

Grateley House School

Grateley House School, Pond Lane, Grateley, Andover, Hampshire SP11 8TA
Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Grateley House is an independent residential special school that is part of the Cambian Group, a national company that specialises in providing residential care and education for young people who are on the autistic spectrum. The school provides co-educational, weekly and termly residential care and education for students from nine to 19 years of age. There are currently 35 residential pupils who are based in accommodation provided in seven separate areas in the main school site. A further 9 residential places are also available in a Care Quality Commission-registered home in Salisbury. The residential provision's last inspection was integrated with education and took place in June 2016.

Inspection dates: 10 to 12 October 2017

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The residential special school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of previous inspection: 28 June 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement

Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school is good because:

- Managers provide strong leadership to an increasingly stable staff team.
- Change to the leadership and management of the school is having a positive impact. Leaders, managers and the governing body are clear about the areas that the school needs to improve and have started to implement a clear development plan.
- The admission and moving-on procedures are very effective and result in very good outcomes for individual young people. Destinations for young people who leave range from vocational to further and higher education placements.
- Access to the on-site multi-professional therapy team is simple. The team provides pupils and staff with support during challenging times. This can be on a day-to-day basis or more long term.
- Embracing diversity is a strength of the school and staff team.
- The provision and management of individual dietary requirements is excellent.
- The school has recognised and acted on identified needs such as increasing support for mental health and well-being.

The residential special school's areas for development are:

- Improving the monitoring and reviewing of areas, such as admission criteria, taking the increased mental health needs of young people into consideration, and ensuring that the continued training of staff meets those needs.
- Monitoring and reviewing the staffing of the residential accommodation to ensure sufficient staffing levels, so that all young people have equal access to staff at all times.
- Reviewing the provision of homework after school and how it is managed.
- Reviewing systems to evidence progress made by young people during their time in the residential provision.
- Providing written risk assessments in relation to decisions around matching young people to their accommodation at night times.
- Reviewing the independence programme so that pupils are able to undertake additional age-appropriate tasks and risks.

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

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

- 13.1 The school's governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the residential provision and welfare provision in the school, and takes appropriate action where necessary.

Recommendations

- Leaders and managers to continue with the quality improvement programme.
- Implement homework for residential pupils in response to feedback from some parents and pupils.
- Implement written risk assessments in relation to decisions around matching young people in the residential provision.
- Continue with the plans for financial investment in the residential provision.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The school ensures that learning disability is not a barrier to achievement. Diversity is embraced and pupils do not experience discrimination. This allows all pupils to feel safe and able to express their own individuality. Progress includes being able to talk to other young people and to act in socially acceptable ways. Some students can now make friends with other students and others feel confident to explore their sexuality and gender identity.

Outcomes across both residential and education range from good to excellent. Feedback from some parents, and which is supported by some pupils, identifies the lack of homework given to residential pupils. This is currently being considered by the school's education team. Education leaders are new in post and are keen to work with parents to ensure that they are happy with the education provided.

Residential monitoring systems are of a good quality and centred on the outcomes for each young person. Pupils have daily and longer-term targets that they set with their key workers. These targets are regularly monitored through key-worker meetings, with good oversight of progress through supervision sessions held between managers and key workers. These supervision sessions specifically focus on key pupils. Recording of progress is an area that leaders are looking to improve by introducing new electronic systems. All students are able to make their views, wishes and feelings known through key-work sessions, individual meetings, and the school council. In addition, students can talk to the anti-bullying committee and the food council. All meetings are overseen by staff and immediate action is taken in response to concerns and requests. A children's charity also provides an independent visitor, who attends every half term and who pupils can talk to. Throughout this inspection, pupils were seen to express themselves freely and with ease. They were listened to and provided with excellent support.

The emotional well-being of the pupils is given priority. Staff are trained and knowledgeable in understanding the needs associated with autistic spectrum conditions and how to respond to individual needs. The increased mental health and well-being needs of the pupils have been addressed by the provision of a range of professionals, such as a psychiatrist, a psychologist, a speech and language therapist, a cognitive behavioural therapist and an occupational therapist, all being located on the school site. This gives both pupils and staff instant access to professional advice, support and therapy. In addition, the staff have received training provided by these professionals. The school is currently recruiting a mental health nurse to further support pupils and the staff team.

Pupils are encouraged to follow healthy lifestyles and to recognise what this means for them. A nurse provides day-to-day cover for monitoring pupils' general health, first aid and an oversight of medication administration. There are procedures in place to monitor staff's competency in administering medicines. If errors occur, appropriate action is taken with further training provided if required. Food is freshly made and of

an excellent standard. Whenever possible, it is freshly prepared on site. There is a wide choice of meals on offer and pupils have the opportunity to cook for themselves and the group. The head of catering meets with students at least once a term to review the menu. Catering staff understand all young people's dietary needs and preferences and ensure that there is always an option that the young people will like.

Pupils receive a well-structured arrival and moving-on experience. They are supported to gain independent life skills while at the school. However, this area of work needs to be further developed to ensure that pupils are allowed to undertake more age-appropriate tasks and risks. Day and weekend activities are planned and suggestions from pupils acted on.

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

Child protection and safeguarding is well managed at the school. Policies and procedures provide very suitable guidance for ensuring that safe practices are maintained. Staff are trained so that they are able to recognise and report on concerns or allegations and in the management of these areas. Good contacts with external safeguarding agencies provide additional support to the staff who oversee this area. There is a prompt response to safeguarding concerns with swift referrals to child protection services. Records are clear and monitored by the safeguarding team and independent visitor. The Principal and two other designated safeguarding leads are experienced in managing concerns and allegations. The local authority safeguarding lead has no concerns about the school's ability to manage safeguarding and says that key staff effectively liaise with them. The school has recently undertaken a Hampshire safeguarding board audit that showed no areas of concern.

Pupils do not leave the school site unaccompanied by staff; this minimises the potential for them coming to harm. Similarly, pupils' access to the internet is supervised and monitored which limits the potential for them to become exploited via social media websites. In addition, pupils sign a user agreement and are made aware of the code of conduct for use of mobile phones. Pupils and parents are given guidance on safe internet use, which helps prepare pupils for the future.

Pupils say that they feel safe in the residential provision. Their behaviour and demeanour show that they are comfortable with staff, even in challenging times. Residential staff have an excellent understanding of each individual's vulnerabilities and care plans reflect this. Individual risk assessments explain what circumstances and situations may cause a concern and how staff can lessen the risk. Matching of pupils to individual residential houses is undertaken with sensitivity; however, there are no records of how decisions are made.

Positive behaviour is promoted through consistency in approach to unwanted and inappropriate behaviours. Incidents of concern are monitored through weekly multi-disciplinary meetings, and new strategies and approaches are agreed as necessary. The expert knowledge of the on-site therapeutic professionals allows for the most appropriate strategies to be put in place immediately. All staff have training in a recognised behaviour management technique during their induction period. Pupils are given space and time to express themselves and responses to unwanted

behaviour allow individuals to consider their actions, negotiate with staff or respond differently. Staff have a keen understanding of each pupil's anxieties and situations that may cause them to become worried or distressed. Close liaison with the therapy team ensures that individual concerns and behaviours are respected and understood and only challenged when it is the individual's best interests to do so.

Pupils are safe from avoidable hazards through regular checks of the building and grounds and firefighting equipment. Pupils engage in fire drills termly and know what action to take in the event of a fire. Safer recruitment processes are in place and extra checks are sought for applicants who have recently lived overseas.

Accommodation is homely and of an adequate standard and bedrooms can be personalised. There are plans to upgrade some areas in the near future.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders, managers and the governing body are effective in recognising and acting on areas for improvement and making change happen. There is a quality improvement programme in place that identifies issues that parents have raised and areas highlighted internally by the leaders. During this time of change, the leadership and management of the residential provision has remained stable and strong. The residential provision is led by a very suitably experienced, skilled and qualified head of care, who is supported by capable and competent senior staff.

The leadership team, including the governing body, had already identified the areas inspectors found that would benefit from further development and put in place plans to address shortfalls.

Staffing retention has improved since the start of 2017, with more staff now in place and a decreasing number of staff leaving. This provides increased consistency in the care of the pupils. Managers are aware of the challenges staff face when incidents of challenging behaviour take them away from caring for other pupils. There appears to be sufficient staffing at these times to ensure safety. However, it is an area that the managers are continually monitoring. A programme of prioritised training needs has been identified and rolled out over recent months. There has also been some staff movement between individual residential houses at the start of this academic school year. Consideration has been given to moving staff with their key-working pupil wherever possible to aid consistency and familiarisation. Most staff have one key-working pupil, while those more senior may have two.

Staff are committed to the pupils they support. They work consistently as a team and feel supported by the leaders in the school. Staff benefit from regular, constructive supervision and annual appraisals of their performance. There are plans to implement a new supervision format for staff in the very near future.

Communication between teams in the school is a particular strength. Weekly meetings with leaders, managers and therapists discuss young people who may need extra support. Staff have the opportunity to meet with therapists during weekly drop-in sessions, and morning briefings ensure that staff are aware of key information.

Handovers at the beginning and end of the school day provide the opportunity for information sharing on pupils' progress and well-being, ensuring that any issues can be addressed through a whole school approach. Liaison and communication with external services and professionals further support young people's growth and development. Leaders and managers work closely with parents to address any concerns or complaints that they may have to achieve positive outcomes.

There are well-established systems for monitoring the quality of care being provided. Half-termly reports are shared with the governing body and include an analysis of behaviour management, missing incidents, sanctions, safeguarding and bullying allegations. In addition, the effectiveness of the school in meeting pupils' needs is reported on. An action plan is closely monitored by the governing body. An independent visitor visits once every half term and provides a detailed report on the residential provision.

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: SC012450

Principal: Mark McQuillan

Type of school: Residential special school

Telephone number: 01264 889751

Email address: mark.mcquillan@cambianguroup.com

Inspectors

Liz Driver, social care inspector (lead)
Suzy Lemmy, social care inspector



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017