

Chart Wood School

Taynton Drive, Merstham, Redhill, Surrey RH1 3PU

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Chart Wood School has recently converted to academy status. It provides for both day and residential boy pupils aged from nine to 16 years. There are 90 pupils on roll, with provision for 24 boarding at any time. At the time of the inspection, there were 23 residential pupils accessing the provision on different boarding arrangements. There is one residential unit on the school site. The school takes young people who have been unable to succeed in mainstream school and who have education, health and care plans arising from social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and mental health needs.

Inspection dates: 4 to 6 February 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and/or the care and experiences of children and young people are poor.

Date of previous inspection: n/a

Overall judgement at last inspection: n/a

Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school is inadequate because:

- Children's needs are not assessed before they take up a residential placement.
- Safeguarding knowledge and practice are poor. There have been delays in recognising and referring safeguarding concerns.
- Children are not consistently given the strategies to begin to learn how to keep themselves safe while in the community.
- Staff are unable to manage effectively all the risks posed to children in their care because risk assessments do not take into account all relevant matters and are not updated following significant incidents.
- The head of care has not had any formal supervision by leaders in the school to ensure that she has the capacity for the responsibility that she holds.
- The self-evaluation of the residential provision does not identify weaknesses found during the inspection.
- Staff have not been provided with necessary training to ensure that they recognise specific vulnerabilities.

The residential special school's strengths are:

- There are plans in place by the new organisation to review the boarding practice. Additional support for the senior leadership team is being provided.
- Staff are child-centred in their approach and children have good relationships with the staff.
- Children benefit from a wide range of activities on offer. Children enjoy spending time in the residential provision, and they have a lot of fun.
- There are various opportunities for children to give their views on how the residential provision is run.

What does the residential special school need to do to improve?

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools:

- 1.1 A suitable statement of the school's principles and practice to be known as the Statement of Purpose is available to parents and staff, is made known to children through an appropriate method of communication and is seen to work in practice. The statement describes the overall purpose of the school and describes any theoretical or therapeutic model underpinning the practice of the school. It also explains the ethos and philosophy of the school, and provides an outline of provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 2.4 The school makes all reasonable efforts to obtain all necessary information about a child's health, education and care needs, prior attainment and achievements prior to (or in an emergency, at the time of) admission.
- 5.1 Suitable sleeping accommodation is provided for children. It is well organised and managed with risk assessments undertaken and the findings acted upon to reduce risk for all children. Where children are aged 8 years or over, sleeping accommodation for boys is separate from sleeping accommodation for girls.
- 6.3 The school ensures that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.
- 11.1 The school ensures that: arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 13.1 The school's governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision in the school, and takes appropriate action where necessary.
- 13.3 The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role.
- 13.4 The school's leadership and management consistently fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met.
- 13.5 The school's leadership and management actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.
- 19.1 Staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the children as they relate to the purpose of the setting. Training keeps them up-to-date with professional, legal and practice developments and reflects the policies, legal obligations and business needs of the school.

- 19.6 All staff have access to support and advice for their role. They also have regular supervision and formal annual appraisal of their performance.
- 21.1 The school produces a written placement plan, agreed as far as is practicable with the child, the child's parents/carers and any placing authority for the child, unless the information is held elsewhere such as in the child's statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan. The placement plan identifies the needs of that child that the school should meet and specifies how the school will care for the child and promote their welfare on a day to day basis. Where significant changes are made to the placement plan there is appropriate consultation. Where applicable the plan is consistent with the care plan of the placing authority for any child placed by a local authority. The placement plan is regularly reviewed and amended as necessary to reflect significant changes in the child's needs or progress in his or her development. Where feasible, children in the school are aware of the content of their placement plans, and confirm that the school is providing care for them that is consistent with the plans.
- 21.2 Each child has at least one key worker (or similar person) within the school who provides individual guidance and support to the child. They regularly make time available to the child to enable the child to seek guidance, advice and support on any matter. They monitor the school's compliance on a day to day basis with the child's placement plan.
- 22.1 Every child has an accurate, permanent record of their history and progress which can be read by the child at any time (except where the data controller is not obliged to supply the information to the child), and add personal statements or statements correcting errors.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

There is no formal assessment of children's needs prior to them taking up a residential placement. It is therefore difficult to ensure that the right services are provided for them or to ensure that the staff have the necessary skills to meet the children's needs. The staff team's understanding of individual children's vulnerabilities is limited and its ability to manage and support them is compromised as a result. The compatibility of the groupings of children has not been fully considered.

Despite the school placing an emphasis on meeting children's mental health needs, there is a lack of a coordinated approach in the residential setting to support these needs. All of the children have a significant need for this type of support to prepare them to manage to live within society's boundaries effectively. There is insufficient focus on developing children's skills to keep themselves safe.

Key-work sessions are not regular and focus on everyday matters. Sessions do not explore areas of vulnerability or consider the support the child needs. Targets are put in place for each child but they are not specific and lack clarity for staff and children about how they will be met. Information-sharing between the school and residential setting is disjointed and individual targets and risks are not clearly shared.

Children enjoy positive and trusting relationships with the staff who care for them. Children informed inspectors that they enjoy the residential experience. They are given opportunities to engage in activities that they haven't previously experienced. Staff give careful thought to the range and type of activities that children can take part in. Children can express their views and they recognise that they are listened to. They are involved in the recruitment of new staff and there is a boarding forum in place.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

Safeguarding arrangements are weak. Staff have insufficient capacity and knowledge to deal safely and effectively with the number of safeguarding referrals they receive. Staff focus on child protection matters but do not give sufficient attention to the risks children face from wider safeguarding matters. Staff have insufficient understanding of the impact of children's histories, including that of abuse in increasing their vulnerability to further abuse, and do not recognise risk factors in the community arising from emerging safeguarding issues, such as county lines and exploitation.

Risk assessments do not consider all relevant factors and are not updated quickly enough in response to new information or incidents, including the outcome of investigations into allegations or serious incidents, such as fire setting. In one instance, significant information was not considered when a decision was made to

allow children to share a bedroom. This failure led to children being exposed to an unacceptable level of risk.

Risk assessments do not include the necessary detail to enable staff to understand their responsibilities and the action they need to take to keep all children safe. Safety plans have not been put in place following serious incidents or allegations. Insufficient consideration is given to patterns and trends of behaviour and risks from others, so referrals are not always made to the local authority safeguarding team when the threshold for such a referral has been met.

Recently, the capacity of the safeguarding team has been reviewed and systems and policies have been revised. These changes have not yet had a positive impact on safeguarding practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Self-evaluation and monitoring by leaders in the residential provision is ineffective and does not reflect the findings of this inspection. Senior leaders have not identified the serious shortfalls in safeguarding or the failure to properly assess and meet individual children's needs. Concerns highlighted by independent monitoring visits have not been acted upon. The school's leadership and management have not fulfilled their responsibilities effectively to ensure that children are safe.

Staff are inducted into their role in the residential provision and they demonstrate that they want the best for children and have high aspirations for them. They work together as a team and are positive about the direct support they receive from their manager. The head of care currently receives reflective supervision from an independent person. She doesn't receive any formal supervision from leaders in the school to enable her to develop and improve the residential facility.

Staff have the necessary qualifications for their roles and there have been training packages put in place. However, these have been insufficient to equip staff to meet all the children's needs. Staff have undertaken some training in peer-on-peer abuse, but none on recognising and managing sexualised behaviours.

New leadership and management arrangements have recently been put in place. Senior leaders accept the weaknesses found during this inspection and are in the early stages of making plans to address them.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people

and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the school knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the national minimum standards.

Residential special school details

Social care unique reference number: 2523136

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Ms Jo-Anne Gale

Type of school: residential special school

Telephone number: 01737 215 488

Email address: joanne.gale@cws.surrey.sch.uk

Inspectors

Emeline Evans, social care inspector (lead)
Ruth Coler, social care inspector



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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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