

# Buglawton Hall School

Buxton Road, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 3PQ

**Inspection dates** 27–28 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Overall effectiveness of the residential experience		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Leaders, including those with responsibility for governance, do not ensure that all the national minimum standards for keeping pupils safe are met.
- Policies and procedures for managing pupils' behaviour and the use of restraint are not clear enough, resulting in inconsistencies in practice.
- Leaders and managers do not monitor the implementation of whole-school procedures, such as those for physical intervention, so inconsistencies in the way pupils are dealt with are not identified and dealt with.
- Care staff do not feel confident in communicating concerns about the way pupils are dealt with. There is a nervousness about whistle-blowing.
- Overall, teaching requires improvement. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) to help them learn.
- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because their attainment is low overall and in some lessons they do not make the accelerated progress required to close the gap between their current attainment and that expected for their age.
- The level of pupils' reading skills is much higher than their ability to comprehend what they are reading.
- The interim executive board does not hold the school to account for its performance in sufficient detail.
- The school must ensure that it meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools which have not been met.

### The school has the following strengths

- There is some good and better teaching on which the school can build. This shows some improvement since the previous integrated inspection.
- Sharply focused teaching of phonics (the link between letters and sounds) is improving pupils' reading skills at a pace.
- Staff know pupils very well and are skilled at fostering positive attitudes to learning. This helps to reduce disruptions to lessons.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed seven lessons taught by five teachers and conducted a learning walk during a tutor period. They observed school life at break and lunchtimes. They visited the residential units, talked to pupils about their experiences of boarding and reviewed arrangements for dealing with medication. Inspectors met with the school council and visited after-school activities.
- Interviews were held with the headteacher, the head of care, teachers and care staff. Inspectors talked by phone with the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and met with the vice-chair. They spoke by phone with a representative of the local authority and met with the local authority’s safeguarding manager.
- Documents were scrutinised including information about pupils’ progress, attainment, attendance and behaviour. Inspectors also took into account the minutes of the interim executive board’s meetings, the school’s self-evaluation and the development plan. Safeguarding policies, procedures and records were evaluated, including those relating to recruitment. Child protection records, risk assessments, safeguarding policies, records of interventions, staff supervision records, and administration of medication records were examined.
- Inspectors took the responses to 46 questionnaires completed by staff into account, as well as one comment from a parent. There were no responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View.

## Inspection team

Jane Austin, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Karen Forster

Social Care Inspector

## Full Report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- Buglawton Hall is a small residential special school in a rural setting some distance from Manchester. It serves boys from the city aged seven to 16 years old who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and, in some instances, additional learning needs.
- All the boys have a statement of special educational needs. A small number are looked after by the local authority.
- The school provides residential care from Sunday evenings to Friday afternoons during term time for all but a very small number of boys.
- The majority of pupils are White British while others come from a range of minority ethnic heritages. All speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, additional government funding provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care or who have a parent in the armed forces, is more than three times the national average.
- Boys are admitted throughout the year.
- The school is part of a federation of three special schools; the other two are day schools located in Manchester. Another headteacher has overarching responsibility for the day schools. Under federation arrangements, the headteacher held the post of head of school under an Executive Principal until December 2012. An interim executive board has responsibility for the governance of the federation.
- The headteacher was absent from school for much of 2012. The deputy headteacher was acting headteacher for a number of months, covering the headteacher's initial period of absence. During a second, shorter absence, an acting headteacher was appointed from within the federation. The headteacher returned to school in January 2013.
- There has been considerable disruption to staffing this academic year. Several teaching staff are absent from school long term and covered by supply staff. Two teachers have temporary positions as assistant headteachers.
- The alternative providers used by the school are Manchester College and Kickstart.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the incidents were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is always at least good in order to raise pupils' attainment, by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use ICT to enhance their learning and their skills
  - improving pupils' understanding of what they read so that they can learn more independently
  - making best use of all opportunities to foster pupils' literacy and speaking skills
  - ensuring that the school's best practice in marking is implemented across all subjects.

- Improve pupils' behaviour and safety, by:
  - taking rigorous steps to deal with any incidents of bullying
  - raising levels of attendance
  - increasing the opportunities for the school council to take on responsibilities.
  
- Improve leadership, management and governance, by:
  - establishing a climate in which all staff feel confident to share concerns about the effectiveness of steps taken to keep pupils safe
  - ensuring that the implementation of policies and procedures is monitored regularly and any inconsistencies are dealt with promptly
  - developing the skills of inexperienced leaders so that they can make a full contribution to the leadership of the school.
  
- The Federation, local authority and Department for Education must, as a matter of urgency, complete the arrangements under way to ensure that the school has a formal governing body so that detailed support and challenge can be provided to school leaders and the views of parents, staff and the community can be represented.
  
- The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools.
  - The school makes reasonable efforts to obtain all necessary information about a child's health, education and care needs, prior attainment and achievements prior to (or in an emergency, at the time of) admission:(NMS 2.4)
  - Arrangements are in place to review how the child is settling following admission to the school. In an emergency admission a review meeting is initiated as soon as possible (and never longer than four school weeks after admission) to consider whether the child should remain at the school, or whether it is in that child's interests to move to a different placement. Such a review meeting may involve (where appropriate) the school, the placing authority, the parents/carers or those with parental responsibility, those with significant involvement with the child (such as social services or health services) and, where possible, the child: (NMS 2.5)
  - Children develop their emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical skills through the accessible and stimulating environment created by the school. Children are supported to take part in school-based and out-of school -activities: (NMS 10.1)
  - 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)
  - Methods to de-escalate confrontations or potentially challenging behaviour are used wherever appropriate to avoid use of physical restraint. Restraint is only used in exceptional circumstances, to prevent injury to any person (including the child who is being restrained) or to prevent serious damage to the property of any person (including the child who is being restrained): (NMS 12.4)
  - All children and staff are given an opportunity to discuss with a relevant adult incidents of restraint they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by: (NMS 12.5)
  - A written record is kept of major sanctions and the use of any physical intervention. Records may include the information in Appendix 2 (Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards) - 'use of physical restraint'. The record is made within 24 hours of the sanction being applied and is legible. Children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records. The school regularly reviews any instances of the use of physical intervention restraint and examines trends or issues to enable staff to reflect and learn in a way that will inform future practice: (NMS 12.6)
  - 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)

- The school's procedures are compatible with the local Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols and procedures applicable to the area where the school is located. Where children placed out of authority go missing, the Head of Care follows the local RMFHC protocol and complies with and makes staff aware of any other processes required by the placing authority: (NMS 15.7)
- The learning and development programme is evaluated for effectiveness at least annually and is updated if necessary: (NMS 19.4)

- Ensure that all pupils have opportunities to develop daily living skills appropriate to their age.
- Ensure that the whole-school policy for managing behaviour complies with the relevant Department for Education guidance, particularly in relation to the policy statement on internal exclusions.
- Ensure that the professional supervision of care staff routinely includes a review of their progress and identifies further training needs.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Overall, pupils' attainment is low. Pupils' social, emotional and behavioural difficulties mean that they have missed some schooling and have very significant gaps in their learning when they arrive at Buglawton.
- Pupils' progress accelerates when they join the school and in many instances they make considerable advances very rapidly. Nonetheless, their attainment remains well below that expected for their age in many cases.
- Achievement requires improvement because pupils do not make gains evenly across the curriculum, since the quality of teaching is not consistently good in all areas.
- In 2012, several pupils gained GCSEs at grades A\*-G and two gained good passes in art. Pupils achieved other appropriate qualifications, including in functional literacy and numeracy. They also successfully completed a range of accredited units, such as in animal husbandry and anger management, which support their personal development effectively.
- Where appropriate, the school enters pupils early for GCSE mathematics to ensure that they have the opportunity gain this qualification. Two pupils achieved good GCSE passes in mathematics last year but this success is tarnished by their subsequent lack of motivation in the subject.
- Pupils' progress in English has improved markedly following the successful introduction of systematic, well-targeted teaching of phonics. Regular testing of skills in English shows that pupils' reading ages are rising although there is a clear, and often significant, gap between this and their levels of comprehension.
- There are no identifiable sizeable groups of pupils in this setting. The school's analysis of learning needs last year resulted in the allocation of pupil premium funding to the purchase of new resources for the teaching of phonics. These have contributed to the good improvements in pupils' literacy skills.
- This year, pupil premium funding is being used to enable a small number of pupils both to receive home tuition and attend alternative, vocational provision which matches their needs and aspirations. The impact on their attendance and engagement in learning is positive.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because not all lessons enable pupils to make good or better progress. In subjects where there have been several changes to staffing, continuity has been lost and pupils are uncertain about routines and expectations. In these lessons, the pace slows because more time is taken up with class management and less time with learning.
- Although the emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection, some opportunities to focus on subject-specific vocabulary and to develop pupils' language skills are missed.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use ICT to enhance their learning in other subjects.
- As well as identifying what has gone well, some teachers' marking helps pupils understand how they can improve their work. However, this good practice is not consistent across the school.
- Much of the teaching observed during the inspection was at least good. Teachers are enthusiastic and energetic. Consequently, the school can appoint newly qualified teachers if necessary.
- In the better lessons observed, engaging topics and resources helped to capture pupils' interest and motivate them. For instance, in an outstanding English lesson younger pupils spoke with enthusiasm and good recall about novels by Michael Morpurgo that they have read. They were captivated by his book *Warhorse* and read with great concentration, applying their phonic skills well. Similarly in a good mathematics lesson, converting metric to imperial measures proved

appealing when linked to the international football transfer market.

- A good range of short activities means that lessons move at a brisk pace which helps to sustain pupils' interest.
- Learning outcomes are spelt out in small, manageable steps which are reviewed at regular intervals during lessons so pupils can see the progress that they are making. Pupils assess their own learning, effort and behaviour at the end of each session, building self-awareness and a sense of responsibility for their own choices.
- The school's lesson-planning format, which includes information about pupils' reading and comprehension skills, helps to ensure that tasks, resources and support are carefully matched to the learning needs of individual pupils.
- Teaching assistants know pupils well and make a good contribution to pupils' learning through support and challenge, as well as through the skilful management of behaviour.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate**

- The school does not safeguard the welfare and safety of pupils adequately. There are inconsistencies in the implementation of the behaviour management policy. This means that staff do not consistently offer similar rewards for certain behaviours which frustrates resident pupils. This frustration has, on occasion, escalated into challenging episodes that have led to physical interventions by staff.
- The school trains staff in the de-escalation of pupils' challenging behaviour. However, the application of this training is inconsistent, so episodes intensify leading to the use of physical intervention. There is evidence of injury to pupils and staff during restraints and isolated instances where injury has not been suitably notified to statutory agencies.
- The school's recording of restraints has improved very recently to meet the national minimum standards. However, records do not show how a whole incident was handled so it is unclear whether sufficient attempts were made to defuse the situation. Incidents are not reviewed from the perspective of the young person or staff members following the restraint. These shortfalls seriously limit the capacity of the school and the external visitor to review and learn from such episodes.
- The whole-school behaviour management policy refers to the use of internal exclusion, which care staff were expected to implement within the school day. This led to regular attempts by care staff to engage with disenchanted pupils at times when their behaviour was extremely challenging. While the practice of internal exclusion has ceased, the policy statement remains and has not been checked by the school for compliance with the Department for Education's guidance.
- Pupils say that bullying occurs regularly, with cyber-bullying being a particular concern recently. They are confident to report incidents to staff and say that action is taken but that the impact is short-lived.
- The school council is gradually developing its voice. It provides a forum for pupils to discuss improvements that they would like as well as allowing them to respond to the headteacher, for instance on the mobile phone policy. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and act on their ideas.
- In lessons, pupils' behaviour is managed well so that learning is disrupted as little as possible. The swift back-up provided by care staff means that a pupil experiencing difficulties does not disrupt the learning of the class.
- Staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils often show staff the same courteous and respectful behaviour that they receive.
- Pupils are motivated by the electronic system on which successes and shortfalls in behaviour are logged. It is helpful in enabling care staff to follow up on rewards and sanctions, with pupils earning many more of the former than the latter.
- In lessons, pupils are motivated by the chance to earn points which contribute to their pocket money. They are realistic in evaluating their own effort and behaviour.



- Although attendance is low overall, the attendance of individual pupils improves substantially when they join the school. The school is in regular contact with parents on a range of matters, including better attendance and behaviour. Efforts are made to provide additional transport for pupils who are not ready at the appointed time and place on Sundays. Recently, alternative provision has markedly improved the attendance of some pupils.

### **The leadership and management are inadequate**

- Shortfalls in the strategic leadership and day-to-day management of the school since the welfare inspection last year mean that not enough improvement has been made in the school's leadership and the leadership of behaviour management. Consequently, pupils' well-being is not safeguarded sufficiently. Although a recommendation regarding the consistent implementation of the behaviour management policy was made at the last inspection, major anomalies remain.
- The implementation of policies and procedures for managing pupils' behaviour and keeping them safe is not monitored rigorously enough and inconsistencies that are apparent are not dealt with robustly.
- The leadership team has not responded sufficiently to a range of issues arising from these inconsistencies, including low staff morale and lack of confidence in the impact of whistle-blowing. Staff questionnaires indicate considerable concerns in these areas.
- Care staff are formally supervised each half term but these sessions do not routinely include progress with training and professional development, nor emotional support. Care staff benefit from whole-school training opportunities, for instance on adolescent development, which they then put to good use when working with pupils. However, the specific training needs of the care staff team are not collated or met in a coherent way.
- The leadership of teaching is more robust. Teachers and teaching assistants have followed a national training programme, delivered internally, the benefits of which are evident in better classroom practice.
- The performance management of teaching staff is rigorous, with staff progressing up the salary scale only if suitably demanding targets are achieved.
- The headteacher has a clear overview of pupils' progress and the quality of provision. Regular learning walks are augmented by scrutinies of pupils' work conducted by the literacy and numeracy subject leaders. Pupils' progress is tracked regularly. A new system for evaluating pupils' progress, better matched to the school's needs, is being introduced.
- The assistant headteachers are new to leadership and at the early stages of developing their roles and skills. They are clear about their responsibilities and approach these with vigour. However, the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator is underdeveloped.
- The curriculum has some strengths. It is balanced well to meet pupils' needs and makes an effective contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As well as basic skills, there is a keen emphasis on outdoor pursuits. Opportunities for pupils to gain qualifications have increased, for instance with the introduction this year of a GCSE course in physical education.
- There are several successful extra-curricular activities, notably the guitar club. Caring for the wide range of pets is popular and offers pupils the chance to gain accreditation. However, while pupils are suitably occupied within their residential time and can choose from activities such as computer games, watching television, and some leisure activities, the choice is limited.
- Recently, the local authority has been responsive to the school's situation, increasing its level of support in the light of staffing issues. It continues to provide the services of an external professional to review the school's progress at regular intervals, a helpful support to the headteacher in evaluating the school's position.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - is not providing the detailed challenge and support required to support the school's improvement. The interim executive board has a broader strategic role in the federation which includes responsibility for overarching direction and finance. The more usual model of



governance is not in place. Consequently, the school has not been held to account through regular and detailed scrutiny of its performance, including of the quality of teaching. Board members have taken responsibility for the headteacher's performance management but not overseen that of teachers. With the Department for Education and the local authority, the interim executive board is in the process of establishing a governing body for the federation and has begun to take suitable steps to ensure that new governors represent the interests of all the schools involved and their stakeholders.

<b>Outcomes for residential pupils</b>	<b>are inadequate</b>
<b>Quality of residential provision and care</b>	<b>is adequate</b>
<b>Residential pupils' safety</b>	<b>is inadequate</b>
<b>Leadership and management of the residential provision</b>	<b>is inadequate</b>

- While the outcomes for some residential pupils are adequate, the shortfalls in safeguarding undermine the elements of positive practice.
- Senior care staff ensure that there are a sufficient number of care staff on duty to care for and supervise residential pupils adequately.
- The placement-planning for residential care is suitable, although the school does not always receive the relevant risk assessment information for prospective pupils. Consequently, the school is not fully aware on admission of all of a pupil's risk-taking behaviour. In addition, new resident pupils do not always attend a meeting shortly after admission to review their progress.
- Personal development is adequately promoted for residential pupils, and key staff demonstrate a clear understanding of each young person's strengths and needs. Key staff are warm and approachable with their group, and sensitive to each individual's specific emotional needs. However, the recording of personal objectives relating to the development of life skills is not provided for all residential pupils. This means that progress in this area is not routinely captured.
- The school maintains suitable links with the police and local authority statutory agencies. Most contacts are in line with the school's policy. However, the school does not routinely distinguish between pupils who are missing and those who are absent from school without authority. The local authority's designated officer was not notified of an unexplained injury to a pupil, which does not meet the school's policy and is outside safeguarding protocols.

## What inspection judgements mean

<b>School</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

<b>Boarding/Residential provision</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105604
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC041918
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	400175

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection of residential 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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	22
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	20
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pauline Newman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynette Edwards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 January 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01260 274492
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