

# Buglawton Hall School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105604
<b>Local Authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	324243
<b>Inspection date</b>	7 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kath Halifax

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Boarding provision</b>	
<b>Social care URN</b>	
<b>Social care inspector</b>	Michelle Moss

The inspection of social care was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	35
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr A Weinberg
<b>Principal</b>	Mr Asif Arif
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 February 2006
<b>School address</b>	Buxton Road Congleton Cheshire CW12 3PQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01260 274492
<b>Fax number</b>	01260 288313

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<b>Age group</b>	7–16
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector and one Social Care Inspector.

## Description of the school

Buglawton Hall is the only residential school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) in the local authority. Many pupils have associated learning difficulties and over one quarter is currently receiving psychiatric support. Most pupils come from deprived areas of Manchester with some pupils known to the courts. All pupils board from Monday to Friday and all are in receipt of free school meals. Whilst the pupils are mainly of White British heritage, there are an increasing number of pupils of Asian, African and Caribbean background or mixed heritage. A very small number are in the care of the Local Authority. The school has achieved the Sportsmark Award.

Along with three other schools, it forms part of the Manchester Federation of BESD Schools. In the absence of the substantive headteacher, the day-to-day running is the responsibility of the heads of care and education with oversight by the principal of the Federation. Work has started on an ambitious programme to improve the accommodation and facilities under the Building Schools for the Future initiative.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. The school offers poor value for money.

For almost a year, there has been no headteacher in post. While the principal of the federation spent a few months as resident acting headteacher, federation matters now take up much of his time. Over the past half term, he has only visited the school twice. Similarly, much of the governors' time is engaged in federation duties and this has restricted the time spent on school issues. While the principal and governors have oversight of the school, no-one has overall responsibility on a daily basis. Consequently those responsible for boarding and education are operating increasingly independently with too little dialogue. This is especially evident in the systems and procedures to ensure the health, safety and well-being of pupils and staff, and in pupils' understanding of what they can do in adopting safe practices. This makes leadership and management, and the care, support and guidance pupils receive inadequate.

Whilst the provision is starting to improve for pupils' education, it is not happening quickly enough to make up for pupils' previous underachievement. Attainment on entry to the school is below national expectations, especially in communication, language and literacy because most pupils had a history of irregular school attendance and a negative attitude towards education. Despite the staff's efforts, standards remain below average. Achievement is inadequate, especially in the subjects of English and mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning is improving and is satisfactory, but inconsistent across the school. Teaching in art is of a high standard so achievement is very good. In some other subjects, however, progress is too variable because the quality of teaching is inconsistent, particularly in managing pupils' behaviour and the effectiveness of support staff. The curriculum has been improved in the past few months and is now satisfactory, but leaders recognise there is more still to do to improve it further.

Since the last inspection, the school has become more focused on listening to the views of pupils, with pupils having some say and making changes; for example to the menus, uniform and range of evening activities. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Relationships between pupils and with adults are generally good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Despite commenting, 'I know it's not cool to like school, miss', pupils were visibly proud when discussing their achievements in art and GCSE, and in talking about their experiences tending to the school animals. Their social development is good. Pupils do not, however, have a satisfactory understanding of, and appreciation for, the beliefs and traditions of different ethnic groups. Attendance is satisfactory and improving but the persistent absence of a very small number of pupils continues to affect the overall figure. The evening curriculum in the residences continues to be a strong feature of the school, contributing noticeably to pupils' personal development. As part of the federation, pupils profit from useful links with the other schools. However, while pupils from other federation schools in the city centre benefit from regular weekend stays at the Hall, resident pupils are concerned that their bedrooms and personal effects are being used without their permission or consultation.

## Effectiveness of boarding provision

### Grade: 4

The boarding provision is inadequate, and the links between boarding and education provision are unsatisfactory. There are some strengths including the school's promotion of healthy eating, the professional relationship between staff and pupils, and the good range of meaningful evening activities. However, there are significant weaknesses that hinder the promotion of health and welfare and the safeguards necessary to protect pupils. This has resulted in a number of key National Minimum Standards (NMS) not being met.

The school has made insufficient improvement since the last inspection in relation to the care of pupils. Whilst there has been increased consultation with pupils, and the head of care has embarked on a professional qualification, too much is still to be done. For example, little improvement has been made in areas of fire safety and training in the care of medicines. Furthermore, adults do not receive adequate levels of supervision and the recruitment of care staff is not robust enough to ensure that the suitability of workers is assessed adequately prior to working with pupils. These ongoing failures to meet national standards compromise the safety and well-being of pupils.

A reasonable attempt to promote pupils' health has been made including recording details recorded in health plans and establishing links with health professionals for guidance and advice on health matters. However, the provision for being healthy is inadequate because the records do not include pupils' medical history or the health needs that require monitoring by staff, such as the details of care and treatment for asthma. First aid boxes are available on every boarding unit, although their stock is not routinely checked to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Furthermore, there is insufficient management in the care of medicines. The provision of staying safe is inadequate. Some aspects of pupils' safety and welfare are reasonably promoted through some staff training and engagement with other agencies that help in safeguarding pupils. If pupils go missing, the school has suitable procedures to help secure their safe return. Pupils' privacy is respected through the management of confidential records held about them. However, some areas of the accommodation are not sufficiently assessed to ensure privacy in bathrooms. Furthermore, there are significant shortfalls in the process of recording complaints and ensuring the complaints procedures include providing parents and pupils with the telephone number and address for Ofsted. In addition, where complaints involve racial bullying, the processes of referral and assessing the risk are not routinely completed. These shortfalls restrict the level of transparency in managing complaints and countering bullying to enhance the welfare of pupils. The strong emphasis and positive approach to managing behaviour enables pupils to feel understood and supported to behave appropriately. However, when disciplinary measures are necessary, either through imposing a sanction or physical intervention, the required bound and numbered books are not in place. The recording system used also fails to hold all information to enable auditing by the governing body to assess compliance with the school's policy and identify any patterns or trends in practices of care and control.

Pupils' health and safety is further affected because the required testing of the fire safety systems is not kept up to date, including updating a fire risk assessment to reflect changes to the accommodation and grounds as a result of building work. Furthermore, risk assessments in relation to the care and welfare of pupils are not held in files that are accessible to care staff. These weaknesses to monitor areas of fire safety and provide staff with safeguarding information limit the school's effectiveness in securing pupils' care. Development to improve the care provision is underway and pupils are actively engaging in contributing to the project. However,

parts of the accommodation are not always maintained to a good standard of decoration or repair. For example, a door handle that is not adequately secure imposes a risk to pupils' safety. In addition, the external damaged paintwork and lifted flooring creates hazards that compromise the welfare of pupils and staff.

The provision to help pupils enjoy school is good and makes a satisfactory contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This extends to care staff being familiar with the learning needs of pupils, and offering them ample opportunities to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community. However, pupils are not given opportunities for celebrating cultural and religious festivals as part of their understanding of the wider community.

The provision to help pupils make a positive contribution is satisfactory, but staff do not have detailed written care plans that take account of all aspects of pupils' needs. This extends to areas of religious, racial, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This limits staff in meeting the needs of all pupils. The opinions and views of pupils are sought to some degree, for example, through the school council and statutory reviews. However, the consultation process does not always extend to decisions made regarding arrangements in the living accommodation.

The majority of care staff hold a recognised qualification in childcare. This provides pupils with access to staff that are assessed as competent in their roles and their practices. However, the organisation of boarding provision is inadequate because the systems for monitoring the quality of the care provision are not sufficiently robust. For example, while the governing body carries out termly visits, it does not complete the required reports on the effectiveness of the boarding provision. This significantly hinders the school's internal monitoring and review of care in which shortfalls can be identified, and improvements or adjustments made. Staffing arrangements for care staff sickness and absence are not sufficiently matched to the needs of pupils and the geographical layout of the boarding accommodation. This has resulted in pupils being expected to take responsibilities for summoning assistance on behalf of staff. Areas of risk-assessing staff arrangements at night and day do not reflect the circumstances of the provision or pupils' needs and are ineffective in ensuring the safety of pupils and staff. Many care staff work as support assistants in lessons. While this provides useful continuity between education and boarding provision, overall this is unsatisfactory because care staff have not been trained adequately to support pupils' learning in basic skills such as literacy.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the care provided to ensure the health, safety and well-being of pupils and staff; the school must ensure that it meets the National Minimum Standards currently not met, as detailed in the boarding section of the report.
- Raise standards and improve achievement in English and mathematics.
- Ensure the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good.
- Secure the leadership and management of the school.
- Ensure opportunities are provided for pupils to understand and appreciate the values and cultures of its diverse population.

#### National Minimum Standards (NMS) to be met to improve social care

- Ensure the stock in a first aid box is fit for purpose. (NMS 14.9)
- Ensure clear instructions on the administration of any medication are made, including the reason for the medication to be administered and ensure these records are regularly monitored by a designated senior member of staff. (NMS 14.20 and 17.5)

- Ensure all staff involved in the administration of medication receive appropriate training. (NMS 14 Appendix 2)
- Ensure each pupil has a clear written health plan or similar document that covers their medical history, any necessary preventive measures, known allergies and any health monitoring required by staff. (NMS 14.6)
- Ensure the school's placement plan includes cultural, religious and racial needs and how these will be met. (NMS 17.5)
- Ensure the opinions and views of pupils are sought and taken into account when decisions affecting their welfare are made. For example, the use of their accommodation at weekends by others. (NMS 2.4)
- Ensure all written records regarding complaints include the details of the investigation and that the complainant is provided with details of the outcome. A designated member of the senior management team should regularly review these records to check the complaints procedure is followed. (NMS 4.3, 4.5, 4.6)
- Ensure risk assessments for countering bullying are carried out and all racial bullying is reported to the appropriate departments. (NMS 6.5)
- Ensure the school has a system in place to promptly notify Ofsted on events listed under the national minimum standards. (NMS 7.2)
- Ensure a record of sanctions and physical interventions are kept in separate bound and numbered books and all records cover the required entries. (NMS 10.9 and 10.14)
- Ensure risk assessments in regard to the school premises and risks relating to pupils not able to appreciate hazards for themselves, are undertaken and regularly reviewed. (NMS 26.3)
- Ensure staff are trained in fire safety and that fire drills are completed for the residential accommodation. Also, make sure regular testing of emergency lighting and fire alarms are carried out for these units and regular reviews undertaken of the fire risk assessment. (NMS 26.4,5,6)
- Ensure the privacy of pupils is maintained when using toilets. (NMS 3.2)
- Implement a robust staff recruitment process. (NMS 27.1)
- Ensure the residential accommodation is decorated and maintained to a high standard. (NMS 24)
- Ensure staff cover arrangements for sickness and absence enables the level of staffing to meet the needs of pupils and consider the circumstances of the residential provision layout. Also, that risk assessments are undertaken regarding night time staffing arrangements. (NMS 28.5,6,11 )
- Ensure the governing body conducts the required checks on the monitoring of the welfare of pupils at the school inclusive of a written report. (NMS 33).

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Pupils' achievement has declined. This was recognised by the principal and, for the last two terms, systems have been introduced to improve progress. Initiatives to raise pupils' reading and mathematical skills have resulted in some improvement, but not enough to have an effect on their National Curriculum levels. Consequently, progress and achievement are inadequate. An analysis of pupils' achievements in all year groups shows far too many pupils have not made the expected progress in English and mathematics. However, pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress in information and communication technology. They are acquiring skills such as using spreadsheets, creating multi-media presentations and data handling. While pupils in Year 11 all leave with nationally recognised awards, including a GCSE pass in up to

three subjects, some have clearly not achieved as well as they should. Nevertheless, GCSE results in mathematics in Year 10 and in art are strong in comparison with other subjects in the school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils have a sound understanding of keeping healthy, being pleased with the amount of exercise they do and their healthy diet. This is despite the overall support for their health and medical needs being inadequate in the boarding provision. Their understanding of keeping safe, however, is inadequate and compromised by the lack of robust systems within school. Most pupils have a positive attitude to school and behave satisfactorily. Pupils gain useful skills for living in the boarding units, budgeting and cooking meals and having enormous fun baking cakes. They enjoy making things and are disappointed that the greenhouses are out of action, and that there are no other enterprise projects. The majority respond well to communal living and know their responsibilities. Other than work on local paths however, they make little contribution to the wider community. Overall, because of their inadequate achievement, especially in the important skills of literacy and numeracy, and other vocational skills, pupils' preparation for future economic well-being is inadequate.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teachers are rising to the challenge to improve the quality of teaching and learning but improvements have not yet had enough impact to eradicate pupils' prior underachievement or eliminate inconsistencies in teaching. Teachers are conscientiously planning to a common format and providing work for pupils of differing capabilities. However, the match of work is not always sufficient to stretch pupils and make them think. The contribution of support staff to learning is variable. Some have a good understanding of how to help pupils progress but most are used purely to control pupils' behaviour. Leaders have recognised the need to provide training in this area. A useful marking system has been introduced giving pupils an indication of how to improve. Pupils say they find that the 'EBI' (even better if) system helps them make better progress. The management of pupils' behaviour is not consistently good. While pupils appreciate the token system, some teachers are not realistic in awarding points thus devaluing the effectiveness of the system.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

A major improvement in the curriculum has been in the provision for pupils in Years 10 and 11. From spending only three nights at the school, they now receive their full boarding entitlement, as well as the opportunity to attend school five days a week. The range of awards available has increased, as well as opportunities for work experience and attending local colleges, but leaders recognise there is still room for improvement especially in expanding vocational qualifications. The provision for humanities is limited in this age group and though it is covered adequately through topic work in Years 7 to 9, too little attention is paid to religious education in enabling all pupils to have an awareness of the major world faiths. Work in science and personal, social, health and citizenship education contributes well to pupils' understanding of healthy living. Evening activities, as part of the boarding provision such as visits to the theatre, outdoor and



adventurous education, and animal husbandry enrich learning and contribute effectively to pupils' personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 4**

There are good links with other external professionals such as the Youth Offending Team and the Childhood and Mental Health Service to ensure the well-being of pupils with specific needs. However, systems to safeguard and ensure the health and safety of all pupils and staff are not sufficiently robust. As a consequence, important information, such as incidents of bullying and the administration of medication is not passed between boarding and education staff. Risk assessments are not available to demonstrate the precautions taken to keep the pupils safe during major building alterations which are expected to continue for the next 18 months. Individual learning plans have been introduced since the last inspection, but these are not sufficiently focused or measurable in terms of the difference they will make. The school has insufficient accurate information about pupils' progress to help decide how to improve their achievement at a much quicker rate.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

The absence of a school leader who has overall responsibility for the school on a daily basis is adversely affecting the school's effectiveness and improvement. This is seen in the weaknesses in relation to pupils' safety and in their underachievement.

Since being appointed, the principal has worked with the federation governors to try and remedy a number of staffing issues, but some remain. These contribute to the inadequacies in boarding provision; care workers report there is often a shortfall in staff and so pupils have to be moved to other residences. The compatibility of pupils is not considered, sometimes resulting in outbursts of inappropriate behaviour. Leadership and management of the boarding provision are inadequate. However, through the principal's actions, the attendance of staff in the residences has increased from 60% to almost 90%. The head of education provides good moral support for teachers and has galvanised them into a team, leading to some recent improvements in teaching and learning. Tracking systems have been introduced; however, these are not accurate and have given a false picture of pupils' achievement. Leaders and managers do not fulfil all of their legal requirements, for example, in safeguarding pupils; racial incidents are not correctly recorded and reported.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The effectiveness of boarding provision	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	4

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<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	4
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Buglawton Hall School, Congleton, CW12 3PQ

As you are aware, a colleague and I spent time recently inspecting your school. Thank you for taking time to talk to us about your work, especially during lunchtime and in the units. It was clear from our discussions with you that you enjoy school, especially the evening activities. We saw some stunning art work and were particularly impressed by the work of your school council.

However, we are concerned that your school is not providing you with an adequate education and have, therefore, judged that it needs 'special measures' to help it improve. This means that your school will get extra help and inspectors will visit again soon to check that it is improving. These are the areas we have asked to be improved:

- The standards you reach and progress you make in English and mathematics needs to improve.
- Although your lessons have improved, they need to be better still.
- The care you receive from adults needs to be improved.
- The leadership and management of the school need to be secure so that all the important requirements are met.
- You need more opportunities to understand the values and traditions of different ethnic groups and faiths.

We know you will do all you can to help your teachers and boarding staff and wish you every success in your future.