

Hampden House

HAMPDEN HOUSE HOSTEL, CATS LANE, SUDBURY, SUFFOLK, CO10 2SF

Inspection dates

13/07/2015 to 15/07/2015

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Requires improvement 3

The quality of care and support

Requires improvement 3

How well children and young people are protected

Requires improvement 3

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings

The residential provision requires improvement because

- There are a number of shortfalls against the National Minimum Standards. The shortfalls have not undermined young people's wellbeing but have the potential to do so if not addressed.
- Shortfalls are related to risk assessments, placement plans, addressing fire prevention issues on the school site, maintaining up to date policies and procedures, the safety of the school site, young people's access to the internet for study, reviewing the training programme and discussions with young people following a physical intervention.
- There is a clear drive to improve the quality of the service and processes are in place for self-evaluation and monitoring.
- Most young people make progress compared to their starting points and there has been a reduction in the number of physical interventions over time.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

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

- Suitable living accommodation is provided for the purposes of organised and private study outside school hours and for social purposes. (National Minimum Standard 5.2)
- Residential accommodation is reserved for the use of those children designated to use it, and is protected from access by unauthorised persons. Any use of school facilities by individuals or groups does not allow members of the public (including members of organised groups using school facilities) substantial and unsupervised

access to children, or to residential accommodation while occupied by children. (National Minimum Standard 5.7)

- The school premises, accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of children are ensured. (National Minimum Standard 6.2)
- The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. (National Minimum Standard 7.1)
- Children take part in age appropriate peer activities as would normally be permitted by the parent in relation to their children or as outlined in any placement plan. Suitable risk assessments are in place for any activities which may put children at risk of harm. Decision-making should be undertaken from the perspective of a reasonable parent. (National Minimum Standard 10.2)
- All children and staff are given an opportunity to discuss with a relevant adult (who was not directly involved) within 24 hours incidents of restraint, including reasonable force, they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by. (National Minimum Standard 12.5)
- Staff working within the school know and implement the school's policy, and where relevant the local authority's policy, in relation to children going missing and their role in implementing that policy. Staff actively search for children who are missing, including working with the police where appropriate. (National Minimum Standard 12.8)
- The school follows and maintains the policies and documents described in Appendix 1. (National Minimum Standard 13.7)
- 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 (or school equivalent) follows the local RMFHC protocol and complies with and makes staff aware of any other processes required by the placing authority. (National Minimum Standard 15.6)
- The learning and development programme is evaluated for effectiveness at least annually and is updated if necessary. (National Minimum Standard 19.4)
- The school produces a written placement plan, agreed as far as is practicable with the child, the child's parents/carers and any placing authority for the child, unless the information is held elsewhere such as in the child's statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan. The placement plan identifies the needs of that child that the school should meet and specifies how the school will care for the child and promote their welfare on a day to day basis. Where significant changes are made to the placement plan there is appropriate consultation. Where applicable the plan is consistent with the care plan of the placing authority for any child placed by a local authority. The placement plan is regularly reviewed and amended as necessary to reflect significant changes in the child's needs or progress in his or her development. Where feasible, children in the school are aware of the content of their placement plans, and confirm that the school is providing care for them that is consistent with the plans. (National Minimum Standard 21.1)
- Each child's file includes the information in Appendix 2 (individual records). (National Minimum Standard 22.2)

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure staff receive regular supervision and support if they are working directly and regularly with children and young people where there are concerns about their safety and welfare.
- Ensure good-quality written records are made and held securely where staff working with children and young people are concerned about their safety or welfare.
- Ensure residential accommodation is good quality, comfortable and well maintained so that children and young people feel relaxed and safe.
- Ensure the views and feelings of children and young people are routinely sought and demonstrate how their views have made a difference.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of the residential provision took place within four hours of announcement. The inspector reviewed the policies, documentation, residential provision and residential arrangements over a period of three days. The inspector spoke to key staff, young people and parents. The inspection considered feedback from external professionals as part of the inspection process.

Inspection team

Ashley Hinson

Lead social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

Hampden House is a residential pupil referral unit maintained by the local authority. The school can accommodate 18 boys aged between 10 and 14 years, 12 residential and a further six day students. Residential students reside at the school for up to four nights a week. The residential accommodation is part of the school. The pupil referral unit is situated in a residential area of Sudbury and caters for students who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The residential provision was last inspected in December 2014.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Requires improvement

The young people are not at immediate risk from safeguarding concerns arising from the care they receive at Hampden House; however there are a number of issues pertaining to safety that need to be addressed.

There is a clear drive to improve the quality of the service that is provided. The acting headteacher spoke with passion and insight regarding the improvements he envisions leading on. Robust internal reviews have identified areas for improvement. Some have been achieved, whilst others are ongoing. There is a collective openness regarding the need for further improvement.

Additional staff have been recruited. This includes a head of care with experience of working in residential management. However, the absence of senior residential care staff has impacted on the pace of improvement. As a result, progress has not yet been made in all areas that require it.

Some young people are making progress in terms of attendance and most young people are making academic progress. Some young people have made considerable academic progress in a short period of time. There has been a decrease in physical interventions. Staff articulate high aspirations for young people although this is compromised by the state of the building.

There is limited documentary evidence of consultation with young people and of their views making a difference to the service they receive. It is important for young people who live away from home for significant periods to be able to influence the shape of the service they receive. This is an area for development recognised in the school's own internal analysis.

The residential provision works in partnership with other elements of the school, parents and carers, and external agencies to support young people. Feedback from professionals was encouraging. One professional said: 'They work positively with some very difficult situations. They have good staff that go above and beyond what is expected of them.'

The quality of care and support

Requires improvement

Young people are treated with dignity and respect. They experience care and support that is sensitive and responsive. The staff are able to offer examples of sensitive practice and this was observed during the inspection.

The staff are able to explain young people's needs and have a good knowledge of their experiences. One professional said: 'She had all the information and was able to talk clearly about his history. She is knowledgeable and putting the young people's needs first.' However, placement plans used in the residential provision do not support this. Plans are not detailed and thorough. They do not address equality and diversity issues.

There is a lack of clarity within the plans regarding how the school will meet the young people's needs and how the school will care for the young person and promote their welfare on a day-to-day basis.

Residential accommodation is of variable quality. Bedrooms are small. Young people are able to personalise them and there are ample washing facilities. They have lockers to keep their belongings safe and have electronic entry to their rooms. This promotes their privacy. The lounge is comfortable and well maintained, having recently been refurbished. Much of the interior is in poor condition, with damage to doors, walls, radiators and windows. Paintwork is chipped throughout. There is also damage to the exterior with broken or absent fencing. The doorbell is missing. Members of staff variously described the building as 'shabby' 'ugly' and 'horrible.' The result is an intimidating and unwelcoming structure, which has the potential to impact negatively on young people's first impressions of the school. The environment is not consistent with the promotion of high aspirations nor does it convey that those who use it are valued.

There is poor internet access in the residential areas of the school. As a result, young people are not able to access the internet to support homework or private study.

Young people have a choice of nourishing meals. The food is varied, plentiful and of high quality. The school caters well for individual dietary needs. One young person said: 'The food is good, but not as good as mum's.' Another young person said: 'Breakfast is good. I like fry up Fridays.' Young people are encouraged to sit and eat together. Staff also sit with them and discussions take place. This means meal times are social events, which children and young people enjoy.

Young people enjoy and benefit from a broad range of social and recreational activities, which include activities in the wider community. One parent said: 'They do a range of activities that he would not get to do otherwise.' The activities offered to young people are dependent upon their behaviour during the school day. A professional said: 'He is the happiest he has ever been since attending.'

Policies and procedures support the delivery of the care experienced by young people. The management team have updated some policies since the last inspection whilst others have not had a review and are out of date. For example, the missing children policy is both out of date and inaccurate. Whilst plans are underway to review all policies, this means that staff do not currently have sufficient access to up to date internal procedures and guidance. This has the potential to compromise young people's safety and does not provide clarity for staff.

How well children and young people are protected

Requires improvement

A young person said: 'I feel safe. If I am not happy I talk to the staff.' Young people have access to an independent person and engage with the independent visitor. There are numerous posters explaining to young people who they can contact. Concerns raised by young people have been addressed. As a result, young people feel that adults listen to them, take their concerns seriously and respond appropriately.

The grounds are not sufficiently secure. The head teacher recognises this. It is a feature

of his future plans for improvement. At present, the security of the grounds presents a risk to young people's safety both in relation to the risk of going off site and of unauthorised people accessing the building.

A fire risk assessment took place in October. It identified a number of concerns that required urgent attention. Some of these have not been addressed. Therefore, young people have not been as fully protected from the risk of fire as reasonably expected. The school has responded immediately to the concerns raised during the inspection and is taking action to address them.

Young people have risk assessments but these do not sufficiently consider some key risks that young people experience; for example, vulnerability in relation to grooming and child sexual exploitation. In addition, some risks associated with self-harming are not fully considered. Subsequently, some risk assessments do not provide staff with a clear analysis of risks, meaning young people are not as protected from predictable risks as they could be. Risk assessments for activities are not always thorough enough. For example, the swimming risk assessment does not consider risks in relation to young people's health conditions. Staff have taken action to begin addressing these shortfalls immediately.

There has been a reduction in the number of physical interventions. Staff are able to articulate the need for these to be interventions of last resort. Staff have managed some very difficult and dangerous situations well. However, capturing feedback from young people after an intervention or incident is still not happening consistently.

There is a named and designated lead for safeguarding. The systems used to capture responses to concerns lack a clear chronological overview, which makes them difficult to navigate without access to a wide range of recording systems. Consequently, records can be confusing for staff to understand.

Young people have rarely gone missing from the school. When they do, no return interviews take place. Staff are unfamiliar with statutory guidance regarding missing children. The related policy is out of date and offers incorrect guidance on responding to young people who may go missing. As a result, staff may rely on inaccurate policies that could lead to young people placing themselves at serious risk.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Requires improvement

Suitably trained and experienced leaders and managers effectively and efficiently lead the residential provision. The interim headteacher is experienced and qualified. He is making a difference to the quality of service provided. The head of care is a qualified social worker with considerable experience of residential management.

Additional staff have been recruited since the last inspection and this addressed immediate staffing shortfalls. However, gaps in staffing remain. This has impacted upon the capacity of the management team to make the changes they have identified as necessary and to identify further areas for improvement.

Staff say they feel well supported by their managers. They spoke very positively about the ongoing impact of the acting headteacher and the arrival of the head of care.

However, supervision has not been provided with the expected frequency. In addition, the training programme for staff has not been reviewed in line with minimum standards.

Leaders and managers actively and regularly monitor the quality of care provided. They use learning from practice and feedback to improve the experiences and care of children and young people. They identify strengths and areas for improvement, have clear development plans that are implemented and action is taken to improve the experiences and care of children and young people.

The management team have developed positive and effective relationships with external professionals. There is regular dialogue that is constructive and open. One professional said: 'They have been really helpful. I get regular communication'. Another said: 'There is an open line of communication. Sometimes there is challenge but this is constructive, respectful challenge with the focus being the best interests of the young people. There is no animosity.'

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework*.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	124530
Social care unique reference number	SC024594
DfE registration number	935/1104

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.

Type of school	Residential Special School
Number of boarders on roll	12
Gender of boarders	Boys
Age range of boarders	9 to14
Headteacher	Mr G Alcock (Acting)
Date of previous boarding inspection	09/12/2014
Telephone number	01787 373583
Email address	grahamalcock@hampdenhouse.net

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