

Unsted Park School

Castle Care Group, United Regional Office, Munstead Heath Road, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1UW

Inspection dates

19/06/2018

Context of the inspection

This monitoring inspection took place to review the school's progress made against its action plan. The inspection looked at action taken in response to the four national minimum standards (NMS) that were not met at the last inspection in December 2017.

The inspector spent four hours on site, viewing records and meeting with the recently appointed head of care, the recently appointed operations manager for education, the operations manager for the region, who was providing an induction for the operations manager, and the deputy head of school with the lead on inclusion. The acting headteacher is currently away.

The inspector also met with two senior care staff and viewed the accommodation.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The evaluation of the school's action plan conducted by Ofsted in April 2018 deemed it to be 'acceptable with modifications'. As a result, the head of care who took up post in April 2018 utilised this, along with the action plan to propose an updated development plan. This plan is clear on what needs to be achieved and by whom, and has realistic completion dates. In addition, he has devised a RAG-rated (that is: red, amber, green) termly evaluation of the residential provision, highlighting areas for development. This aims to: improve staff skills and knowledge; create a better living environment; and improve outcomes for students. Senior residential staff said that staff are now feeling more involved in the service, and have a greater understanding of why they are completing some records and tasks. They also said that staff are more motivated and have welcomed the new approach to leadership from the head of care. As a result of these actions, NMS 13.4 is met.

Progress has been made in reporting and recording safeguarding and child protection concerns. Since the last inspection, eight safeguarding concerns have required referral to partner agencies. Clear chronologies show what the issue was, who it was reported to and when. There was a delay in reporting an incident to the designated officer in the local authority, it was of less than 48 hours and no child was at risk due to the delay. The head of care has noted the delay and has improved reporting procedures since being in post.

Weekly safeguarding team meetings are used to review any concerns and monitor all students who have had any issues over the academic year. Meeting minutes show clear recording of decisions and who is responsible for following these up. Issues arising are scrutinised in the following week's meeting. The team is developing its links with external agencies and is sourcing training from specialist services in areas such as sexual exploitation and safer internet and mobile phone use. In addition, the team is seeking to engage parents further to expand their knowledge of internet safety and safety apps to download onto their child's phone. Residential staff have also received further training in who to report safeguarding concerns to and how to escalate these externally if they feel the school has not responded effectively. As result, NMS 11.1 is now met.

Since the last inspection, all staff who did not already hold a suitable level 3 qualification have been enrolled to complete this. All are making good progress and the head of care receives regular updates from the training provider regarding each staff member's progress and the percentage of the course completed. This means that NMS 19.2 is now met.

Students' placement plans have been reviewed and revised since the last inspection. They now contain greater detail and demonstrate better joint working across school departments and services. However, they still lack specific detail on how to support the individual student. Statements remain vague, such as 'staff to be vigilant and offer support and encouragement', without describing what support is effective for the student and for what they require encouragement. The head of care has devised a new pro forma for the placement plans, which will result in more detailed plans and increased student involvement in devising them. The plans are much improved, but do not yet meet NMS 21.1.

National minimum standards

The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools:

- 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.

Inspection team

Jennie Christopher

Lead social care inspector

Information about this school

Unsted Park is a residential special school for boys and girls aged seven to 19 years. The school provides day and residential provision for students who have Asperger syndrome. Residential placements are provided in four boarding houses. The residential provision was last inspected in May 2014.

School details

Unique reference number	135419
Social care unique reference number	SC363144
DfE registration number	936/6592

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	15
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	7 to 19
Headteacher	Lucy Wood
Date of previous boarding inspection	05/12/2017
Telephone number	01483 892 061
Email address	unstedparkschool@priorygroup.com

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