

Sexeys School

Sexeys School, Cole Road, Bruton, Somerset BA10 0DF

Inspection dates

19/01/2017–20/01/2017

Context of the inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the progress made to improve the boarding provision at the school. This visit follows an inspection in October 2016, when the boarding provision was judged to be inadequate. This monitoring visit was aligned with an inspection of the education provision.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

At the full inspection in October 2016, serious and widespread safeguarding failings were identified and the boarding provision was judged as inadequate. Following that inspection, leaders and managers provided Ofsted with an action plan detailing how they would seek to address the weaknesses. The actions are being implemented, but some aspects not rapidly enough. In addition, it is too early to evaluate the impact of these actions.

This monitoring visit, which aligned with a full inspection of the education provision, identified that senior leaders and managers have focused on strengthening the safeguarding systems and procedures. Progress has been made, but the management of known risks affecting vulnerable pupils has not been assessed rigorously enough by senior leaders. As a result, weaknesses remain in how well pupils are protected.

Since the last inspection, the head of the pastoral team has taken on responsibility as the designated safeguarding lead. He has completed the required training to undertake this role. Since his appointment, improvements are emerging in how effectively the school consults with external safeguarding agencies and in the quality of records pertaining to child protection concerns. A missing from home and children missing education policy has now been produced and records of these incidents are recorded centrally. As a result, senior leaders are beginning to have improved oversight of these incidents.

At the last inspection, senior leaders were asked by the inspectors to retrospectively report three child protection concerns. To date, one concern has been reported. Urgent action is required to report the remaining two concerns.

Weaknesses remain in the effective identification and management of bullying. Although

records of incidents are now centralised, some staff still report incidents of bullying only as poor behaviour. As a result, it remains difficult for senior leaders to understand the prevalence of bullying, to identify patterns and trends or to effectively apply lessons learned from previous incidents.

Boarders who are identified as having high-risk needs or are vulnerable, now have a boarding information plan. In addition, some boarders also have individual risk assessments. The quality of information recorded in these plans varies significantly, including omissions of important information about boarders' needs. As a result, these plans require improvement to ensure that they contain specific information about how staff should support boarders and mitigate the risks.

A process to assess the risks that boarders may present to each other when living together has started. However, staff are not using all of the information that they know about boarders to inform these assessments. As a result, they are not yet effective.

Since the last inspection, there have been changes in the nursing team. In the short time since her appointment, the senior nurse has taken action to ensure that medication is securely stored. The nursing team has plans to improve how medication is administered and recorded. Until this action is completed, weaknesses remain. Action has not yet taken place to improve the quality of individual healthcare plans for boarders who need them.

Boarding staff have started to have appraisals of their performance and there are plans to provide them with regular supervision. The director of boarding has started to identify the training that boarding staff require to equip them with the skills to meet boarders' needs.

Older boarders who have responsibility as a prefect for supporting younger boarders now receive regular opportunities to meet with boarding staff and to share any worries or concerns that they have about the prefect role and/or about boarders. The privacy and confidentiality of boarders who visit 'The Sanctuary' has improved as a result of removing the closed-circuit television monitoring systems in the room. Boarders now have better opportunities to tell boarding staff about their experiences of boarding and to make suggestions for how they can improve.

A further full inspection will be undertaken to assess the impact of the improvements made so far, and to evaluate the action taken to remedy the weaknesses in the national minimum standards that are not yet met.

National minimum standards

The school must meet the following national minimum standards for boarding (residential special) schools

- 3.1 The school has, and implements effectively, appropriate policies for the care of boarders who are unwell and ensures that the physical and mental health and emotional well-being of boarders is promoted. These include first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, dealing with medical emergencies and the use of household remedies.
- 3.4 All medication is safely and securely stored, and proper records are kept of its administration. Prescribed medicines are given only to the boarders to whom they are prescribed. Boarders allowed to self-medicate are assessed as sufficiently responsible to do so.
- 5.1 Suitable sleeping accommodation is provided for boarders. It is well organised and managed, with risk assessments undertaken and findings acted on, to reduce risk for all boarders. Where boarders are aged eight years or over, sleeping accommodation for boys is separate from sleeping accommodation for girls.
- 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 that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.
- 11.1 The school ensures that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 12.1 The school has and consistently implements a written policy to promote good behaviour among pupils. This policy includes: measures to combat bullying, including cyberbullying, and to promote positive behaviour; school rules; disciplinary sanctions; when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and how this will be recorded and managed; and arrangements for searching pupils and their possessions.
- 12.2 The policy complies with relevant legislation and has regard to guidance, and is understood by staff and pupils.
- 13.3 The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role.
- 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 is taken to improve outcomes for children as appropriate.
- 15.1 Any staff member or volunteer employed or volunteering in a position working with boarders has a job description reflecting their duties, receives induction training in boarding when newly appointed and receives regular reviews of their boarding practice, with opportunities for training and continual professional development in

boarding.

Inspection team

Sharron Escott	Lead social care inspector
Paula Lahey	Social care inspector

Information about this school

Sexeys School is a mixed gender boarding school in Somerset for boarders aged 11 to 18 years. The school admits pupils from all over the United Kingdom and has a small number of pupils from overseas. It offers both day and termly boarding places. The boarding accommodation is provided in three houses, all of which are located on the school site. The school has the capacity for accommodating 261 boarders. At the time of this monitoring visit, there were 197 boarders.

School details

Unique reference number	137313
Social care unique reference number	SC039847
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 boarding schools.

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Type of school	Boarding school
Number of boarders on roll	197
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	11 to 18
Headteacher	Irfan Latif
Date of previous boarding inspection	12/10/2016–14/10/2016
Telephone number	01749 813393
Email address	headmaster@sexkeys.somerset.sch.uk

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