

Grateley House School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Greg Sorrell
Social care inspectors	Sharon Escott and Janice Hawtin

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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

Grateley House School, located in the village of Grateley in Hampshire, is an independent, residential special school registered for students aged nine to 19 years who have Asperger's Syndrome and related autism spectrum conditions. It opened in 1986 and is owned and managed by Cambian Education Services. Currently, there are 54 students on roll, 37 boys and 17 girls, each of whom has a statement of special educational needs. Of these, 48 are resident. Students are placed at the school by 31 different local authorities. The school last received a full education inspection in March 2009. The most recent inspection of the residential provision was in October 2012.

The school's aims may be summarised as 'to provide students who have Asperger's Syndrome with a high quality therapeutic education and residential provision that has a strong focus on learning. As a result of this, students are challenged to achieve high standards and develop self-esteem and skills in self-advocacy which result in the confidence to enjoy mature and positive relationships'.

Evaluation of the school

Grateley House School provides an outstanding quality of education and outstanding outcomes for residential students and successfully meets its aims. The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding and all students make outstanding academic progress. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as is their behaviour. The provision for the students' welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding, is good. The school has made outstanding progress since the last inspection in respect of extending opportunities to day pupils. It meets all the

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.

independent school regulations and national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Quality of education

The school's curriculum is outstanding. It represents the school's high expectation for the students' achievement and equips students very well for learning at the school and beyond, whether in further education, higher education or employment. The residential provision also makes a significant contribution to the curriculum. The curriculum is well documented. Schemes of work and short-term plans are informed by national guidance and take full account of the students' statements of special educational needs, as do the students' individual education plans (IEPs). There is a suitable emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy that enables the students to understand the curriculum effectively.

Since the last inspection the range of the curriculum and accreditation has improved significantly at school and through carefully selected courses at three local colleges of further education. In addition to offering wider accreditation at entry level, ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network), GCSE and A level, recent additions include awards in functional skills and AQA projects for older students who are not quite ready for sustained study at colleges of further education. Post-16 students also follow a wide range of accredited vocational courses, including BTEC and City and Guilds awards in hairdressing, creative media, health and social care, wildlife and environment, customer service and floristry.

There is also a highly effective programme for personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education (PSHCEE) that addresses relationships, careers guidance and a host of topics designed to promote safe and healthy lifestyles in school and beyond. These aspects are strongly supported by the residential provision's 'waking day' curriculum for all activities outside school hours. The curriculum also benefits from well-established external links with providers of work experience and careers guidance, particularly in the students' later stages of Key Stage 4. There is an extensive extra-curricular programme for residential students with a strong emphasis on physical fitness and use of the community. After-school rehearsals for the school pantomime are underway and are open to all students, including the minority of day students. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding and results in the students making outstanding progress. School managers have an accurate view of what happens in lessons through regular observation and discussion. There are effective systems to support all staff to improve their practice where appropriate so as to maintain the quality of teaching. The coordinators of English, mathematics and science undertake careful self-evaluation of the success of teaching in their subjects and this is very effective. However, this high quality self-evaluation is not undertaken to the same extent in some other subjects. All staff manage students' behaviour well. Reflecting their special educational needs, some students find collaborative working challenging, yet teachers seek regular opportunities to promote this key skill. Lessons

are planned with very close attention to students' prior learning and preferred learning styles and interests. For example, in English, all students are provided with individual learning objectives and are supported to achieve them using different resources and with additional support. Specialist knowledge is a hallmark of all subjects and this also applies to teaching assistants whose skills and interests have been appropriately deployed. The good quality of relationships is evident throughout the school and is always age appropriate. For example, post-16 students are encouraged to address staff by first names. Students are encouraged to extend their skills without fear of failure; they respond well because of the trust they have in adults they know well and the praise received. Good examples of this include singing aloud in music or following the footsteps of renowned artists to create their own works of art. All subjects are well resourced and teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) well, although opportunities are missed for students to make more use of interactive whiteboards in lessons.

Assessment of learning is meticulous and regularly shared with students. Teaching is typically very well focused and all students have their individual learning objectives close to hand, with staff providing regular feedback throughout the lesson. The sharing of information is also evident between staff and this aids their planning of subsequent lessons. Students' work is marked regularly and typically contains focused feedback with guidance for improvement. Assessment information informs IEPs and short term learning objectives which aids the understanding of students on how they can progress to the next level. There are effective tracking systems to monitor students' progress and evidence shows that all the students make outstanding progress from their different starting points.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school's provision for the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. All students respond very well to school's commitment to promote their personal development alongside their academic achievement. In discussion with students, including day students, they say that they enjoy being at school and value the range of activities available. The parental view endorses the same sentiment, with a unanimous response that parents would recommend the school to other parents. Attendance and behaviour are outstanding.

In lessons the students show enjoyment as they go about their tasks and increasingly show reflection upon their achievements. Some also pass constructive comments about the work of their peers, such as in an art lesson where they left their own work and viewed the artwork of others with positive approval. Empathy for others is a characteristic that many students find difficult to show; nevertheless, the students' respect for others, including visitors, is evident at all times.

All students have many opportunities to reflect upon the wider world and their own personal development. For example, a candle in the morning assembly provides a focus for students to consider the chosen theme, such as consideration of others and friendships. Staff are conscious of the need to widen students' horizons and

frequently use topical news media to develop an appreciation of the wider world. Students take an active part in school life. For example, some older students collect daily newspapers from the village shop so that their peers can keep abreast of current affairs. During the inspection, students shared their intentions to collect items for a local food bank in time for Christmas. Fundraising is well established as a means of contributing to the wider community. With the school's residential community, the students know that they are expected to look after their belongings and ensure the house bases are treated with respect. They respond well and sensibly to the opportunity to personalise their rooms and accept the responsibilities for looking after small pets.

The residential staff strongly promote the use of the community for all residential students, and particularly the older ones, many of whom join community groups such as the army cadets or local sports teams. These activities add significantly to their successful outcomes and prepare them well for life beyond school. One student wrote, 'The school has helped me to become sociable. From not being able to fit in the world at the beginning, like a broken car, to now being as clever as an owl, skilful and practical.'

The school prepares its students very well for the next stage of their life by developing their basic and social skills and by providing different vocational programmes through links with local colleges. Some of the students belong to local community clubs. They learn about different cultures in their PSHCEE, religious education and English lessons, and also visit places of cultural interest such as museums, galleries and places of worship for different faiths. Extensive studies are undertaken about public institutions and are supported by visits to, and visitors from, the police and fire services. Residential students are encouraged and supported to develop their own interests.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provision for the students' welfare, health and safety is good overall, despite being outstanding in most respects. It is good rather than outstanding because there are occasional, minor administrative shortfalls; for example, recording follow-up telephone calls regarding references and the need for minor amendments to the central register.

Nevertheless, there is a wealth of highly effective practice to successfully promote and safeguard the students' welfare, health and safety. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are, in practice, robust and are regularly reviewed, and risk assessments are carried out thoroughly.

There is a very strong integrated approach involving education, therapy and care which is very effective in promoting the students' all-round development. Most notable is the outstanding in-house multi-disciplinary therapeutic team that ensures the students receive comprehensive support for all their identified psychological, therapeutic and medical needs. This team provides detailed intervention programmes

that include working with students individually or within class groups. The team also works closely with the teaching and residential staff so that the impact is seen throughout the school. A new assessment package is in use to further strengthen this work. Links with external agencies are also well established and effective. The school works closely with parents through regular correspondence and support events, such as the one held during the inspection which was well attended.

Policies and procedures, including child protection, to underpin the students' safety, are implemented effectively. All staff, including the school's designated officer, are trained at the appropriate levels in child protection procedures. There are very detailed health and safety risk assessment policies for the school and out-of-school activities which are effectively implemented. The first aid policy meets requirements and all staff are trained at the required level. The full-time nurse also makes a significant contribution to ensuring the students' medical needs are well addressed. The whole school pays close attention to the prevention of bullying even though it is not a common occurrence. All aspects of behaviour are tracked meticulously and any trends are identified, for example students' increased anxiety due to changes arising from new students joining the school.

The school has a suitable fire risk assessment and appropriate steps have recently been made to implement all recommendations. A comprehensive range of tests is made on fire safety equipment and evacuations are held in a timely manner for the day and residential provision.

Throughout the day and residential provision there is a strong encouragement for students to adopt healthy lifestyles. For example, high quality meals ensure the students eat sensibly and all take part in a range of physical activities. Students receive age-appropriate guidance in sex and relationships education, the avoidance of harmful substances and how to keep safe. The school's system for recording sanctions meets requirements, although occasionally records do not contain sufficient detail about the circumstances leading up to the sanctions. However, in practice, sanctions are rarely used and are minimal. The school maintains attendance and admission registers which meet the regulations.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school undertakes appropriate checks on staff and others to ensure their suitability to work with children. During the inspection, a small number of minor amendments were made to the school's central register, which now contains the information required.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school's premises and accommodation are excellent and are most suitable to ensure safe and effective learning. The main school building is a large Grade II listed country house set in eight acres of grounds. There is also a newer building set as a quadrangle which provides classrooms that are well maintained and of suitable size

for the numbers of students in each class. The majority of classrooms are designated for specific subject areas, including English, mathematics, science, ICT, art, food technology and design and technology. Within the grounds there are also teaching areas predominantly used by post-16 students. A small gym is fitted with equipment designed to improve the students' fitness and coordination. The contemporary-styled dining room provides very well for all students' meals. A number of other rooms are also used for teaching, therapies and the students' medical needs. The residential accommodation is good and enables students to experience supported community living with adequate privacy, although communal lounge areas in a minority of the house bases lack the space found in most others in the school. The outdoor areas offer excellent facilities for large team games and adventurous play. Throughout the school there are strategically placed offices for administration. The school also makes extensive use of the local community to support the learning of day and residential students.

Provision of information

All of the required information is provided, or made available, to parents, carers and others. Information provided by the school, including that related to the residential provision, is clear, accurate and up to date. The quality of reports is good, including those on termly and annual achievement as well the annual reviews of students' statements of special educational needs.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's complaints policy and procedures, including those related to the residential provision, meet requirements.

Leadership and management of the residential provision

The quality of leadership and management is good as is the overall effectiveness of the residential experience. These aspects would be outstanding were it not for the occasional minor administrative errors in relation to welfare issues. Nevertheless, the outcomes for the residential students are outstanding and safeguarding, in practice, is of a very high standard.

Leaders and managers ensure that the residential provision provides a consistently high standard of integrated care which meets the diverse needs of individuals. Regular reviews and collaborative planning ensure that the students' needs remain paramount. Monthly monitoring visits record interactions with students, staff and parents very well. Residential students feel safe and benefit from the warm and positive relationships they enjoy with the highly committed staff. The residential experience strongly promotes the students' personal, social, cultural and educational development to ensure the students make outstanding progress. Residential students show tolerance, respect and acceptance of each other's differences. They enthusiastically take part in the extensive programme of activities available to them. The staff ensure that the residential students get involved in the local community,

which sometimes includes becoming members of clubs. Personal interests and preferences are encouraged and some have responsibility for looking after school pets.

The dining room is exceptional. The school's meals, taken in the impressive dining room, are nutritious and take full account of the students' preferences and dietary needs. Staff are vigilant and ensure that all students eat healthily and regularly. The students' wider health needs are very well served by outstanding health care practices carried out by fully trained staff. The residential accommodation is of an excellent standard and is well maintained and kept very clean. Regular risk assessments and appropriate supervision of students promote their safety very well.

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 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.

- Ensure that the fine points of detail in relation to welfare issues and the single central record are always addressed.
- Extend the outstanding quality of self-evaluation in English, mathematics and science to all other subjects.
- Encourage greater use of the interactive whiteboards by students.

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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Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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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 for students with Asperger's Syndrome and Autistic Spectrum Condition		
Date school opened	1986		
Age range of pupils	9 to 19 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 37	Girls: 17	Total: 54
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of boarders	Boys: 33	Girls: 15	Total: 48
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 37	Girls: 17	Total: 54
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£65,146		
Annual fees (boarders)	£130,291		
Address of school	Pond Lane, Grateley Andover Hampshire SP11 8TA		
Telephone number	01264 889751		
Email address	sue.king@cambianguroup.com		
Headteacher	Sue King		
Proprietor	Mike J McQuaid		

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.



10 December 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Grateley House School, Grateley, Andover, SP11 8TA

You may remember that I visited your school earlier this month with two of my colleagues. We wanted to see how you are all getting along in both the school and in the residential areas, your base houses. I want to tell you about some of the things we saw. In the lessons, most of which I saw with staff you know, I was really impressed by what I saw. I agree with your staff that you make outstanding progress because of the outstanding teaching you receive and all the lessons and activities you take part in. I enjoyed seeing you develop your skills in a lot of lessons such as reading in English, discussing moral dilemma in PSHCEE, and making masks in art. I am sorry I didn't get to food technology, but my colleagues and I did enjoy the Christmas cake you made!

There are also lots of activities for you do outside the school, many of you have interests in the local community and the staff work really hard to help you become more confident in everything you do. Those of you who attend colleges are very well prepared by lots of visits and work experience. There are many specialist staff who work very well as a team to give you all the guidance and support you need.

You, too, play your part by behaving well and trying your best even when new things can be quite challenging. In order to improve the school even further I am asking the school to do a few things. Some of your teachers check just how well their subjects are effective in helping you to learn and I am asking that all teachers do the same. You have really good ICT resources and the teachers use the interactive whiteboards well, but I think that you could use them more often. I am also asking the school to do a little better with some of its administrative procedures.

Once again, thank you all for the warm welcome. I hope your pantomime goes really well and I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Greg Sorrell
Lead Inspector