

Chaigeley Educational Foundation

Chaigeley School, Lymm Road, Thelwall, Warrington WA4 2TE

Inspection dates	11/01/2017 to 13/01/2017	
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	Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings

The residential provision requires improvement because

- This inspection has identified a number of shortfalls against the national minimum standards. Although the shortfalls have not yet impacted on young people's well-being, they have the potential to do so if not addressed.
- Oversight and monitoring of the residential provision by leaders and managers is inadequate. The head of residential care has insufficient knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of care practice in the boarding provision, and has not taken appropriate action to raise standards of practice to improve outcomes for residential pupils
- The school's governors do not robustly scrutinise records and, therefore, do not provide sufficient challenge to the senior leadership team, in order to bring about improvements in safeguarding and the promotion of residential pupils' welfare.
- Although staff members understand the presenting welfare concerns for individual pupils, these are not consistently recorded within a central document, such as a written placement and healthcare plan. This shortfall compromises the delivery and monitoring of a consistent approach for young people from all staff involved with the care and support needs of individual pupils.
- Some written risk assessments do not fully capture individual risks for pupils. Staff members do not always receive clear and explicit guidance in order to successfully manage challenging or risk-taking behaviour, or to avoid the occurrence of risk by

recognising potential triggers.

- The safety of pupils and staff was compromised when the gas safety certificate expired in November 2016.
- The recruitment of agency staff from a recruitment agency was not completed to the same standard as the school's own recruitment policy. This means that the school allowed agency staff members, whose employment history is unknown and their experience is unclear, to have contact with young people. This practice compromises the safety and well-being of young people.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

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

- 6.2 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.
- 13.4 The school's leadership and management consistently fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met.
- 14.1 Schools operate safe recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 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?

- Develop individual and detailed risk assessments that provide suitable guidance for staff on how to manage risk.
- Develop a plan regarding how the school will reduce the number of episodes for young people who go missing from school.

- Review care practice as a team and discuss any serious incidents that take place, taking into account the views of young people.
- Decorate the communal lounge and kitchen in the residential unit.
- Ensure that controlled drugs are stored in line with medication guidance.
- Ensure that the governors provide sufficient challenge and scrutiny to promote further improvements within the residential provision.
- Ensure that each child has a clear individual health and welfare plan or similar record, containing relevant health and welfare information provided by parents/carers to outline significant health and welfare needs and issues.
- Ensure that consultative meetings with young people are recorded and that the records are shared with the young people.
- Demonstrate the impact that residence makes to pupils in relation to their social, emotional and academic achievement and progress.

Information about this inspection

Notice of the inspection was by telephone call to the school initially at 9am on the first day of the inspection. Details of the inspection were confirmed with the principal and then followed up by email, which also contained: a letter of confirmation, an indicative timetable, letter to parents (parent view), and a copy of Annex A.

During the inspection, the inspector undertook the following activities. The residential unit was visited along with a tour of the grounds. Informal discussions with residential pupils took place as inspectors toured the residential areas after school, in early evenings, observing routines, inter-action between residential staff and pupils and sharing meals with pupils.

In addition to this, meetings and discussions took place with: the principal, residential manager, senior residential staff, residential staff, chair of governors, the business finance manager, human resources, and catering. Contact with the local LADO was made prior to the inspection commencing.

Inspection team

Elaine Clare

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Chaigeley School is a non-maintained special school for 35 boys and girls aged 8-16 years, of whom four reside at the school during term time. The residential accommodation is provided in three units; however, only one unit is currently operational. The maximum number of residential beds is currently set at six. During the inspection, two residential places were occupied. The school is situated on the outskirts of Warrington and caters for young people with behavioural, emotional and/or social difficulties. The residential provision was last inspected in March 2016. A six-bedroom children's home has very recently been registered with Ofsted and is situated in the school grounds, but was not operational during this inspection.

Inspection judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Requires improvement

Outcomes for residential pupils require improvement. This is based on the impact of deficits in practice relating to leadership, behaviour management and safety of pupils. The pupils report that they mostly enjoy their time boarding in the residential unit. They have established positive relationships with the residential staff. However, the residential unit does not provide a general harmonious and mutually supportive living environment. Pupils observed in the residential provision showed a lack of tolerance of each other's differences, alongside a lack of respect and consideration for each other and staff.

There have been a number of incidents of unacceptable and poor behaviour demonstrated by residential pupils and this has led to some poor outcomes for those pupils involved. The complex needs and presenting behaviours of some pupils can, at times, adversely impact on other pupils. Some pupils say that they do not like the behaviour of particular pupils and their interaction with them makes them feel uncomfortable. When bullying between pupils occurs, this is satisfactorily dealt with by staff to stop such behaviour. Safeguarding procedures and practices are met, but there are examples of poorer quality risk assessments which do not fully protect the well-being of some individual pupils.

There is limited evidence to demonstrate the progress that pupils make as a result of staying in residence. Although the principal is able to passionately vocalise the significant progress of pupils' achievements, both educationally and emotionally, there is no data or formal reporting that demonstrates the impact that the residential provision has on the pupils. Further work needs to take place to show the difference that staying in residence makes to pupils in relation to their social, emotional and academic achievement and progress.

The staff consult with pupils, who are able to see the results of their views being listened to. However, the staff have not recorded recent consultative meetings with the residential pupils. This does not enable further discussion to take place with pupils about the issues that they raise and conveys a message that these meetings, and pupils' views, are not important enough to record.

The pupils report that they enjoy their time in residence. Pupils are able to pursue a range of leisure activities, both in the residential provision and in the community. For example, at the weekend one pupil travels a distance with residential staff to follow his passion for martial arts, while another pupil enjoys the long-distance cycle paths around the area.

Many of the pupils are new to the residential provision and, therefore, there is no evidence of the impact of their stay in residency on their academic achievement. Pupils have access to computers and additional resources to complete any additional work. The residential staff work closely with the educational staff to ensure that they understand how pupils are doing in school.

Currently, there are insufficient staff to meet the needs of the pupils. As a result, agency staff members are being used to assist the residential care staff with the night shift. This does not provide a continuity of care for the pupils, but does ensure that pupils are safe.

The quality of care and support

Requires improvement

Some residential pupils do not have detailed individual placement or care plans and, as a result, do not benefit from such guidance being in place. Placement plans are generic, with the exception of detail around medication that pupils are taking. Neither the school's placement agreement nor healthcare plans clearly identify how the school will meet individual pupils' care needs on a day-to-day basis. This lack of clear guidance is a significant shortfall, particularly when new residential care staff have been appointed and they do not know each residential pupil's particular needs.

The quality of the school's residential accommodation requires improvement. The communal lounge and kitchen show general areas of wear and tear. Bedrooms in the main are of a sufficiently good standard. Pupils can and do personalise their rooms with pictures, posters and treasured personal items from home. Residential pupils confirm that the safety of their possessions is assured. Other bedrooms are being used for storage including damaged items waiting for disposal, for example a broken washing machine and a television set. The residential unit are generally well maintained. However, the gas safety certificate had expired in November 2016. This could lead to a fault or issue with the gas appliances in the residential unit not being identified and causing significant harm to pupils and staff.

The school's medication policy is good. Arrangements for dealing with medication and healthcare are effective and safe. Records of the administration of medication given in residence are adequately monitored by senior staff. However, not all residential care staff have completed medication training to ensure that they have sufficient knowledge to manage medication safely; for example, controlled drugs are not kept in a separate locked box in the medication cabinet.

Pupils have excellent access to specialist therapists to support their physical and emotional well-being. Residential pupils have individualised programmes of therapy to discuss past trauma and to build emotional resilience that would assist them into adulthood.

Residential pupils are offered a varied diet, with healthy eating options available and special diets catered for. Inspectors found a wide range of healthy choices, which are routinely influenced by pupil feedback and surveys. An innovative catering manager strives to include pupils' preferences alongside special dietary requirements, medical needs and liaison with parents, carers and health professionals with regards to menu planning.

Pupils have the opportunity to take part in exercise and have sufficient time to relax and rest. The staff value the pupils and treat them with respect. The pupils are encouraged to behave in a way that is polite and courteous to each other and staff. The school sees this as a way for pupils to learn how to behave at school and in the community. Many pupils offer positive comments about the range and frequency of the activities they enjoy. Their comments include, 'playing football, cycling and going to the skate park'. Others said, 'I enjoy reading and Aikido'.

How well children and young people are protected

Requires improvement

There have been occasions when pupils have left the school site without permission. These instances have occurred during residential time and which required police involvement as the pupils were categorised as missing. The head of the residential unit has not developed a plan on how the school will reduce the missing behaviours over time. Missing from school records provide minimal information and do not include, for example, where staff have gone to look for pupils and who was notified when the pupils returned. A police officer did, however, note that the school's response to incidents involving pupils was appropriate.

The senior leadership team uses recruitment processes that comply with statutory guidance. In two cases, second references were still outstanding after the residential care staff started in the residential provision; however, this was actioned during the inspection.

Because of a shortage of staff, the residential provision is using agency staff for a waking night shift to help staff manage behaviour of the pupils, particularly at night. Despite the presence of a clear induction sheet for agency staff members to ensure that they are aware of the pupils' behaviours and how to keep the pupils and themselves safe while on duty, these had not been completed. The head of the residential unit could supply no evidence that agency staff had had any induction. Furthermore, the recruitment agency had failed to send photographs of the agency staff; therefore, when the agency staff arrived on duty and showed their identification, this could not be matched to records held about them on the unit. This fails to ensure that procedures for the use of agency staff are sufficiently robust.

On Christmas Eve, an agency staff member, alongside a regular member of staff, covered the Christmas Eve into Christmas Day shift until 2pm. The head of the residential unit explained that no other staff could be found to cover the shift and the use of agency staff was his only option. The impact of having a stranger working closely with the pupils during this particularly emotional period is unknown. The decision demonstrated a significant lack of consideration of the vulnerability of the pupils. Furthermore, the head of the residential unit could not provide any details on the background or history of the individual and was even unaware of his name. This demonstrates a very poor regard to the safety of the residential pupils and other staff member working on the unit during the shift.

Individual risk assessments for young people are brief and are not fit for purpose. On the whole, they are generic documents with only small specific pieces of information pertaining to each individual pupil. They are not sufficiently detailed to include triggers of behaviour or the approach to use to manage the presenting behaviour.

The principal has liaised with the designated officer in the local authority when concerns about staff conduct have arisen. No concerns have been upheld. The designated officer was positive regarding the liaison that takes place. Senior leaders follow up incidents quickly and communicate well with the appropriate agencies. The designated officer was clear that senior leaders seek advice and take appropriate action, which ensures that young people are protected.

The principal monitors incidents of bullying and the staff challenge bullying and racist

behaviour. The senior leadership team responds to behaviour in a proportionate and young person-focused manner.

There are occasions when staff need to use physical intervention to keep young people safe. The principal monitors these incidents, which increases the likelihood of identifying and acting on any inappropriate interventions.

Regular fire tests and drills take place. The site manager conducts regular audits and observations to monitor the safety of the physical environment. Visitors have to sign in to the school and the school provides them with written safeguarding information.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Inadequate

The leadership and management of the residential provision are inadequate. The school fails to comply with a number of national minimum standards and this means that residential pupils' welfare is at risk. The head of the residential unit has insufficient knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of care practice and has not, therefore, taken appropriate action to raise standards of practice to improve outcomes for residential pupils.

The school's governors do not demonstrate rigour in their scrutiny of records and practice. Records and procedures are not routinely examined for quality and accuracy and information is not systematically evaluated to bring about improvement in practice. The quality of the independent visitor reports is poor. The reports do not provide sufficient and accurate details about the operation of the residential provision and rarely provide any evaluation or make any recommendations for improvement. Although governors report that they visit frequently and talk with staff and residential pupils, their views are not routinely recorded.

The care staff team and head of residential unit were made redundant in March 2016. Following an eight-month break, the head of residential care was re-employed and a new staff team has been recruited. Staffing levels within the residential provision are minimal and this impacts on the school's ability to promote pupils' welfare and keep them safe. Of the staff that were recruited in September, two staff, one of whom was in a senior position, have decided the role was not for them and subsequently resigned their role, without giving notice of their departure.

The remaining staff have a broad range of previous working experiences. They are not yet fully familiar with all aspects of the school's boarding practice. Adequate levels of supervision have been provided to residential staff during the last academic term. The staff team has had one staff meeting in October 2016, with a second meeting taking place during the inspection. As a result, there has been a limited arena for staff to discuss incidents and practice that have happened during residential time.

There is a clear induction process in place for new employees. This begins with the school's own induction booklet, moving on to the Children's Workforce Development Council induction standards and culminating in the NVQ Level 3. This provides staff with a secure introduction to the school. They receive training in safeguarding procedures and physical intervention and de-escalation techniques.

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 the '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 exceed the standard of good and result 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 SC027019

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 35

Gender of boarders Mixed

Age range of boarders 8 to16

Principal

Date of previous boarding inspection 16/03/2015

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