

Hassockfield Secure Training Centre

Inspection report for Secure Training Centre

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Lead inspector	Linda Christie HMI
Additional inspector(s)	Malcolm Stannard Gwen Buckley Shaun Common Elizabeth Taylor Vivien Shipley HMI David White AI
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Service address	Hassockfield Secure Training Centre Corbridge Road Medomsley Consett, County Durham DH8 6QY
Telephone number	01207 565600
Email address	twilsonsmith@premier-serco.com
Director	Trevor Wilson-Smith

About this inspection

The purpose of inspection is to provide assurance to the Secretary of State that secure training centres (STCs) provide an environment that promotes the safety and welfare of young people and that will help prevent children and young people offending in the future, and in particular that:

- the safeguarding of children and young people is effective
- programmes exist to tackle offending behaviour and meet the citizenship and resettlement needs of children and young people
- the performance of the STC provider meets the quality of service expected in the inspections standards
- there is a purposeful regime in which children and young people are encouraged to take part
- there is effective security and control within the STC
- high standards of social care, health care, education and training are provided for children and young people
- the individual needs of children and young people are fully assessed and there are plans for meeting them as far as possible.

The inspection was conducted in accordance with the Statutory Rules inspections of secure training centres made under Section 47 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, and in line with section 37(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which states that: It shall be the principal aim of the youth justice system to prevent offending by children and young persons.

This was a key inspection carried out in accordance with the service level agreement between the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and Ofsted. The standards used during the inspection were those agreed between the YJB and Ofsted.

The last full inspection was carried out in April 2009 with an interim inspection in October 2009.

A team of five social care inspectors spent four days on site and two HMI education inspectors spent two days reviewing standards and the impact of the service on young people.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Not judged: this aspect of the provision was not judged

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Service Information

Brief description of the service

1. Hassockfield Secure Training Centre is managed by Serco.
2. Hassockfield is situated near the town of Consett in County Durham. It is a purpose-built secure establishment. It offers secure provision for young people aged 12 to 17 years who meet the criteria for custodial sentence or secure remand.
3. The centre caters for up to 58 young people of both genders. During the inspection 46 young people were in residence. Young people live in four separate house blocks.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

4. The inspection findings show further improvements in a number of areas identified during previous inspections and in matters raised by the Youth Justice Board. This reflects an executive management team who listen to constructive comment, are reflective and who strive to improve all aspects of the care and service to young people. There is evidence of continual development, although progress in some areas is slow and some improvements are not consolidated.
5. The high number of secondments outside of the centre with some key managers absent for periods of time, has slowed down progress in certain areas. Despite the improvement in benefits for individuals and ultimately the centre, there has been a cost in continuity of practice and development. For example, senior managers have been required to cover the role of duty director with less time to focus on developments in their respective departments and less time spent on the residential units.
6. There have been examples of a lack of cohesion in approach to the overall management of the centre, with inconsistent advice, guidance and direction being provided. This is in sharp contrast to the very effective multi-disciplinary working across departments and collaborative working practices both internally and with external partners.
7. Staffing levels on the residential units during the inspection were found to comply with the minimum numbers as set out in the contract with the Youth Justice Board; in fact at least three additional care staff were on site on each of the days. However, demands upon staffing still result in care staff being left to work with and manage groups of young people on their own,

including moving them around the centre without assistance. Although the senior management team have clear expectations about the deployment of staff and strive to ensure that there are additional care staff on site, this can be affected by a range of factors. For example, staff sickness, admissions, medical trips outside of the centre, challenges or disruptions presented by young people, and other demands upon residential staff time.

8. There is a strong focus on the resettlement of young people, with robust planning and reviewing that supports young people's transition back into the community. The important role played by young people's families in supporting them during their time in custody and upon release is understood by this centre. Efforts are being made to provide parents or carers with support and help them understand the issues that will impact on effective resettlement. However, the use of mobility to assist young people's resettlement into the community is very limited and hinders opportunities for effective preparation for release.
9. There is a commitment to minimising the use of restrictive physical intervention with young people and this is set out in the centre's minimisation strategy. There has been success in this respect, with no evidence to suggest that restrictive physical intervention has been used inappropriately.
10. Young people are well protected by effective and well-embedded safeguarding procedures that include close working relations with local child protection services.
11. Young people's health care needs are thoroughly assessed and addressed by a committed nursing team who are an integral part of the care provision. There is effective communication and collaborative working between the different disciplines at the centre. The aim consistently reflected across the centre is that the holistic needs of the individual child are considered.
12. The importance of equality and diversity continues to be reflected in planning and delivery of care and services to young people. The group of staff responsible for this aspect of care ensures this is kept firmly on the agenda.
13. The training and development opportunities for staff are excellent. The initial training provided to care staff is well established, regularly reviewed and improved upon evaluation. The accreditation of this training is an excellent achievement for the centre. Ongoing opportunities are available to staff to obtain professional qualifications, such as in social work and psychology. Safeguarding training is offered to all staff at the centre with 110 people, including those in administration roles, currently participating in level 2 training provided through the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

14. The centre provides good quality education and has very good capacity to improve. The quality of the provision and young people's levels of attainment have improved consistently over a number of years. Outstanding guidance and support are significant in helping young people to make very good progress. A high proportion achieve useful qualifications, including in literacy and numeracy. Too few young people are able to visit further education providers on mobility. Staff work with energy, enthusiasm and a strong commitment to the success of the centre. Teachers are well qualified and benefit from excellent staff development to continue to develop their skills. Arrangements for quality assurance and self-assessment have improved but more needs to be done to revise procedures so that they are part of a regular review of the curriculum.

What has been improved since the last inspection

15. Good progress has been made in enabling medical consultants to be able to ensure privacy when meeting with young people. This includes all staff remaining a specified distance away from the consulting room and piped music in the corridor ensures anyone in this area of the healthcare centre cannot overhear conversations.
16. The procedures for dealing with complaints have been improved and staff are now working to these effectively and efficiently.
17. Consideration was given to expanding the closed circuit televisions to include the entrance corridors in the three main house blocks, but this was not carried out due to a lack of funding.
18. A review has been undertaken of the arrangement for telephone contact with the young people. However concerns remain about the length of time available for the call, the fact that the warning tone to alert them to the imminent end to the call is inconsistent and that incoming calls are not allowed. This remains a concern and is therefore repeated as a recommendation.

The effectiveness of the service

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

19. A good nutritious range of home-cooked food is available. Young people are able to choose from a wide range of meals, including healthy options, and are able to experience a range of foods reflecting different cultures. The views of the young people on the food provided vary considerably, but the majority feel that it is getting better. Excellent systems ensure special diets are consistently catered for and take account of medical, cultural and religious dietary needs.
20. The centre promotes healthy eating, lifestyle and exercise. Fresh fruit and water are freely available throughout the day. Meal times are well-managed social occasions with young people and staff sitting together.
21. The management of health care in the unit is excellent. Young people's well-being is promoted by a motivated health care team who are child centred in their approach. A robust system ensures relevant health information obtained at the time of admission informs the initial assessment of health care needs and ongoing health care planning. The assessments undertaken on admission include: physical needs, mental health, immunisations, substance use and misuse, disability and vulnerability.
22. Primary health care provided to young people is excellent. All young people have prompt access to primary and secondary National Health Service facilities and specialists when clinically required. They have daily GP surgeries that provide access to male and female GPs and access to a nurse 24 hours a day. A GP and the dentist, who also visits regularly, are on call 24 hours a day. A detoxification service is available, as is help with substance use and abuse. Mental health professionals see young people when referred, and within 24 hours of arrival if there are specific concerns. A multi-disciplinary approach ensures the young people receive health care they require.
23. A GP undertakes a medical examination of all young people within 24 hours of admission to, and planned exits from, the centre. Young people have routine monthly checkups with a GP throughout their stay, ensuring a good oversight and monitoring of medical needs.
24. Medication administration, recording and monitoring systems are good. Records are well maintained and there is suitable storage for immunisations and medication. Effective internal and external auditing of the health care provision takes place.

25. A self-administration procedure is followed for young people assessed able to self-administer a small selection of creams. This restricted self-administration limits young people's ability to take responsibility and learn to manage their own medication, in a safe supportive environment, and in preparation for discharge or independent living.
26. A health care plan is produced for each young person and where appropriate includes details of any requirement for immunisation, dental or ophthalmic interventions and referrals to other health professionals. The health care plans are updated regularly.
27. Nursing staff and young people agree on whether medical information is shared. Young people's privacy is respected while receiving treatment.
28. The managers at the centre consider the emotional well-being of young people is a high priority. Young people have counselling and mentoring services provided. Depending on the individual's need, this support comes in various forms such as from different religious groups, students from Durham University as well as North East Counselling Services.
29. Nursing staff are actively involved in the education of young people, for example, on sexual health and advising on healthy eating. They contribute effectively in the centre's multi-disciplinary approach to caring for young people. The sexual health education for young people is jointly delivered by nursing staff and staff from the resettlement team. Debrief sessions between staff delivering the session and their line manager take place ensuring opportunities for reflective practice and improvement to service delivery for young people.
30. Nursing staff have excellent working relationships with external medical and health consultants, and young people report excellent relationships with health staff. Young people stated that health care staff care about them. One young person stated that one particular nurse 'is a role model; she is better than my mum. I look up to and respect her and she cares for us all. You can sit and talk to her, she takes time to talk with you and I can take anything that bothers me to her. She gives me advice on my condition and helps me understand what is happening to me'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

31. The centre has excellent security measures in place that ensure young people are not able to leave without authority. Measures in operation are robust, regularly checked and subject to internal and external scrutiny and monitoring. Staff at the centre take part in regularly updated training in security matters. There have been no reported recent breaches of security.
32. The centre has excellent health and safety procedural and monitoring systems in place with recognised awards and certificates. This helps ensure young people, staff and visitors are kept safe.
33. Good partnership and consultation arrangements exist with local emergency services. Emergency and contingency plans are revised and tested with partners as necessary. This ensures that formal responses to emergencies work efficiently to keep young people safe.
34. A written procedure is in place, which is known to young people, for undertaking any searches. Searches are carried out on all areas of the building regularly, routinely and rigorously. The centre also carries out regular searches of staff, visitors and vehicles to ensure security and safety are maintained. Recent additions to security processes are designed to improve practice even further, including random drug testing of employees.
35. Young people are not locked in their rooms or removed from association inappropriately. Comprehensive records are available of all separations which occur. A thorough auditing process involving the checking of a written record against actual closed circuit television footage of a separation is in place.
36. Staff make good use of time away as part of therapeutic crisis intervention. This is utilised to allow young people to re-establish an acceptable baseline of behaviour when required. Young people are encouraged to take themselves to their room to calm down and think about their actions. Instances of this occurring are recorded as enforced separation, even though there has been no force used to remove a young person and on the majority of occasions the door to the room remains unlocked. The procedural guidance for staff in how to record the use of therapeutic crisis intervention time away however is not sufficiently clear. Should a young person elect to spend time in their room, they are able to do so and this is appropriately recorded.
37. Expectations of behaviour are made known by staff to young people through positive relationships and there are some excellent examples of this in

practice. There are appropriate behaviour management policies and procedures in place for staff guidance. However, there are inconsistencies in the staff practice of challenging inappropriate behaviour. Some care staff do not confront young people's inappropriate behaviour confidently. On occasions this occurs when a staff member is supervising a group of young people on their own within a unit and there is reluctance by some to challenge inappropriate behaviour. The number of staff present at times on the house units means that supervision of those individuals or groups presenting inappropriate behaviour is not always effective and could potentially place them at risk.

38. The recent introduction of a new multi-disciplinary behaviour scheme has ensured that all areas of concern relating to young people's behaviour can be identified. The gate-keeping and monitoring system utilised as part of this scheme ensures that all occurrences are reviewed on a daily basis. Any actions required to be undertaken in relation to a young person, for example over issues of bullying or intimidation are identified and allocated to a named staff member. Where action is required the occurrence is brought back to the multi-disciplinary meeting so that it can be signed off when all participants are happy with the outcome. This system greatly lessens the chance that a bullying or safeguarding issue may be overlooked.
39. As part of the behaviour scheme and where necessary, young people undertake targeted work with allocated staff, which incorporates three levels of intervention. These range from verbal interaction with the young person through monitoring of their behaviour to the setting of targets and an individual behaviour support plan where required. All levels are reviewed after seven days to ensure that they continue to offer support for staff in their work modifying young people's behaviour. The scheme is in its infancy and it is too early to evaluate its impact.
40. Positive behaviour by young people is recognised by the centre's incentive scheme, resulting in the gaining of rewards. The scheme is constantly reviewed to ensure it remains effective. It recently underwent some modification to ensure that incentives to be gained in all areas of the centre are consistent. Young people receive good information about the scheme and understand how it works. The scheme can be personalised for those young people who find it difficult to achieve on the mainstream incentive system.
41. Formal sanctions are used only where necessary; they are used appropriately and are relevant to the misdemeanour. There is a positive and increasing use of restorative practice by staff and they undertake an increasing amount of mediation with young people. This helps young people to understand the consequences of their actions. A record of all sanctions used is kept. However, while there is space on the record provided for young people to make comment on the sanction this is rarely completed or a refusal noted.

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42. A good written policy and procedural guidance exists on the use of physical restraint. The guidance states clearly that restraint should be used only as a last resort. There has been a decrease in the incidences of restraint occurring for the first three months of this calendar year, with an underlying trend of reduction since July 2009. There has been one occasion during this period when numbers of restraints occurring rose. This is attributed by managers to a large turnover of young people during this time. Occupancy levels have remained consistent throughout this period. Records are completed of all restraints which have occurred and there is comprehensive monitoring and auditing of all incidents by senior managers. All staff who may be required to use restrictive physical intervention with young people receive training in its use and refresher training at least annually. Therapeutic crisis intervention training is also undertaken, which provides staff with knowledge to mediate and diffuse situations.
43. Good use is made of behaviour management data in order to develop practice at the centre. A critical incident review panel meets every month, which involves the attendance of external professionals. This meeting enables a transparent review of behaviour management practice and safeguarding at the centre to be undertaken. While data is available regarding the frequency and type of sanctions used, it is not routinely discussed within these meetings.
44. The complaints system has been improved to ensure that young people are kept informed of the progress of the concerns they raise and that a conclusion is reached in a timely manner. The monitoring and oversight of the complaints process is now more structured, enabling administration and investigation to be completed without delay. All complaints made are acknowledged and a young person receives verbal feedback as well as written confirmation in a child-friendly letter. There is an appeal structure in place which enables young people to refer to the director; however, there is no appeals mechanism external to the centre. This is due to historic arrangements whereby any young people who were dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint would be referred to the Youth Justice Board performance monitor. This process is no longer in place, due to changes in the role of the performance monitor.
45. Young people have good access to independent advocates who visit the centre on a regular basis. Young people can be seen by advocates in a group or on an individual basis. Young people can also access advocacy via a telephone helpline or request to see an advocate in writing. Information made available to inform young people about the advocates is widely published with pictures, visiting times and contact numbers all available. The independent advocates state that any issues which they raise with managers at the centre are dealt with quickly and comprehensively.

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46. A good accredited anti-bullying structure is in place which helps to protect young people. There are written procedures and guidance available for staff who understand that a zero-tolerance approach is taken to any instance of bullying. Any intervention undertaken such as the implementation of a tracking log is recorded and considered at a multi-disciplinary meeting. The introduction of the new behaviour management structure ensures that any occurrence which could be considered as a bullying issue can be identified.
47. Comprehensive child protection procedures are in place which support robust and effective practice. All allegations of a safeguarding nature are referred to the local children and young person's services. They respond in conjunction with the police by holding a strategy meeting and visiting the young person for every referral received. External professionals also view closed circuit television recordings of events where an allegation has been made and a police representative attends a review panel at the centre. At this meeting all incidents are evaluated and promotion of appropriate practice undertaken.
48. There is a comprehensive multi-disciplinary assessment procedure in place which is undertaken when young people arrive at the centre. This enables a young person's vulnerability and their potential for self-harm to be identified. All young people have an individualised support or risk management plan compiled which is reviewed on a regular basis at the multi-disciplinary meeting. Young people are protected effectively from any impact of their self-harming behaviour and from abuse by others.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

Education

The provision is good.

49. Good quality education is provided. Achievement and standards are good. Considering that most of the young people at the centre have very poor previous experiences of education it is significant that the overall levels of qualifications achieved by them are high. All young people leave having gained qualifications that are useful in helping them to prepare an application to further education or to return to mainstream schools. Young people have the opportunity to gain qualifications in most areas of the curriculum at a level which is appropriate to their length of stay and to their varying abilities. Managers are increasing the range of qualifications by applying for accreditation to offer BTEC qualifications. Most young people improve their reading age during their time at the centre. Around half attain adult Skills for Life qualifications in literacy and numeracy at level 1 and 2, which improve their life chances significantly and raise their self-confidence. More able young people are able to complete GCSEs and a high proportion attain these qualifications.
50. Young people make very good progress during their time in the centre. For many their achievements are their first experiences of educational success and this raises their self-esteem significantly. They produce good standards of work overall. In hairdressing they develop vocational skills at an appropriate level for their age. They learn to work together cooperatively in dance and trampoline lessons. In most lessons they are encouraged to take part in discussions that develop their thinking skills and tolerance for each other. Young people's written work is mostly satisfactory.
51. Young people develop positive attitudes to school and their attendance is excellent. Their behaviour improves and is mostly good. Movement between lessons is well organised and young people arrive at lessons punctually. However, teachers do not implement agreed standards of behaviour in lessons consistently. Relationships between staff and young people are mostly good. Managers spend considerable time supporting individual young people to reflect upon the impact of their poor behaviour and helping them to change their attitudes.
52. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good. The majority of lessons observed by inspectors were good or better. However, a minority of lessons were inadequate. Teaching is outstanding in English, hairdressing and dance. In the better lessons young people respond well and benefit from relevant learning materials that encourage participation and learning. In several subject areas young people develop knowledge and practical skills that help to prepare them for progression into the community

and for independent living. For example, in catering, young people practise basic recipes and learn budgeting skills that will be useful when they leave.

53. In the better lessons, for example, in hairdressing and beauty therapy, young people's work is very well organised and clearly reflects strong development of subject knowledge and practical skills. Less effective lessons are often characterised by weak classroom management and work that is insufficiently challenging. Teachers in these lessons rely too much on whole class activities; there is too little variety in learning activities and the pace is slow. While a consistent approach to schemes of work and lesson planning are in place, they are not applied consistently. The majority of young people enjoy lessons. They recognise and value the progress they make. While the points reward system is valued by young people, it is not used appropriately in less effective lessons.
54. Good progress has been made in setting short-term achievable targets for young people. However, managers are aware that more work is needed to ensure these are effective for all young people. Residential care staff make good contributions to teaching and learning and in many instances act as good role models by participating in learning activities alongside the young people. The centre's rigorous arrangements for observing teaching and learning are implemented assiduously and support improvements in quality. Insufficient attention is given to helping young people become more independent learners.
55. Assessment of young people's written work remains satisfactory overall. As found at the last inspection teachers provide good verbal feedback to young people during lessons that helps them to understand what they need to do to improve. Good and appropriate use is made of praise.
56. The curriculum at the centre continues to meet the needs of most young people well. The increased focus on vocational pathways has seen further development in the planning and implementation of BTEC units of work across a good range of courses. A cross-curricular activity based on the television programme 'The Apprentice' has been introduced successfully. This has enabled greater interaction between subject teachers and improved young people's progress and achievement in basic and functional skills.
57. Good emphasis is placed on improving young people's levels of literacy and numeracy. Increasing numbers of young people are being entered for a wider range of GCSE courses. A dance and performing arts course has been introduced successfully. A successful focus for the development of the curriculum is to prepare young people effectively for progression into further education, training or employment. The centre is still unable to offer a core science subject but a limited number of science-based modules are taught through PE and other subjects.

58. Guidance and support is outstanding. Very good progress has been made in strengthening this through a new tutorial system and an 'accelerated pupil programme'. These ensure every young person has a weekly meeting with a manager to review their educational targets as set out in their sentence plan, which are graded on a traffic light system. The agreed outcomes are discussed at weekly staff meetings to help staff with their lesson planning and support interventions. In addition high quality support is provided by the educational psychologist for both individual young people and to support teachers. The number of young people withdrawn from lessons and the use of physical constraint and care within education has declined significantly.
59. A highly effective induction programme helps young people settle quickly into education with the minimum of delay. For example, one young person was participating in a cookery lesson on his second day at the centre. The guidance and support team is highly motivated and very well led and managed. Roles and responsibilities are clear and colleagues quickly and willingly work together to cover each other's tasks. Contact with young people's previous schools and with their youth offending teams is managed tenaciously to ensure continuity of school work and to support them on their return to the community or their next placement. Education staff attend all young people's detention and training order review meetings and produce detailed reports that enable appropriate decisions to be made and targets set.
60. Arrangements for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are outstanding. Diagnostic work is good and managers have commissioned research to identify appropriate diagnostic tests to resolve gaps in reading tests available for young people with reading ages below six years and above 14. Very good arrangements are in place to provide a range of highly effective support strategies that support individual young people very well. These include a well-structured programme of in-class and one-to-one support. Individual education plans are thorough and reviewed regularly. However, access to professional support for some additional learning needs such as speech and language therapy is limited. Good progress is made in identifying and supporting more able and talented young people. Careers education and guidance provided by the guidance team and from a Connexions personal adviser is comprehensive. This helps young people to plan and prepare for their futures when they leave the centre.
61. Leadership and management are good. Managers and staff have clear ambition for the future and high expectations. They provide strong leadership and very good support to staff to ensure that they continue to develop their skills and experience. Teachers are well qualified and most have good experience. A very sound strategy for succession planning supports care staff to become qualified teachers. Opportunities for staff development are excellent and valued highly by teachers. Effective induction supports new teachers with no experience of working in similar establishments. Teachers benefit significantly from the opportunity to

shadow and work with teachers in a local secondary school. Weekly team meetings are well planned and focus on curriculum development and improving teaching and learning. Regular training ensures that staff understand their roles in implementing whole establishment policies and procedures, such as those for child protection and equality and diversity. New teachers have been appointed and additional training has been provided to resolve issues raised at the last inspection.

62. Staff work with energy, enthusiasm and a strong commitment to the success of the unit. They work together exceptionally well, sharing ideas and good practice that focus effectively on improving the quality of the experience provided for young people and increasing their levels of attainment. Managers are reflective and work very hard to develop new approaches. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement and implement carefully considered action plans. The quality of the provision has improved consistently over a number of years. The centre has a very good capacity to maintain improvements.
63. Managers have made good progress in improving systems for quality assurance and self-assessment. All staff were involved recently in completing the self-assessment for the inspection. They valued this experience which has increased their understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement across all aspects of the provision. Managers are aware that arrangements for self-assessment need to be revised to ensure that they become part of a regular review of the quality of the provision. Regular supervision that draws on the evidence from observation of teaching and learning is used effectively to monitor the progress of individual teachers. Some observations are not sufficiently focused on learning and the progress young people make in lessons.
64. Accommodation in the education centre is satisfactory overall. Managers and teachers work hard to improve classrooms and circulation spaces with displays of young people's work. Since the last inspection there has been investment in equipment for PE and resources for this area of the curriculum are now good. Forced ventilation has been fitted to the design technology room to resolve the weakness identified at the last inspection. However, furniture in the art and design room is not fit for purpose and a shortage of classroom chairs disrupts the start of some lessons.
65. Managers value the views of young people and external partners. For example, young people have been consulted over the introduction of a school uniform. Strong links have been established with local schools and colleges and staff devote significant time to work with young people's previous schools. Good action is taken to promote equality of opportunity and develop young people's understanding of diversity. Displays of work and learning materials celebrate diversity. The good practice identified at the last inspection of the use of English lessons to increase young people's understanding of poverty and human rights has been strengthened. Very

good action is taken within the school to remove barriers to learning but more needs to be done to increase pupil's social mobility through mobility visits to further education providers.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

Welfare

The provision is satisfactory.

66. Nominated staff are available who hold responsibility for overseeing the activities and enrichment programme. They produce a weekly plan of all activity and enrichment sessions and ensure that there are sufficient resources available. Investment has recently been made in the acquisition of new and varied equipment to support activities, for example, new goalposts for the artificial outdoor surface and an inflatable climbing wall as well as some smaller items of craft materials and board games for the house units.
67. There is good forward planning of activities, enrichment and clubs, with young people being able to choose which activities to participate in. Teaching staff are also able to offer more specialist pursuits such as hair and beauty, crafts and dance. A youth club is operated throughout the week which offers young people the chance to socialise and undertake a number of different experiences.
68. In practice the actual delivery of structured activities and clubs is erratic and inconsistent. The number of sessions available on an evening for young people to participate in fluctuates from as many as nine to as few as two. There are regular late cancellations of clubs when the demands of the service mean that staff are taken away to complete other duties. This creates frustration amongst young people and for some groups, particularly for young females.
69. There are a number of staff who have undertaken qualifications enabling them to increase their knowledge of a particular activity and lead sessions, for example, weight and fitness training and coaching young people in specific sports. However, there are examples of these staff having to undertake duties such as dealing with admissions or supervising young people on their own house unit, which prevents them from using their skills and leading or assisting with a particular club. A staff skills audit is undertaken and this is updated when new staff commence work at the centre. Any individual interests are recorded and where possible utilised to enhance the range of provision available.
70. There are some good continuing links with the local community; the young fire fighters scheme continues to be popular with young people and a link with a local artist remains, although his visits are presently curtailed due to circumstances beyond the centre's control. The staff identified as holding responsibility for activity sessions are actively seeking new opportunities to develop links external to the centre. Recent contact has been made with the

'second chance' organisation which is able to offer advice regarding funding and practicalities of providing activities.

71. An opportunity to contribute towards the make up of the weekend enrichment activities is available for some of the young people through the consultation panel. There are a number of young people however, who feel that the activities on offer do not meet their needs. On one evening during the inspection there was a wide range of pursuits available; however, on another only football and weight training options were on offer.
72. All young people are able to access fresh air on a daily basis. External recreational areas can also be accessed by individual house units in addition to structured club opportunities. The provision of unstructured activities has improved; house unit staff now provide more purposeful activities and opportunities for positive interaction on the living units.
73. A senior staff member compiles an evening activity monitoring sheet, producing actual figures of availability and attendance on a weekly basis. A database is held of young people who attend clubs and their attainment. This information is used to inform review and planning meetings about a young person's progress and to identify any further recreational input required.
74. There is excellent support from care staff to promote and support young people's educational attainment. Young people praise the help given to them in the classroom and when completing work outside of school.
75. Young people are encouraged to practice their faith, observe their religion and cultural identity. People from a range of different faiths visit the centre to support the young people. Young Muslims can access a Muslim mentoring service and there are also visitors from a non-denominational church, a Baptist provision and the Church of England. A visitor from a local religious charity provides an eight-week football programme which promotes the young people's understanding of 'being a team player' in the wider world.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

76. A comprehensive admissions process is carried out by qualified and experienced nursing staff with the support of care staff. Great care is taken to assess young people's levels of vulnerability and to identify their needs. This is done in a sensitive manner; young people's dignity is promoted though balanced with the need to ensure their safety. Young people receive a welcome pack which contains useful information about the centre and about matters relevant to their welfare. Additional clothing is issued, if required. Young people are encouraged to make a telephone call to someone important to them when they arrive. Clear administration processes ensure young people's possessions are logged into the centre and those not kept in their possession are securely stored.
77. All staff within the centre are tenacious in their pursuit of gaining sufficient information and supporting documentation about young people at the time of admission. This ensures initial plans for young people adequately promote their safety and well-being.
78. The resettlement team comprises staff with a range of skills and expertise that are extremely child-focused in their approach. The team work collaboratively with other disciplines within the centre and with external professionals and agencies to ensure young people's holistic needs are addressed.
79. An established system of multi-disciplinary meetings ensures young people's plans are regularly monitored, reviewed and updated. Any changes in need are quickly identified and addressed.
80. Initial planning and review meetings are effectively managed and are very child centred. The immediate and longer term needs of young people are discussed and clear targets are identified for them to work towards during their stay. Plans to support young people's transition back into the community are also discussed, regardless of the length of time they may be resident in the centre. Transition arrangements remain a set item on the agenda of all subsequent meetings.
81. A good and clear protocol for young people remanded to the centre ensures relevant documentation is obtained and there is an expectation that local authority representatives are active participants in the planning and review process. This ensures young people's right to a service is implemented in practice.
82. Parents are appropriately consulted and notified, and are supported to contribute to their child's assessment, planning and review meetings. Young

people are also well supported to be active participants in a range of meetings where decisions are made about their welfare and future.

83. Training plans for young people are detailed and address risk factors in a young person's life as well as specific offending behaviour work. Young people's health needs and education targets are also identified in the training plan. This enables focused work to be undertaken, tailored to young people's specific needs. The plans clearly describe the role each department has to play in supporting the young person. Targets are expressed in practical, measurable terms. This enables a more accurate evaluation to be undertaken to show whether young people have made progress towards, or achieved, their targets.
84. Excellent consultation with young people prior to starting any programme of specialist work ensures the objectives of the exercise are agreed and understood. A further commendable initiative, which assists young people, is the identification of their preferred learning style. This is gained from an internal assessment by teaching staff and is used to determine the format that programmes are delivered in. Offending behaviour programmes and specialist interventions such as substance misuse programmes are well organised and set within clear time frames and are developed to address individual needs. This ensures there is no drift in their delivery. While care staff are knowledgeable about individual young people and are clear about the contribution that key working sessions make to enabling change, one-to-one sessions do not take place with the same regularity as other planned sessions. These sessions are not delivered consistently by a specific allocated key worker due to care staff working patterns. This does not fully promote continuity for young people.
85. Offending behaviour programmes are well integrated with work carried out in partnership with the different internal departments as well as external providers, such as Durham University and the local fire department.
86. Mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of offending behaviour and supporting programmes continue to be refined. Staff are insightful in their analysis of young people's responses and changes in behaviour or attitude. This helps to inform how effective programmes are in delivery. The result is that most young people are helped to understand the impact their offending behaviour has on themselves and others and to re-evaluate their negative attitudes. Programmes are revised to address young people's entrenched views or behaviours. However, the revision of programmes is not always effected speedily. Reflective practice is exercised by some staff to quickly identify the need for a revised approach but is not yet established practice by all.
87. Staff relationships with young people are in the main nurturing and supportive. Young people reported positive relationships with many staff and appropriately friendly but professional interactions were observed by

inspectors. One young person said, 'There is nothing bad about being here, the staff are alright.' Another young person said, 'Staff are okay, you can have a laugh with them.' However, some young people gave examples of staff they felt were not committed to meeting their needs. Young people's comments in this respect tended to relate to incidents when staff either did not explain their actions, seek to negotiate with them or did not readily engage with them.

88. Young people are helped to maintain relationships with their parents and family members. Individual contact arrangements are confirmed on admission and any restrictions on contact are clearly recorded. Young people receive visits and send and receive letters and cards, in accordance with safety procedures. Good arrangements are in place to promote phone contact; individual phone connection points are fitted in each young person's room and phones are issued after tea during weekdays and after organised activities at weekends. However, calls can only be made out from the centre. The current system does not enable incoming calls to be transferred in a way which prevents safety and security being compromised. There is an escalating timescale for phone calls, from seven minutes upwards, which is linked to the incentive scheme. Extra phone time can be earned by taking responsibility for additional tasks such as helping in the main kitchen.
89. A recent internal survey was carried out in respect of gaining the views of young people and parents about phone contact. This showed the majority of the young people agreed with the system being linked to the incentive scheme but felt the base allowance levels should be higher. Young people were also in favour of being able to buy more phone time from personal monies and to be able to purchase extra phone time on a daily basis. The need for more phone time, particularly in mitigating circumstances, was identified. Staff were observed to implement this in practice with some young people during the inspection. Young people also said they would like a 'warning tone' to alert them when their call is due to be curtailed. A new system had recently been installed to address this issue, although there had been some ongoing problems with this. Parents concurred with both of the latter points.
90. In response to earlier suggestions made by young people, the centre has looked into the possibility of installing a phone system whereby young people can receive external calls, in a safe and secure manner. However, the centre has been informed that funding is not available for this development. Nevertheless this remains an important issue for young people, particularly as many are placed considerable distances away from their home area.
91. Consultation and negotiation with young people is used to good effect by the majority of staff. All staff are in the process of completing training in the use of restorative justice. Increasing and effective use of restorative practice was observed to resolve day-to-day disputes. Young people's views and wishes about everyday matters are sought as a matter of course and young

people's meetings take place in each living unit on a weekly basis. A variety of formal and informal mechanisms operate to gain young people's views about their care and the general running of the centre. Feedback is provided on matters raised by young people. Nevertheless, young people were not confident that their views and suggestions affected decision making about the general operation of the service.

92. Good systems are in place to ensure young people have access to, and support from, people external to the centre when needed, including their solicitor and post-release supervising officer. A phone and on-line interpretation system is used by the centre to meet the on-going needs of young people from different racial and cultural backgrounds. A highly effective mentoring scheme for young people is also established. Four approved visitors attend on a twice-weekly basis to befriend young people and talk to them about any matter they wish. Young people appreciate these visits and form good relationships with the mentors. They say they look forward to them visiting.
93. Good data collection mechanisms are in place to determine the effectiveness of offending behaviour and social awareness programmes. Young people and staff are involved in the evaluation process and record keeping is routinely audited. Feedback is also sought from young people's families and other interested persons continually throughout placement and in a twelve-month period following discharge. Questionnaires are offered shortly after admission and the completion rate for these is significantly higher than for exit questionnaires. The commitment to gaining information to inform future development of the service is commendable. However, there is a need to ensure the analysis and interpretation of data is robust.

Helping children achieve economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

94. An identified staff member is responsible for resettlement development and practice issues at the centre. Effective and early resettlement planning takes place for each young person. This ensures solid arrangements are in place for their transition back into the community. All plans are reviewed and kept up to date throughout a young person's placement. Although some vocational opportunities are available to young people to prepare and support their transition back into the community, these are very limited.
95. Each young person is provided with a resettlement pack on discharge, tailored to their individual needs. These packs include a wide range of information about amenities and resources in the community the young person is returning to. They also contain reference guides, for example bus timetables, food recipes and information on sexual health.
96. Young people's youth offending team workers are involved and participate in the development, review and improvement of resettlement plans from the point of admission. Any support, advice or continuing service that is beneficial to meeting a young person's needs on release is identified before discharge. Information is then shared with relevant professionals to ensure work continues in the community and aids a young person's resettlement.
97. Case workers and resettlement managers ensure early and effective communication with local authorities so discharge planning identifies where a young person will be placed on release. Procedures and processes demonstrate that local authorities are encouraged to meet their obligations to young people. Where appropriate, young people are supported to access external advocacy services to assist, represent and support them with transition arrangements.
98. There are a range of life-skills packages available to young people to help them develop the skills necessary for adult life and independent living. A number of staff are trained in leaving care legislation and in the delivery of life-skills modules to young people. The centre has a dedicated independent life-skills facility to assist young people in developing such skills, however, this is limited in its use and not all young people are aware of its existence.
99. The life-skills assessment and planning process undertaken by the centre to identify skills young people already have or those which they may need, does not take into account young people's length of sentence. As a result, the assessment and planning process does not prioritise the most important elements to young people, meaning they do not receive the best information and guidance on these matters prior to release.

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100. There are inconsistent practices in the promotion of life skills. For example, young people are encouraged to learn how to keep their bedrooms and communal space clean and tidy. However, only some young people have access to washing machines to learn how to launder their own clothes. Young people have very limited opportunities to practice or develop other life skills on house units. Therefore when they learn a new life skill through a module or package such as cooking skills, they do not get to practice this in reality.
101. Mobility is not used as effectively as it could be to assist young people's preparation for release, resettlement, and understanding of further education opportunities and in developing essential life skills. The centre is not implementing its written policies in this regard. Young people are not routinely afforded opportunities for orientation visits to their home area or in the area of the centre or to encourage community reparation and vocational opportunities. Mobility has been limited to essential personal events for young people or to the occasional visit to an educational placement.

Management

The provision is satisfactory.

102. Leadership and management of the centre are satisfactory. Senior managers continue to reflect a clear vision about the quality of care and service they strive to provide to young people and have continued to encourage innovative working with them. However, at times there is a fragmented approach to prioritising of objectives in departments, with different department heads having different priorities. For example, the lack of senior management presence on the residential units does not support staff in the delivery of quality care to young people.
103. The development of the house block manager's role has had a positive impact on the direction and management of the residential units. For example, there is now consolidated and embedded practice of consultation with young people. House block managers monitor to ensure this is regularly done and recorded. However, there is still work to be done to ensure all staff feel included in developments, are consistent in their dealings with young people and are fully signed up to the values, principles and objectives of the centre.
104. There remain inconsistencies in the approach to young people's behaviour and the level of support provided to care staff in their role with often challenging and demanding young people. Directives from managers are at times conflicting and confusing. For example, a decision had been made to remove the pool tables from the living units after an assault on a staff member, but not all units complied with this, resulting in dissent among staff in the house units.
105. The number of custodial staff working directly with young people is at times insufficient to promote all aspects of their care. Care staff continue to find themselves on their own with a group of young people. Their team colleague may have taken a young person to a visit, to the healthcare centre, responding to an incident or involved in the admission of a new resident. This leaves colleagues to manage a group of often lively and challenging young people. The staffing ratio, although compliant with the Youth Justice Board contract, is tight. This is the case even though the centre contributes to additional care staff resources. However, this is insufficient to ensure consistent support and good supervision of young people, at all times. Adequacy of staffing also has an impact on other aspects of service delivery; for example, the use of mobility to prepare a young person for transition, access to enrichment activities and clubs, consistency in approach to one-to-one working with young people and opportunities for training in life skills.
106. There is a range of positive mechanisms in place which contributes to staff care. This includes an on-site advice and guidance forum and external counselling and mediation provided as required. A number of staff reported

in the pre-inspection survey and during the inspection that they did not always feel supported in their role with young people. They cited not being appropriately supported after an incident of restraint, and working on their own with young people resulting in them at times feeling unsafe.

107. The employee recognition scheme is a positive procedure. However, there were groups of staff, particularly those working directly with young people who felt that their efforts were not adequately recognised.
108. The number of staff leaving has continued to reduce, which at 13% per annum, is the lowest for this centre since it became operational. This results in greater stability of care for young people. Sickness absence is reducing and is carefully monitored, with discussions each day between the director and the human resources manager. All line managers are now more consistently following the absence from work procedure and referrals are made to occupational health more swiftly.
109. Cross departmental working is very well embedded at the centre. For example, the close links between case managers and staff in education have ensured that the majority of young people have clear plans in place which aid transition from the centre and resettlement into the community.
110. A continuing strength is the networking and partnership working with a range of external agencies. One of the more recent partnerships has developed through the 'preventing violent extremism programme'. The sessions with young people help them understand diversity, prejudice and to develop a greater sense of tolerance. This partnership has also opened up access to a wider diverse community. For example, the centre will now receive support in attempting to attract applicants from diverse backgrounds within the local region during the next recruitment campaign.
111. The quality assurance monitoring of records has improved and procedures are under regular review. This now more consistently informs the collection and analysis of performance management information, which has also improved and is continuing to develop. Senior managers now receive detailed performance management reports each month and are using these more systematically to inform service development and practice. Policy and procedural guidance is regularly reviewed and revised to reflect changes in practice and development. All recently revised documents are currently with the Youth Justice Board for ratification.
112. There are now effective and efficient systems in place to ensure good communication across all departments at the centre, particularly to ensure young people's safety and welfare are promoted. The range of meetings across the centre serve to ensure staff are kept up to date on any changes they need to be aware of, including any potential risk or vulnerability of individual young people.

113. Although residential care teams are now more consistently meeting together the records do not reflect a professional and coherent process of reflective practice or attempts to ensure consistency.
114. There are efficient and effective recruitment and selection procedures in place to ensure only appropriate staff are appointed to work with young people at the centre. Young people are actively involved in the recruitment and selection of all staff, which is excellent practice. Young people involved were positive in their comments about the process, and they felt their contribution was important and welcomed by managers.
115. The frequency of formal supervision for care staff has improved, with 83% achievement in the past six months. However, newly appointed staff are not receiving monthly supervision as set out the centre's policy and procedure. There are also shortfalls in the frequency of supervision for a number of managers, many of whom are new to their role or in acting positions, and they have not received formal supervision for over a year. The quality of supervision for care staff as reflected in written records is not yet being reviewed. Staff in other departments such as resettlement and education receive formal supervision in line with agreed timescales and quality assurance checks are in place.
116. Staff now have their progress appraised and their development needs identified. The annual performance review process is now informing the training and development strategy for the centre.
117. The commitment and investment in providing training for all staff across the centre is outstanding. The initial training course has been reviewed and revised and is now accredited by Newcastle College to BTEC advanced level three status in youth justice services. This is the first of the secure training centres to achieve this status with their initial training course. Although the initial training provided for care staff and mentoring during the first two weeks in their role are excellent, a gap is evident in the ongoing formal support available to them.
118. The centre supports staff in obtaining professional qualifications, to equip them further for their job with complex and challenging young people. Eight staff at the centre hold social work qualifications and another five are currently undertaking the Open University degree course in social work. Residential care staff have opportunities to obtain a range of nationally accredited training and qualifications. For example 12 staff have completed the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) at level 3 in health and social care, with another 12 currently undertaking this and 12 staff in the process of registering. In addition there are 80 care staff who are completing an NVQ at level 2 in custodial care. This reflects the ongoing commitment to ensuring staff are trained, skilled and equipped to do their job.

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119. Staff across all departments have regular opportunities for training and development. Residential care staff continue to have good opportunities to take up to three training days every 12 weeks. These opportunities are built into the shift pattern.
120. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The centre's dedicated diversity officer chairs a group that meets regularly to address diverse needs and to challenge discrimination. This group ensures appropriate practice development and raises awareness of equality and diversity issues across the centre. The individuality of young people is respected and they are helped to understand and value difference.
121. As required, a single page Statement of Purpose is now prominently displayed throughout the centre. This provides a clear and concise account of the overall objectives of the centre and is translated into different languages as required. The centre also has a detailed Statement of Purpose to supplement the displayed objectives. This is a well-produced document that is reviewed and revised at least twice a year.
122. Parents and carers of young people placed at the centre receive a detailed information pack, which provides them with details about what they and their children can expect from the centre and is available in different languages and formats as required.
123. There are ongoing efforts to improve and soften the living environments for young people. However, 44 per cent of young people who responded to the pre-inspection survey said that the centre was not a comfortable place in which to live. Several parents made similar comments. At times there is insufficient comfortable seating for young people in living units. This is due to damage caused by young people, which is not immediately addressed. Although the site is reasonably well maintained, the processes for ensuring all areas of potential shortfall are consistently highlighted and addressed are not fully embedded in practice. While there is a facilities team on site they are managed at a distance through Serco Integrated Services. It is difficult to ascertain who is responsible on a day-to-day basis for identifying and addressing issues of maintenance and repair across the site.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to the Director of the secure training centre unless otherwise stated.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further develop the centre's self-administration policy and practice to provide young people with the opportunity to manage their own medication in a safe supportive environment (Being healthy - Standard 2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure young people are routinely offered an opportunity to make recorded comment on sanctions applied (Staying safe - standard 17)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarify the recording process of instances of young people taking time away in their room (Staying safe - standard 16)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revise arrangements for self-assessment so that they are part of a regular review of the curriculum, placing more emphasis on the impact of teaching on young people's learning and progress (Enjoying and achieving - standards 2/5)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve the furniture in the art and design classroom and ensure there are sufficient chairs in all classrooms (Enjoying and achieving - standard 21)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase opportunities for mobility to help improve young people's understanding of further education opportunities, and enhance the delivery of training plans and contribute to effective resettlement (Enjoying and Achieving and Achieving Economic wellbeing - standards 5, 10 & 11)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that staffing resources are sufficient to enable the planned activity programme to occur (Enjoying and achieving - standard 8)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigate how the programme of activities can be tailored so that it meets the interests of the young people (Enjoying and achieving - standard 7)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure individual support programmes provided by key workers are delivered to the planned frequency (Positive contribution – standard 16)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure young people receive an appropriate programme that prepares them for the next stage of education, training or employment; specifically provide more opportunities for young people to participate in vocational and work experience (Economic Wellbeing - standards 2 and 5)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the number of custodial staff working directly with young people is at all times sufficient to promote all aspects of their care and safety (Staying safe - standard 9 and Management standard 18)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure an effective and consistent presence on residential units of senior managers that ultimately supports staff in the delivery of quality care to young people (Management - standard 11 & 22)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure managers and staff at all levels receive appropriate formal supervision (Management - standard 22)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure efficient and effective monitoring of the site highlighting and dealing with any maintenance issues, including adequacy of seating and other facilities for young people (Management - standard 21)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to review the arrangements for young people to have telephone contact with their parents or carers (Positive contribution - Standard 19).

