

Grateley House School

Pond Lane, Grateley, Andover, Hampshire SP11 8TA

Inspection Dates

13–14 March 2017

Overall outcome

Residential provision outcome

The school meets all of the national minimum standards that were checked during this inspection.

Educational provision outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection.

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

(Independent School Standards: 8, 8(a), 8(b)).

- The previous inspection found that paragraph 8 of the independent school standards, relating to boarding provision, had not been met. This was because not all of the national minimum standards for residential special schools had been met. In particular, the independent visitors' checks and the headteacher's annual review of welfare provision did not meet requirements. Pupils' views were not recorded when major sanctions were given for poor behaviour. Pupils, parents and staff expressed concerns about the effects of high staff turnover. Furthermore, the school's prospectus and ethos statement did not refer to the residential provision. Pupils said the information provided to them about contacts for help outside the school was not always clear.
- Analysis of the school's website; discussions with senior leaders, including the deputy headteacher (head of care) and the deputy headteacher (head of education); visits to classrooms; review of residential provision; minutes of governors' meetings and scrutiny of documentation all show that these previous shortfalls have been rectified. Details of leaders' actions and their impact are summarised in the section below about the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

(Independent School Standards: 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)).

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that all of the independent school standards had been met, because the national minimum standards had not been met. Consequently, paragraph 34 of the independent school standards had not been met. Leaders have taken effective action to rectify these shortfalls and so this standard has also been met.

- Although not affecting the independent school standards, leaders were also asked to improve their checks on teaching because they were too superficial. At the time of the last inspection, individual feedback to teachers about their work did not support continuing improvement. Teachers' feedback to pupils was not of the high standard expected in the school's policy.
- Leaders have increased the frequency and detail of their checks on teaching. A school improvement partner, commissioned by school leaders, has provided useful and timely support for these checks. Leaders now carry out regular and focused learning walks to review the performance of staff. Staff receive general feedback about what is going well and what needs extra attention. Staff report that the feedback they have been given is useful to identify areas that are not going as well as they would like. However, they also believe that the feedback is not specific enough for their individual needs.
- The school improvement partner has helped ensure that the feedback focuses on key areas that need improvement, such as teachers' feedback to pupils about their work. From this, leaders have given clear and specific direction to staff about what is expected and why. Consequently, the feedback given to pupils is improving rapidly. Leaders identify that some feedback is much more effective than other feedback.
- The work of leaders to address the historic turnover of staff has had mixed success. Senior leaders have introduced a number of useful strategies so that they can more readily hear the views of staff. For example, there is now a staff forum, where the headteacher elicits the views of staff and shares areas of concern with the proprietor. Following a reduction in residential pupils, leaders have rightly closed one of the homes to reduce the need to appoint new staff. As a result, staff turnover has been reduced. However, despite leaders' efforts to advocate for staff, there is still significant discontent among some staff. In particular, the lack of career and pay progression remains an issue. Staff report that they feel valued by senior leaders, but not by the company.
- Leaders have maintained effective safeguarding arrangements. Staff and pupils rightly report that they feel and are safe. A robust safeguarding policy and absolute commitment to protect children and young people underpin the school's caring ethos. The school community is calm and orderly. Pupils recognise that there are different rules for different individuals, because, as one pupil commented: 'We all have different needs.' Levels of supervision are appropriate. Staff know pupils exceptionally well and so positive relationships are fostered successfully.

Residential provision

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools that were assessed during this inspection

Standard 15.7

- Young people say that they are cared for by, and enjoy good relationships with, a consistent group of staff in the residential provision. There have been some changes in staff, but these are significantly less than at the time of the last inspection. Leaders report an increased investment in training for staff, for example in mental health champions. The organisation has committed to a review of staff pay in April 2017; the detail of this is not yet known.

Standard 20.4

- A new statement of purpose has been written, using the format outlined in the children's

homes regulations. This provides a clear outline of the service and the role of the residential provision working in partnership with education and the therapy team.

Standard 20.2

- A new independent visitor contract has been arranged. Visits to date have been within the required timescales, both announced and unannounced. The visitor has ensured that young people can now share their views and experiences about the residential provision. Reports arising from these visits are detailed and the head of care has driven changes to the report template to make the best use of the visit. The head of care has also formalised the half-termly monitoring and evaluation of the residential provision with the aim of identifying areas for further improvement.

Standard 12.2

- Staff now actively seek the views of young people following any incidents, as evidenced in behaviour management records. Staff are sensitive to the needs of young people. When young people are not able or willing to discuss the matter at the time, staff record that and revisit when the opportunity arises.

Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards'), the national minimum standards for residential special schools and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School Details

Unique reference number	116588
Social care unique reference number	SC012450
DfE registration number	850/6058
Inspection number	10030801

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The inspection of residential provision 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	Special
School status	Independent residential special school
Age range of pupils	9 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	24
Number of part-time pupils	1
Number of boarders on roll	42
Proprietor	Cambian Group
Chair	Mr Tom Burford
Headteacher	Mr Greg Sorrell
Annual fees (day pupils)	£69,500
Annual fees (boarders)	£139,000
Telephone number	0800 1381184
Website	http://www.cambiagroup.com/ourservices/service/home.aspx?id=41&s=
Email address	grateley.admin@cambiagroup.com

Date of previous standard inspection

28–30 June 2016

Information about this school

- Grateley House School, situated in the rural Hampshire village of Grateley, is an independent residential special school for pupils with Asperger syndrome/high-functioning autism, complex needs and challenging behaviour.
- The school opened in 1986 and is owned and managed by Cambian Group, a national company who provide specialist services in education, health and care.
- Residential pupils are accommodated in seven houses, including two sixth-form houses. Nine sixth-form students are accommodated at Stratford Lodge in Salisbury, which is inspected by the Quality Care Commission.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. None are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The school arranges for pupils in key stage 4 and the sixth form to follow courses at Sparsholt and Andover Colleges and Wiltshire College (Salisbury). Pupils also attend education and vocational training at Riverbourne Farm.
- The school describes its purpose as to 'prepare students for the demands of adult life through staff expertise and specialist approaches'.
- The last full inspection of education and residential provision took place in June 2013, when the school's overall effectiveness was judged to be outstanding. The most recent social care inspection, in November 2015, judged the quality of the residential provision to be good.
- The headteacher joined the school in February 2016.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection. Inspectors took into consideration a complaint about the school that had been received by Ofsted since the time of the last inspection.
- The inspection was unannounced and focused on both education and residential provision.
- A notice was served on this school by the Department for Education (DfE), following the last integrated inspection which took place in June 2016. The school was judged to require improvement overall, with leadership and management requiring improvement. All other areas were judged as good. The school submitted an action plan to the DfE and this was judged to require improvement.
- Inspectors were asked to review the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan and to check whether parts 3 and 8 of the independent school standards and the national minimum standards are now met.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Maire Atherton

Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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