

St Rose's School

Welfare inspection report for a residential special school

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Inspector Anna Williams

School address St. Roses Special School, Stratford Lawn, STROUD,
Gloucestershire, GL5 4AP
Telephone number 01453 763 793
Email admin@stroses.org.uk
Headteacher Mr Jan Daines

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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

St Rose's School is a co-educational, non-maintained, Roman Catholic day and residential school. It provides a service for children with physical disabilities and associated sensory, communication and learning difficulties. Some of these children also have complex health care issues. Children are aged between two and 19 years.

The school is located on the outskirts of Stroud, Gloucestershire. The school provides fortnightly residential care. The school also provides flexi-stays during term time and a programme of activity breaks. Residential accommodation for children is available in two buildings on site. The House provides accommodation for younger children. St Joseph's provides post-16 accommodation. Since the last inspection, the school has opened a new adult residential service on site.

At the time of this inspection there were 49 pupils at the school, 26 of whom accessed the residential provision. The residential provision was last inspected on 6 December 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	satisfactory
Outcomes for residential pupils	good
Quality of residential provision and care	good
Residential pupils' safety	satisfactory
Leadership and management of the residential provision	satisfactory

Overall effectiveness

The key findings of the residential inspection are as follows.

- This residential provision provides a satisfactory service to residential pupils. Residential pupils achieve good outcomes through their boarding experience. The quality of care within the residential provisions is good. However, the overall effectiveness of the residential provision is compromised by satisfactory leadership and management and safety shortfalls.
- The residential experience has a positive impact on residential pupil's educational and social development. They build confidence and they learn appropriate life skills.
- Safeguarding arrangements within the school are satisfactory.
- Equality and diversity is well-celebrated throughout the school and residential provision.
- The school does not meet 3 national minimum standards for residential special schools.
- Since the last inspection, there have not been any fire drills in residential time within one accommodation base. Consequently, not all residential pupils and all care staff across all accommodation bases are aware of what to do in case of fire.
- The school recruitment policy has not been followed. This does not demonstrate robust safer recruitment practice.
- The shortfalls identified within this inspection were not identified through the internal monitoring of appendix two records by management. Self-evaluation systems within the residential provision are not effective.

- The independent person visits the school on a weekly basis at the same time. However, outside of this specific time slot, residential pupils do not have contact details to contact them directly regarding any personal problems or concerns they may have. This means residential pupils cannot freely communicate their views and feelings at any time to their independent person.
- Monitoring visits take place each half term. However, the majority of these visits are within school hours, not residential time. This limits the monitoring of the quality of care within the residential provision.
- Prescribed medication is given to the residential pupil to whom it is named. However, confirmation direct from the prescriber is not sought with regard to changes to children's prescriptions. This risks confusion. However, no adverse errors have occurred.
- Previous excellent practice within the residential provision has not been sustained.

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outcomes for residential pupils are good. Relationships between residential pupils and staff are warm and appropriate. Positive and harmonious relationships exist between residential pupils who use the residential provision. The school's 'respect all' ethos and inclusive environment is reflected within the residential provision. The behaviour of residential pupils is good.

Through the residential experience, residential pupils make good progress with regard to their personal and social development. Some residential pupils have successfully progressed with the use of communication aids. This supports them making choices and communicating across all aspects of their lives. Residential pupils stay at the residential provision either on a fortnightly basis or through flexible stays according to the individual needs of the child. All residential pupils make new friends socially through the boarding experience. This provides children with opportunities to develop social skills and interact with other children. Comments from parents include 'since staying at the residential provision, my child has grown in confidence and self-esteem.'

Residential pupils are positive about their school experience and their time in the residential provision. They contribute to the running of the residential provisions through house meetings and the student council. Through these forums, residential pupils have seen changes in activity plans, menus and are currently fundraising for a specialist swing. This demonstrates to residential pupils that their views are important and are listened to.

Residential pupils are positively involved in community activities such as church attendance, shopping trips and local events such as firework displays. A recent trip took place to see a well-known pop group turning on the Christmas lights in a nearby

town. Residential pupils expressed immense enjoyment of this outing. Comments from parents include 'my child enjoys spending time with their peers and accessing activities that they cannot do with us at home.'

Residential pupils take part in local and national sporting events. This ensures they maintain good physical health. Some residential pupils make good progress in achieving independent movements. This promotes their physical health and well-being. Some residential pupils make successful progress in following a more varied diet. This supports positive health outcomes.

Some residential pupils have successfully transitioned into the residential provision after initially being very apprehensive about coming to stay. This supports residential pupils to build confidence and provides opportunities to learn independence skills. They take part in regular cooking and life skills sessions. This ensures residential pupils are well-prepared for adult life through the positive promotion of life-skills.

Quality of residential provision and care

The quality of the residential provision and care is good. The residential accommodation is of a generally good standard. Limitations of one older building, such as narrow doorways, are well-managed by staff and therefore it does not impact negatively on residential pupils. The accommodation is well-maintained. Residential pupils personalise the bedroom they stay in. The accommodation provides space for residential pupils to relax and also for appropriate learning in line with the 24 hour curriculum.

The health and emotional well-being of residential pupils is well-promoted through the multi-disciplinary team based on the school site. This includes occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and physiotherapy. Residential pupils nursing care needs are well-met by trained nurses and experienced residential care staff. Arrangements for the administration of medication are adequate. However, confirmation direct from the prescriber is not sought with regard to changes to children's prescriptions. This risks confusion regarding conflicting information on pharmacy labels. However, no adverse medication errors have occurred.

Catering arrangements are excellent. Specialist diets are well-catered for. Food is of good quality and menus are healthy and balanced. This promotes a healthy lifestyle.

Residential pupils have access to an independent person on a weekly basis at the same time during school hours. However, outside of this specified time, residential pupils do not have contact details to contact them directly regarding any personal problems or concerns they may have. This means residential pupils are unable to freely communicate their views and feelings at any time to their independent person.

There are good links between care and education staff which positively supports residential pupils' personal and academic progress. New residential pupils receive a

guide to the school written by other pupils. This provides a child-friendly guide to what it is like to stay at the residential provision. Transition arrangements are tailor-made to the individual needs of the child. This ensures that children are effectively supported to understand what staying overnight will be like. Residential pupils maintain appropriate contact with family and those who are important to them during their stays.

There are a broad range of extra-curricular activities on-site including the hydro pool, rebound therapy, sporting clubs, arts and crafts and use of the school grounds. The school runs its own scouts and explorers groups. Residential pupils achieve badges and link with local scouting groups for competitions and events. This promotes residential pupils personal development through trying new experiences. The annual scout camp on the grounds is well celebrated through photos on displays around the accommodation. This allows children to reflect on and remember their achievements.

Residential pupils' safety

The safety of residential pupils is satisfactory. Parents report that they feel the safety of their child is given a high priority within the school. Comments from parents include 'I feel staff work together well to keep my child safe and secure at school and when my child stays overnight.' Residential pupils are positive about their residential experiences.

Residential care staff knowledge of safeguarding policy and procedures is sound. Senior management are aware of their responsibilities with regard to investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm, although there have been none since the last inspection.

Bullying is not an issue within the residential provision. Any occasional behaviours which may target or upset another pupil are quickly identified and effectively addressed by the high levels of staff. This creates a harmonious and friendly environment for all.

Regular maintenance routines ensure the environment within the residential accommodation is physically safe. However, fire drills within residential time have not taken place in one accommodation base since the last inspection. Consequently, not all residential pupils and all care staff across all accommodation bases are aware of what specific action they should take in case of fire.

The school policy to promote good behaviour is consistently implemented by staff and is effective. No sanctions or physical interventions have been used since the last inspection. This supports pupils to behave well and build constructive relationships with everyone around them. The school has a policy on missing students, although positively there have been no incidents since the last inspection.

The safety of pupils is compromised by poor recruitment and vetting practices. The

school recruitment policy has not been followed. Staff commence employment at the school without at least two satisfactory references and a full employment history. Further shortfalls within recruitment files were identified. This does not demonstrate a robust approach to safer recruitment. This places children at risk of unsuitable persons gaining access to them.

Leadership and management of the residential provision

The residential provision has a Statement of Purpose which adequately describes the aims of and the services provided by the school. The school has appropriate policies and procedures in place for staff to refer to and to seek guidance from. However, the school recruitment policy has not been followed.

The whole school development plan is a comprehensive document. However, it does not reflect specific improvement targets for the residential provision within it. Specific school development plan objectives regarding recruitment and fire drills have not been met since the last inspection. The current system in place for monitoring appendix two records has not been effective in ensuring that the recruitment policy is followed, and that fire drills are up-to-date. Overall, self-evaluation systems of the residential provision are weak and have not identified shortfalls which have been highlighted within this inspection.

Monitoring visits to the school take place at least every half term. During these visits school records are scrutinized and reports highlight areas of comment and improvement. Suitable action is taken following these reports. However, the majority of these visits are within school hours, not residential time. This means visitors do not monitor the quality of care within residential time on a regular basis.

The school maintains a complaints log. Positively, there have been no entries from residential pupils or parents or carers regarding the residential provision since the last inspection. Records are stored securely and adequately capture the story of a residential pupil during their stays at the school.

Turnover of residential care staff is very low. This provides residential pupils with a stable environment and consistent approach from staff. Staff training needs are identified and well-met. Regular refresher sessions take place to ensure that staff maintain up-to-date skills. This ensures residential pupils are cared for by suitably trained and qualified staff. Staff receive regular supervision and an annual appraisal. Regular staff team meetings allow opportunity to discuss the individual needs of children. This means that residential pupils are cared for by staff that are suitably supported and adequately supervised.

Care plans for residential pupils are up-to-date, comprehensive and clearly detail the unique needs of each child. Residential care staff implement individual care plans consistently and effectively. Comments from parents include 'the staff fully understand my child's needs and work hard to fulfil them. There is also a high

standard of personal care'; and 'I think they are brilliant staff, they know my child so well and recognise my child's needs.'

Communication between the school and parents is good. Comments from parents include 'since my child started boarding, at the end of each week we get sent home a day-to-day record of what my child has done' and 'staff are attentive and keep us informed of what our child has achieved regularly.'

National minimum standards

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

- In addition, fire drills are regularly (at least once per term) carried out in 'residential time'. (NMS 7.2)
- Schools operate safe recruitment procedures and vet staff in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (as referenced in 'Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards'). (NMS 14.1)
- 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)

What should the school do to improve further?

- Ensure that children know the contact details of the independent person, so that they may contact them directly about personal problems or concerns at the school.
- Ensure that some monitoring visits take place within residential time.
- Ensure that confirmation is obtained direct from the prescriber with regard to any changes to children's prescriptions.

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.



12/11/2012

Dear students,

Inspection of St Rose's School

I came to visit the House and the post-16 house recently. Thank you for spending time with me. I really enjoyed eating meals with lots of you. Thank you to the students who showed me around the accommodation. Your tours were excellent! Thank you for sharing your opinions about coming to stay overnight. It is important to hear your views.

I found that all the students who stay overnight are positive about coming to stay. I found that students like their bedrooms and like the staff. I found there are lots of activities which students get involved in after-school, like scouts and rebound therapy. I found that students make good progress. Well done!

There are some things which the school needs to improve on. This will make students stays even better. This will keep everyone safe. The head teacher and the head of care will make sure that these are looked at.

Overall, I found that students have lots of fun in residential time! I saw lots of lovely smiles! I judged the residential provision to be giving students OK care overall. Thank you all again.

Yours sincerely,

Anna Williams