

Brantridge School

Brantridge School, Staplefield Place, Staplefield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 6EQ

Inspection dates

17/10/2017 to 18/10/2017

Context of the inspection

The residential provision at the school was inspected in June 2017 when eight national minimum standards were judged to be not met. The school has submitted an action plan to address the shortfalls. The purpose of this inspection was to evaluate the progress the school has made in implementing the action plan and meeting the national minimum standards. The inspection was aligned with a full inspection of the education provision.

Since the inspection in June 2017, a new trust has agreed to take over the school. The transfer is not yet complete but a service level agreement is in place to facilitate the management of the school in the interim period.

A new interim executive headteacher was appointed in August 2017 who has implemented prompt and significant change with the aim of improving the residential provision. Interim leadership arrangements are having a positive effect. Safeguarding arrangements have been correctly prioritised but interim leaders have had little time to implement the action plan fully in order to rectify some of the shortfalls relating to the national minimum standards.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

During the inspection in June 2017, eight national minimum standards for residential schools were unmet.

National minimum standard 3.7

The previous inspection identified that suitable accommodation, including toilet and washing facilities, was not provided in order to cater for the needs of children who are sick or injured. The school has plans to provide a dedicated sick bay area, adjacent to the school nurse's office. The work is planned to be completed by the end of November 2017.

This national minimum standard remains unmet.

National minimum standard 11.1

At the previous inspection, shortfalls were identified in relation to the school's policies

and procedures regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at the school. The new interim executive headteacher, appointed in August 2017, has taken prompt and decisive action to strengthen safeguarding procedures within the school. A new designated safeguarding lead has been appointed and the safeguarding team has been expanded. The team meets weekly to consider all safeguarding concerns and ensure that appropriate action is taken to protect pupils. The designated safeguarding lead is committed to changing the culture to ensure complete transparency and purposeful engagement with external safeguarding agencies. The staff have received additional safeguarding training and the school is implementing a new approach to behaviour management. Safeguarding arrangements are now more rigorous in protecting pupils and promoting their welfare.

This national minimum standard is met.

National minimum standard 12.8

Weaknesses were identified at the previous inspection in relation to plans for residential pupils who leave the school without permission. The plans did not detail the specific actions required by staff if an event occurs. These plans still do not provide detailed guidance for staff to protect residential pupils effectively in such circumstances.

This national minimum standard is not met.

National minimum standard 13.1

The previous inspection identified that the governance of the school was ineffective and did not provide the required level of scrutiny, oversight and support. The governing body has been significantly strengthened through utilising the skills, knowledge and experience of the governing body of another of the trust's schools. Although the new governing body has only recently been put in place, governors are demonstrating their focus on ensuring that senior leaders work cohesively and that senior leaders and all staff have the level of support to make improvements and promote positive outcomes for residential pupils. Scrutiny and oversight of leadership and management within the school have improved considerably.

This national minimum standard is met.

National minimum standard 13.2

Weaknesses in the leadership and management of the residential provision were identified at the previous inspection. The interim executive headteacher intends to develop robust relationships within the senior leadership team through open and honest communication, frequent and regular meetings and a robust performance management regime. Her objective is to ensure that leaders and managers are working collaboratively with the common aim of improving outcomes for residential pupils. The new systems are not yet embedded and thus the impact on the effectiveness of leaders and managers cannot yet be judged.

This national minimum standard is not met.

National minimum standard 13.4

Inspectors identified shortfalls in monitoring the national minimum standards at the last

inspection. Currently, there is not a robust and rigorous process to monitor, review and ensure that the national minimum standards are met and the practice of residential staff is securely underpinned.

This national minimum standard is not met.

National minimum standard 13.7

At the previous inspection, managers did not provide evidence to demonstrate that the school follows and maintains the policies and documents described in Appendix 1. The interim executive headteacher has plans to create a library of evidence to demonstrate that all policies and documentation are maintained and monitored effectively. This was not yet in place at this visit.

This national minimum standard is not met.

National minimum standard 13.9

Leaders and managers did not demonstrate at the previous inspection that the matters and issues listed in Appendix 3 are being monitored effectively. There continues to be a lack of evidence to show effective monitoring of these matters.

This national minimum standard is not met.

National minimum standards

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

- NMS 3.7 Suitable accommodation, including toilet and washing facilities, is provided in order to cater for the needs of children who are sick or injured.
- NMS 12.8 Staff working within the school know and implement the school's policy, and where relevant the local authority's policy, in relation to children going missing and their role in implementing that policy. Staff actively search for children who are missing, including working with the police where appropriate.
- NMS 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.
- 13.7 The school follows and maintains the policies and documents described in Appendix 1.
- 13.9 The issues specified in Appendix 3 are monitored, and action taken to improve outcomes for children as appropriate.

Inspection team

Jan Hunnam	Lead social care inspector
Maire Atherton	Social care inspector

Information about this school

The school is a non-maintained residential special school. It is situated close to Haywards Heath in West Sussex. The school provides education and care for boys who have social, emotional and mental health needs and for boys who have autistic spectrum conditions. All pupils have either a statement of special educational need or an education, health and care plan. The school supports boys from the age of 6 to 13 years. Residential pupils are weekly boarders. Residential accommodation is located on one site in the main school building. Currently there are eight residential pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	134063
Social care unique reference number	SC042663
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	Residential Special School
Number of boarders on roll	8
Gender of boarders	Boys
Age range of boarders	6 to 13
Headteacher	Angela Drayton
Date of previous boarding inspection	05/06/2017
Telephone number	01444 400228
Email address	schooloffice@brantridge-school.co.uk

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