

Royal School for the Deaf Derby

ROYAL SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, 180 ASHBOURNE ROAD, DERBY, DE22 3BH

Inspection dates

22/06/2015 to 24/06/2015

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 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

- Radical changes to the management structure are not fully embedded. Leaders and governors are monitoring the residential provision but this does not yet offer enough challenge to secure sustained improvement. The Acting Principal does not monitor compliance with the national minimum standards or provide an in-depth report for governors annually to demonstrate compliance with the national minimum standards.
- Safeguarding records do not always provide good evidence of actions taken.
- Residential and academic staff do not complete any joint planning for children and young people to ensure a consistent, holistic approach across the school.
- Some policies are either missing, such as the risk assessment policy, or require further improvement, such as the missing child policy, safeguarding policy and the behaviour policy.
- Written risk assessments are generic rather than tailored to individual children and young people.
- Residential staff do not have access to activity risk assessments during the evenings and so children and young people have participated in activities without reference to a risk assessment.
- Health and welfare needs are not well planned which leads to confusion about responsibilities and delay of healthcare checks. Furthermore, cultural and communication needs are not detailed within plans.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

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

- 3.12 Where necessary, a child has a clear individual health and welfare plan or similar record, containing relevant health and welfare information provided by parents/carers and recording significant health and welfare needs and issues. This record should be agreed by parents/carers and include: records of developmental checks; health monitoring required by staff; intimate care or bodily functions requiring staff help; and the involvement of a child's parents/carers or significant others in health and welfare issues.
- 6.3 The school ensures that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.
- 13.2 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.
- 13.4 The school's leadership and management consistently fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met.
- 13.8 The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate.
- 13.9 The issues specified in Appendix 3 are monitored, and action taken to improve outcomes for children as appropriate.
- 20.4 The head teacher (or school equivalent), governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for carrying on the school carries out, and records in writing, once each year: a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for boarding pupils, in relation to: its Statement of Purpose; its staffing policy; the placement plans for individual children; and an internal assessment of its compliance with these standards. Where appropriate such a report may be incorporated within a review of the whole school.
- 21.1 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve policies further to ensure they are meaningful to the school. These policies include the missing child policy, the safeguarding policy, the risk assessment policy and the behaviour policy, with particular regard to bullying.
- Ensure records of identified maintenance of fire safety equipment clearly state when work is completed.
- Ensure all nursing staff are provided with clinical supervision.

Information about this inspection

This inspection was announced on the morning of the start of the inspection. The inspectors visited the residential accommodation, spoke to children, young people and staff, including key staff with responsibility for the residential provision. The inspectors also observed practice in the residential provision and scrutinised school policies and records. The inspectors also gathered information from Parent View.

Inspection team

Mrs Vyas	Lead social care inspector
Mrs Timms	Social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

The Royal School for the Deaf Derby is a non-maintained residential special school. There are 130 pupils on roll, whose ages range from 3 to 19. The vast majority of pupils are of white British heritage with some pupils from ethnic minority groups. All pupils have a statement of special educational need or an Education, Health and Care plan for hearing impairment and some have complex special needs. The residential service operates weekdays only as all children and young people go home at weekends. There are 36 pupils who stay at the school, either on a full-time or part-time basis during the week. The residential accommodation is provided across three residential facilities that are purpose-built blocks. The school is a signing and speaking community where the languages and cultures of both deaf and hearing people are valued. The school is situated in the city of Derby.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Requires improvement

Children and young people enjoy positive experiences at this school. They make steady progress both academically and personally. They benefit from living in a signing community and enjoy making good friends. They have strong relationships with staff that help children and young people to keep themselves safe. Children and young people are fit and healthy, benefitting from a varied and wide range of activities. They are encouraged to learn new skills that will help their transition into independent living.

Children and young people feel supported, valued and respect one another. However, a new management structure and change to systems has not yet been finalised or fully embedded. Internal and external monitoring systems do not challenge the school enough yet to improve the quality of care and safety for children and young people.

Since the last inspection, the safety of children and young people has become a high priority for the school but the arrangements for safeguarding are not yet robust. For example, specific risk assessments, such as for those at risk of sexual exploitation, are generic and not tailored to the individual. Records of safeguarding concerns do not always demonstrate enough detail on how concerns are addressed. This makes monitoring difficult.

Staff are well trained, supervised and supported. There are sufficient numbers of consistent staff in each of the houses who have time to listen to children and young people and meet their needs. The residential provision is child focused but areas such as care planning and risk assessment require more attention so as to be able to reflect the specific needs of each young person.

The quality of care and support

Requires improvement

Children and young people clearly enjoy staying in residence. They are happy and benefit from living within a signing community. They like making good friends at school. A parent said, 'I have no concerns about residence, very relaxed and comfortable with everything.'

Residential staff know and understand the children and young people well. However, some confusion about the responsibilities for a child's health and welfare needs mean that routine health checks have been delayed and management of their personal needs has been unsatisfactory. Furthermore, care plans do not always clearly identify how a child's cultural or communication needs are to be met. Nevertheless, staff are sensitive to the cultural needs of children and young people, as well as presenting disabilities. For example, staff have been supportive of children and young people who are considering their sexual orientation. A parent said, 'They have really taken care of him very well.'

Children and young people make sufficient progress particularly with regard to education, communication and behaviour. A social worker commented, 'She has made very steady progress with her education and her communication has improved. Everyone has noticed, she is much calmer and has flourished.' They also learn skills that will help

them successfully transition into adulthood and independence. Two semi-independent flats are available for post-16 students. These help young people to develop their independence skills supported by staff. However, written risk assessments do not currently support this area of work, for example, the safe use of kitchen facilities, independent travel, front door access and staff supervision.

Children and young people benefit from nursing support when they are ill or have an accident. Nurses also meet with residential staff regularly to pass on information about children and young people's healthcare needs. Nurses liaise with children's mental health services, occupational therapy and physiotherapy to ensure children and young people are receiving the help and support they require. Management of medication is safe at this school. Staff are appropriately trained by the nursing staff regarding medication and health conditions, such as epilepsy and diabetes. Nursing staff do not currently receive clinical supervision. This would benefit them to ensure they can reflect on practice so it continues to be safe and up-to-date.

Staff actively seek children and young people's views and wishes. Children and young people are informed about plans for the school. They choose the weekly menu and activities. Complaints from children and young people are listened to and acted upon.

Meals are nutritionally balanced, plentiful and enjoyed by the children and young people. The school caters well for special dietary needs. Mealtimes are social events where children and young people catch up with friends and staff.

Children and young people have a wide range of activities they enjoy at the school and in the local community. They can attend brownies and guides. They have access to good outdoor space within the grounds as well as a gym. They enjoy football, basketball, cricket and other sports. They access the local park and town centre. The wide range of activities ensures children and young people are fit and active. The activities help to build confidence and resilience that will help children and young people to flourish.

Children and young people live in one of three purpose-built blocks, one of which is refurbished to a good standard. Some of the décor and furnishings are old and tired in the other blocks, but plans are in place to refurbish one of the blocks this summer. Children and young people like the accommodation, especially their bedrooms. They are relaxed and safe in the residential provision. Post-16 students have some minor concerns with the building and Wi-Fi connectivity. The maintenance department is addressing these issues.

How well children and young people are protected

Requires improvement

Written risk assessments for children and young people do not provide good information for staff. They are generic and therefore do not provide information tailored towards the individual young person. For example, all young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation have the same risk management plan. There is also little cross reference to other documentation, such as behaviour management plans. However, staff have a good understanding of how to keep children and young people safe and the risks associated with individual children and young people. Children and young people are able to take managed risks in order for them to learn new skills and develop confidence, for example, walking into town with friends and independent travel on the bus and train.

Staff demonstrated good, safe practice when working with children and young people. However, residential staff do not have access to activity risk assessments as these are kept centrally in the school. The head of care took immediate action to rectify this when highlighted during this inspection

Practice to promote the safety of children and young people has improved significantly since the last inspection. They say they feel safe and have strong relationships with staff. Staff are clear about reporting procedures if they have a safeguarding concern. Additionally children and young people can also report concerns through the drop box system. Children and young people feel they can talk to staff about their concerns. They also have an independent person who visits them in residence and they know how to contact her should they wish to. A parent said, 'I am pleased they have worked on stranger danger, and also have supported him by talking to him about his adolescent development.'

Staff have undertaken training in safeguarding children, whistleblowing, e-safety and child sexual exploitation. This has provided them with the skills they need to keep children and young people safe. Children and young people who are deaf rely a lot on technology and the internet to communicate. The school recognise this and have been proactive in promoting e-safety, as well as having good systems to monitor access to the internet to ensure their safety.

Children and young people do not report bullying as an issue at this school. They have confidence in staff to resolve any conflict between them. Generally, children and young people are well behaved and get on well with each other. When conflicts occur, appropriate action is taken to ensure the safety of children and young people. Staff are trained in physical intervention but have not used this since the last inspection. Staff keep children and young people occupied and talk to them about why they are feeling angry or anxious. The strong relationships staff have with children and young people enables them to help keep them calm without the need for physical intervention.

Children and young people do not go missing, take illegal substances or get involved in offending behaviour while residing in the school.

Staff vetting systems ensure unsuitable people do not work with children and young people. Health and safety procedures including fire safety are good. Children and young people know what to do in the event of a fire and practice this regularly.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Requires improvement

The head of care is appropriately qualified and experienced for this role. He has been head of care at the school for a number of years. He continues to develop professionally and has just started a social work degree. He is also a member of the newly formed safeguarding team for the school.

Children and young people benefit from a consistent staff team who are qualified and have the skills to meet their needs. They are well supported by the head of care. Staff are highly motivated to provide good care for children and young people.

The school have made substantial progress in meeting the failed national minimum standards from the previous inspection. However, two standards are not yet fully met. Monitoring by the head of care, governors and independent person have failed to identify the shortfalls highlighted within this report.

An independent review of governance has recently taken place that has made some challenging recommendations for the school. The governing body has very recently appointed new governors who come with a wealth of experience, particularly concerning safeguarding children. The governing body are starting to offer more challenge to the school but this still requires improvement. For example, the governors and independent person who report on the residential provision have not identified the shortfalls discussed within this report.

The school has trained additional senior staff to have safeguarding responsibilities and support the designated safeguarding lead. This means that there is a senior person with safeguarding responsibilities on duty the majority of time children and young people are present in the school. The safeguarding team meet weekly to review safeguarding concerns, policy and practice. However, they have failed to identify some poor recording that does not provide enough detail, or clearly show, how the concern was addressed.

Links between academic and residential staff are good on a day-to-day basis. However, there is no joint planning for individual children and young people. This would help to provide a more holistic view of children and young people and promote consistent practice across the school. Furthermore, incidents that have occurred in the school have not always been passed to residential staff in a timely fashion.

The head teacher does not currently include a comprehensive report to governors within her annual report regarding the residential provision. This would help to ensure there is a cohesive approach to the monitoring and quality assurance processes within the school and its compliance with the national minimum standards.

Some policies are either missing, such as the risk assessment policy, or require further improvement, such as the missing child policy, safeguarding policy and the behaviour policy. These policies do not comply with the national minimum standards or statutory guidance.

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and 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

Social care unique reference number

SC002015

DfE registration number

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

136

Gender of boarders

Mixed

Age range of boarders

3 to19

Headteacher

Mrs H Shepherd Acting Principal

Date of previous boarding inspection

01/12/2014

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