practice. The residential staff are skilled, caring and committed. There are exceptional links with a wide range of outside healthcare professionals, which ensure that pupils receive the care plans they require. Shared team meetings between care leaders and personal tutors ensure that issues such as attendance, behaviour, personal development and academic progress are reviewed at fixed points throughout the school year. All pupils are equally positive about the school's impact on their well-being and capacity to respond with changes.

Child protection is thorough and given priority at the school. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Staff are trained at the appropriate levels in child protection and the senior staff are trained in safer recruitment procedures. Safe and effective policies and procedures safeguard pupils from bullying, racism and going missing from school. School attendance by residential pupils is consistently above average

within the school. The school has numerous proactive strategies to combat bullying and does this well. Positive behaviour is promoted through personalised plans which provide exceptional guidance for staff. Vigilant and rigorous monitoring ensures the effectiveness of all interventions by providing clear information which then informs practice. Residential pupils feel safe and are safe. Pupils are listened to and any safeguarding concerns are taken seriously. Residential pupils know who their independent visitor is and how to make contact. Therefore, residential pupils can easily access an external independent person if, in exceptional circumstances, they are unhappy with the school and do not wish to talk to someone there.

Residential pupils behave well in boarding time and the need for physical intervention is rare. Staff know what helps to reduce anger, anxiety or frustration in each individual pupil. They are generally successful at averting the need for physical intervention. Residential pupils who have been restrained say it is carried out properly and for the right reasons, to keep themselves and others safe. In the event of any behaviour incident, clear procedures are followed which activate a detailed self-review about what happened, the response by staff and the sanctions imposed.

The school has a robust and challenging school improvement plan which is monitored regularly for its impact on welfare, health and safety of pupils. It has recently reviewed its complaints policy as part of this plan to improve its partnership response to formal complaints and their procedures. The acting Principal has led this initiative as part of a wider school accountability linked to shared practice, monitoring and enhanced communication. Parents, carers and placing authorities are kept up to date with newsletters, phone calls and emails.

There are full risk assessments for fire safety. Fire drills are regularly carried out, recorded and monitored, and there are annual visits from the local fire safety officer. The school's first aid arrangements meet requirements and the school has drawn up a three-year accessibility plan that fulfils the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has appropriate recruitment arrangements for ensuring the suitability of staff, volunteers and proprietors to work with children. Details of all required checks are maintained in an appropriate single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school premises are appropriately designed and organised to promote a very good range of learning opportunities and to ensure the safety and security of pupils. Teaching rooms are well maintained and provide a suitable environment for the small teaching groups across all the age ranges. Good use is made of outside space and a sports hall for games and recreation, including well organised and valued physical education. There are specialist suites for art, nurture, science and food technology work, and for therapy sessions. All classrooms have access to laptop computers, information and communication technology support and interactive whiteboards for teaching purposes. The large inner entrance hall makes a good whole school

assembly area. There are sufficient toilets and washrooms, and appropriate arrangements are made for any pupil who may become ill.

All of the boarding accommodation provides suitable space for study, shared leisure time and meals. Each house has its own independent kitchen, laundry and staff base. The standard of cleanliness and decoration is very high. A night-call line is available to staff when the school's switchboard is closed. The school efficiently maintains all its boarding buildings and grounds.

Provision of information

The school provides appropriate, up-to-date information for parents and carers. It has an outreach worker, as well as a school website that provides both an annual report and a selection of policies. The school publishes a pupil handbook which is given to all pupils and their parents or carers. This is updated annually and provides a comprehensive guide to boarding life at the school, the code of conduct and classroom expectations together with details regarding worries and complaints.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's arrangements for the management of any complaints meet statutory requirements. Its complaints policy has been recently updated, and it is on the school's web-site.

Leadership and management of the residential provision

The leadership and management of the residential provision are outstanding. The residential provision is an integral part of the school with clear aims that are translated into outstanding practice. The school has just completed a reorganisation of its provision by rationalising down to three residential houses. This change was notified to placing authorities, parents and carers so as to consult and forewarn. These arrangements included a new policy of some mixed age accommodation. Residential pupils report that these changes to some peer groups, staff and moving to new bedrooms and locations had all been carried out very successfully. The reorganisation has left them feeling fully secure about all the new arrangements and well prepared for the start of the next academic year. They expressed confidence in the school's continuing care.

The head of care, supported by the house staff team, leads and manages the residential provision against a well established and consistent set of procedures. Staff are qualified, competent and feel very well supported and trained for their roles and responsibilities. Staff teams are effectively deployed throughout the residential provision to supervise the pupils. Daily staff meetings are held to ensure that working logs are reviewed and any concerns highlighted and resolved. The residential accommodation has received a full review and changes in staffing levels have been made ready for the new school year. However, although meeting all national minimum standards, further consideration needs to be made with regards to the number of night-time staff available to support pupils who may have problems

during the night. At present, this staffing level is low compared with that found in similar schools.

The school has a partnership arrangement with the Principal of an adjacent school so that a 24-hour series of checks on care and well-being are reported and shared with the school annually in a written report. The school has a very clear and accurate evaluation of its performance with regards to the residential provision. This enables the school to plan effectively for the future. The school has shown that it has the capacity to act on improvement points arising from a previous welfare inspection visit earlier in the year. It has audited its medication policy, procedures and administration to ensure consistent good practice in line with recommendations, and improved its placement plans for pupils' day to day care to an outstanding level.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

National minimum standards

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

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development

- respond to the request from boys and parents for appropriate homework
- develop the scope and range of numeracy policy guidance and intervention to that already being offered for literacy
- maintain the whole school ambition and drive, so as to continuously evaluate and improve teaching and learning at an outstanding level
- review staffing levels during the night, so as to enhance the level of support available for potential difficulties.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education	✓			
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils	✓			
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs	✓			
How well pupils make progress in their learning	✓			

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	✓			
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	✓			
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Overall effectiveness of the residential experience

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

School details

School status	Independent	
Type of school	Residential special school	
Date school opened	1976	
Age range of pupils	8 to 16 years	
Gender of pupils	Boys	
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 81	Total: 81
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Total: 0
Number of boarders	Boys: 39	Total: 39
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 81	Total: 81
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 10	Total: 10
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 58,233	
Annual fees (boarders)	£ 70,062	
Address of school	15-17 Somerby Road, Knossington, Oakham, LE15 8LY	
Telephone number	01664 454264	
Email address	trhodes@knossington.rutland.sch.uk	
Headteacher	Tuesday Rhodes	
Proprietor	Acorn Care & Education Group	

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.



20 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Grange Therapeutic School, Oakham, LE15 8LY

Thank you for your welcome when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit, starting with the whole school assembly presentation from the 'Hottest Classroom' about the Tanzania expedition by a school leaver. It showed us how high the achievement is at the Grange.

We judged that your school provides you with an outstanding quality of education and helps you with both your academic and personal development. The school meets all government requirements. We were particularly pleased to see

- that you respond to your teachers with outstanding progress
- the outstanding relationships which you have with all the staff
- the efforts you make to improve behaviour and co-operate with each other
- that both day and residential pupils get on well together and share in the student council
- attendance is high and you arrive wanting to learn
- the range of activities you get through the curriculum and obtain success.

We have asked the staff to think about how to maintain this outstanding progress and learning at your school along with residential care. We have asked the school to consider how they may occasionally set homework for you, if you are ready for it, to bring you in line with pupils at other schools.

We wish you all the best for the future and trust that your plans and hopes will be fulfilled.

Yours sincerely

Sa'ad Khaldi
Lead Inspector