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The Grange Therapeutic School

The Grange Therapeutic School, 15-17 Somerby Road, Knossington, OAKHAM, Leicestershire LE15 8LY

Inspection dates

13/03/2017 to 15/03/2017

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good **2**

The quality of care and support

Good 2

How well children and young people are protected

Good 2

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Good 2

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- Two residential houses provide children and young people with a good quality of consistent, well-planned care and support.
- Children and young people are happy and enjoy the residential experience. They have well-established and trusting relationships with the residential staff. Peer relationships are well managed and generally very positive.
- Children and young people's views are valued. This means that they feel able to contribute and that their views are seen as important.
- Parents and external professionals think highly of the residential provision. Effective joint working helps children and young people to make good progress.
- Children and young people are kept safe. Leaders and managers implement effective safeguarding, monitoring and reporting arrangements. Staff are appropriately trained to understand their personal responsibilities in the protection of children and young people.
- A particular strength of the residential provision is the ability of residential staff to engage children and young people in a broad range of stimulating and fun activities.
- A long-standing leadership team promotes the best outcomes for children and young people. Management oversight identifies areas for further improvement and drives forward development areas.
- While no poor outcomes for children and young people are identified, areas of weakness and areas that require further improvement have been identified.

Decoration, both external and internal, has not been well maintained in one of the residential houses. Two areas for improvement are identified in relation to medication administration. A recommendation for improving one area of environmental health and safety is also made in this report. Also, the inspection recommends working with an external professional to assess the nutritional balance of menus across the school and the residential provision.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

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

- 5.4. Accommodation is appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained, and reasonable adjustments are made to provide adequate accessible accommodation for any children with restricted mobility. The accommodation contains suitable specialist facilities to support children whose disabilities require them.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In relation to legionella bacteria prevention, consider rewording written procedures to clarify that 'quarterly flushing of water outlets' should be adjusted to ensure that this task is undertaken prior to the beginning of a new school term.
- Arrange for a nutritional assessment of the school and residential menus.
- Develop a formal procedure to include record-keeping and to guide practice to ensure that PRN (as needed) medication is always available when children and young people are away from the residential house.
- Review, and where necessary strengthen, the stock control system for homely remedies medication.

Information about this inspection

The inspection was announced to the school on the morning of the first inspection day. The inspector toured the residential houses, and spoke to residential students and staff with responsibility for the residential provision. The inspector observed practice in the residential provision and joined the children and young people's evening meal. Key areas of policy and record-keeping were reviewed. The inspector spoke with a selection of parents and involved professionals. Parents' views were also drawn from comments put forward to Ofsted via 'Parent View'.

Inspection team

Mary Timms

lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

The Grange School is an independent residential special school for 73 boys aged eight to 17 years, 13 of whom reside at the school during the week. The residential accommodation is provided in two houses, one of which is located on the school site; the second is situated in the village of Knossington, a short walk from the main school building. The school is situated in a rural location close to the town of Oakham in Leicestershire. The school caters for children and young people who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The residential provision was last inspected in March 2016.

Inspection judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good

Children and young people form trusting relationships with the staff who care for them. Staff are consistent in their approach. As a result, children and young people are confident in the care that they receive. Comments from children and young people include, 'The very best thing is the staff, and, 'The other kids are really nice.'

Children and young people are in settled placements and are happy. Comments from parents include: 'The socialisation is particularly good. My son was particularly quiet and they have worked really hard to bring him out. He has improved in his happiness and socialisation.' Comments made by children and young people include, 'I like playing games with the other boys. I can now do this better than before.'

Children and young people's views are valued. As a result, they feel comfortable contributing to residential decisions and feel listened to. A social worker said, 'They really understand and value xx (child). He has a voice there.'

Children and young people are beginning to develop skills and knowledge they will need to live more independently in the future. They have daily tasks around the home and help with laundry tasks. They each benefit from the emphasis placed on the development of social skills and empathy for others. This will help children and young people to manage social situations in an improved manner.

Over the last year children and young people from the residential provision have made good progress with their education. For example, two out of nine key stage 2/3 pupils are above target in maths and six are on target. Progress has been underpinned by a more focused use of individual pupil premium funding and strengthened residential support for homework tasks.

The commitment and drive of leaders and managers is tangible within the residential provision. Highly effective joint working between residential, education and therapeutic staff means that there is no doubt about the plans for group and individual needs. Safeguarding children and young people is effectively managed and is always central to care arrangements.

The quality of care and support

Good

Residential staff develop constructive joint working relationships with parents and carers. Parents hold very positive views about the impact of the residential provision on their child, and the contribution of residential staff. Comments include, 'I think the staff do an amazing job under difficult conditions and are passionate and committed to enabling my child to reach his full potential.' Also, 'The staff are professional and very caring.'

Good care arrangements enable the promotion of good health with children and young

people. While the primary responsibility for children and young people's health remains with parents, residential staff work collaboratively to ensure that individual health needs are appropriately supported. The school's therapeutic team work directly with referred pupils and provide training for staff. As a result, staff have a good understanding about therapeutic care.

Physical activity is promoted as important to good health. A strength of the residential staff team is its ability to engage children and young people. Activities are planned for each evening, such as jogging locally with a member of staff, playing basketball in the garden, visiting local swimming pools and walking in local woods.

The main meal of the day is catered for in the main school. Residential staff consult children and young people about their likes and dislikes and plan a less substantial evening tea in the residential houses. This inspection recommends that further improvements could be made by assessing the nutritional balance of meals across the school and the residential provision.

While the administration of medication is generally sound, two areas are recommended for further improvement. Stock control records for non-prescribed medication are identified as not always completed by staff. This means that managers are not always able to understand quickly the stock of medication. Additionally, while no concern was identified that PRN (as needed) medication is not taken out on trips away from school, there is currently no formal system to guide practice. This raises the potential for needs to be unmet.

Staff have a good understanding of the diverse individual needs of children and young people and work creatively to ensure that they each enjoy their residential experience. Well-planned care includes a focus at any one time on agreed targets. This may include working to improve personal hygiene or being polite to others. Progress with targets is monitored and success is recognised.

The two residential houses provide appropriate accommodation and facilities. The environment is kept clean and tidy, supported by a housekeeper in each house. However, one of the residential houses is in need of decorative attention and maintenance. For example, external paintwork is in a poor state of repair, with areas of bare wood on windows due to flaking paint over time. Communal areas in the same house are in need of some maintenance work and decorative upgrading.

How well children and young people are protected

Good

Safeguarding children and young people is central within residential arrangements. Children and young people feel safe and are comfortable seeking support from residential staff if they feel anxious or have a concern.

The very experienced designated safeguarding lead has well-developed links with external safeguarding agencies. She seeks advice and makes notifications as and when necessary. Over the last twelve months staff have attended refresher training in relation to the recognition of safeguarding concerns. Training has also been facilitated in relation

to e-safety, the sexual exploitation of children, recognising radicalisation and the Prevent agenda. This means that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in the protection of children and young people.

Staff understand individual vulnerabilities and potential risks for specific children and young people. There have been no incidents of children and young people going missing from the residential provision. When leaders identified a pattern of a child not returning after the weekend this was raised with the placing team and discussed with parents. Well-organised care means that children and young people are well supervised. There is a strong focus on helping children and young people begin to understand personal risks. For example, recent work has been undertaken across both houses in relation to internet safety. A social worker said she was very impressed with the impact of direct work undertaken, saying, 'Therapists have been invaluable to him understanding his risk-taking behaviours. He has become so much more self-aware and responsible.'

Children and young people's behaviours are well managed. Positive relationships support children and young people to begin to reflect, and to consider the impact of their behaviours on others. Children and young people say that there is no bullying. Staff are mindful of this having the potential to happen, and step in swiftly to address emerging conflict between children and young people. Staff mostly adopt positive reinforcement techniques rather than using punitive sanctions. Trained staff at times use physical holds in order to reduce the potential for harm. While a weakness in record-keeping relating to one incident involving the use of physical holds is identified, this had been picked up in the monitoring by the leadership and management team, and actions have already been taken to strengthen records in future.

Health and safety procedures are appropriately followed, which helps to protect children and young people from potential environmental hazards. Risk-management strategies are incorporated into practice and procedures. The inspection notes that procedures are in place to reduce the potential for legionella bacteria in the water systems. A recommendation is set to further improve the clarity of procedures, by including the steps to be taken at the beginning of a school term when water outlets have not been used during holidays. Fire evacuation drills are practised each term. This means that children and young people know how to respond should a real fire occur.

Safe recruitment practice ensures that unsuitable adults do not work with children and young people.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Good

The longstanding leadership and management team are committed and enthusiastic. The head of care is highly respected by residential staff, who say they feel supported in their role. Well-trained staff are available in appropriate numbers to meet the needs of the residential provision. Most of the residential staff have worked at the school for many years. They have well-established working relationships, are confident in each other and work hard together to achieve the best possible outcome for children and young people.

The head of care maintains a broad oversight of the residential provision and drives forward improvements. The school implements a range of quality assurance monitoring processes, which include gathering the views of stakeholders. An independent listener is available for children and young people to contact directly, and visits the residential provision each term. Survey forms are sent to parents in order to seek feedback on the service their child receives. This means that children, young people and their families are able to make suggestions and contribute to service development. An external person from within the owner organisation visits the residential provision on a half termly basis, always meeting with the head of care. The visits and reporting are effective in recognising strengths, listening to children and young people and identifying areas for further improvements. For example, the external visitor raised concerns about the maintenance of the residential garden areas. Following these concerns, an external contractor has been secured to address the maintenance issue. For the most part management monitoring is effective. However, there has been delay in addressing the maintenance issues within one residential provision.

The statement of purpose for the school commits to 'provide a therapeutic environment and culture in care and education to build confidence in our boys'. This is translated into practice. Staff understand the aims and ethos of the school and are clear about their individual roles and responsibilities.

There has been one complaint since the last full inspection in March 2016. Records show that the concern was investigated and responded to appropriately. The head of care confidently speaks about lessons learned from the issue.

Parents speak very positively about the way in which the residential team keeps them updated about their child. Parents show a real confidence in the staff and their abilities to meet the individual needs of their children.

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 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 SC001831

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 79

Gender of boarders Boys

Age range of boarders 8 to17

Headteacher Bob Batten

Date of previous boarding inspection 01/03/2016

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