

Grateley House School

Pond Lane, Grateley, Andover, Hampshire SP11 8TA

Inspection dates

5–7 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Sixth form provision	Good
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Continued turbulence in staffing and vacancies in the care and therapy teams mean that this school is less effective than it could or should be.
- The proprietor and leaders have not ensured good personal and academic outcomes for pupils overall. The residential accommodation is not currently suitable in one house.
- Leaders' improvement strategy is not tight enough. They do not organise or make best use of all of the information available to them to promote faster improvement. The school development plan is not fit for purpose.
- Some pupils do not attend lessons regularly enough, which hampers their progress.
- Some staff do not feel confident in dealing successfully with pupils' increasingly complex needs. Staffing shortages have reduced the amount of available training.
- Views of pupils, parents and staff about the school are understandably very mixed.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all of the national minimum standards and independent school standards are met. Reports to directors about the residential provision do not cover all requirements.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders and staff are committed to the young people in their care. They work tirelessly in often challenging circumstances. The safeguarding culture is strong.
- When pupils attend lessons, the strong teaching and curriculum usually mean they make strong progress. Post-16 provision is good.
- There is a rich and exciting curriculum.

Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for residential special schools

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the national minimum standards for residential special schools and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management, including governance, to secure good or better personal development, behaviour, welfare and outcomes for residential and day pupils by:
 - stabilising staffing, especially in the residential and therapy teams, and securing sufficient high-quality staff to fulfil the school's statement of purpose
 - providing sufficient training and support to improve staff confidence and competence in meeting pupils' increasingly complex needs
 - improving the attendance of those who frequently miss lessons so that they sustain stronger progress over time
 - using the information held about pupils' academic progress and personal development more effectively to evaluate the school's overall effectiveness
 - ensuring that systems used to record information about pupils' behaviour, personal development and welfare support leaders and staff to identify overall patterns and trends promptly and secure the necessary improvements
 - sharpening the school's development plans so that they are precise about the difference the actions are intended to make and detail how their success will be measured and checked
 - checking that the half-yearly reports reviewing the operation and resourcing of the school's residential provision include all those matters detailed in national minimum standard (NMS) 20.4, specifically, its statement of purpose, staffing policy, the placement plans for individual children and the internal assessment of compliance with the standards
 - establishing sufficient facilities in every residential house for the number and needs of the pupils accommodated
 - strengthening communication with pupils, parents and carers, and staff, explaining, wherever possible, the reasons why leaders have made the decisions they have about the best courses of action.
- The school must meet the national minimum standards for residential special schools and the independent school standards, as set out in the annex of this report.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
The effectiveness of leaders and managers in the residential provision	Requires improvement
How well children and young people are helped and protected in the residential provision	Good

- Ongoing difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, particularly in the care and therapy teams, have hampered the genuine efforts to improve the school since the previous inspection.
- The proprietor and leaders have not ensured that the residential provision has fulfilled the school's statement of purpose. Although staff offer sensitive care to pupils, in practice this does not extend to the 'opportunities to revisit early missed "nurturing" experiences' as described in the statement. Most staff have only had a taster session in the specified parenting course that the statement asserts is attended by all staff. When asked, staff were not able to say how the training has affected their practice.
- Staffing shortages have meant that care staff have had to concentrate on those pupils who have the potential to be disruptive or unsafe, leaving others without the level of care needed to help them develop and achieve as well as they could.
- Leaders do not use demonstrable evidence well enough in reaching their own conclusions about the school's effectiveness. Partly this is because some of the school's systems do not readily allow leaders to sift a wealth of information about pupils' behaviour and personal development to make comparisons, or identify patterns and trends. This makes it difficult for leaders to be absolutely certain whether the school is improving quickly enough.
- There have been significant changes of leadership since the previous inspection. The small senior education team has creative and thoughtful plans for the future which centre on meeting the full range of pupils' needs. However, the partnership between the new principal and head of education has been in place for less than a year. Consequently, some potentially major and well-reasoned changes, although showing positive signs of improvement, are still at a relatively early stage.
- Staff are committed to, and passionate about, the school. Care, therapy and education staff communicate and work closely together in the best interests of pupils. Managers have introduced a new format for supervision of care staff that has provided a better structure for sessions. Staff take opportunities to reflect carefully on their practice, adapting their approach, aimed at improving outcomes for pupils.
- Although leaders work hard to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of staff on each shift in the residential provision, often these staff may be from other houses. Consequently, sometimes they do not know the pupils well enough to support them fully. Some staff do not feel sufficiently well trained to deal with some of the increasingly complex needs of pupils. The extent of available training and support from the therapy team has suffered as a result of being overstretched by the vacancies.
- Senior leaders have correctly identified the potential to further develop the leadership

capacity of existing education staff. For example, the school's internally designed system for tracking pupils' academic progress is long-established and refined. Consequently, the information it contains is well used by subject teachers to plan for their own pupils and classes. The very recently formed middle leadership team can see the potential to make even more use of this valuable information to improve the school's overall effectiveness.

- The exciting and enriching curriculum, throughout and beyond the school day, contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of British values. Where possible, staff willingly introduce or adapt activities to cater for pupils' individual interests, in addition to seeking ways to broaden their experiences.
- School leaders are not complacent. For example, they commissioned a report into the quality of the physical environment of one of the residential houses to identify necessary improvements. However, important improvement tools, such as the school development plan, are cumbersome and unwieldy. Although the suggested actions are reasonable, plans are too focused on completing tasks, without a clear picture of why, or what difference the various actions are intended to make.
- Through this turbulent period, leaders have not secured the confidence of a considerable minority of pupils, parents and staff who have reservations about the school's effectiveness. The morale among care staff, in particular, is low. The concerns expressed are not always well founded, but the communication from leaders has not been as clear or strong as it could be to provide greater reassurance.
- A number of parents, pupils and staff are overwhelmingly positive and proud of the school and the positive difference it has made to pupils' lives. They praise the willingness of the school to adapt to meet individual needs, with phrases such as 'bowled over' and 'patience and dedication' reflective of the repeating themes.

Governance

- The proprietor discharges its responsibilities through the group's board of directors. Although there are no safeguarding breaches, the proprietor has not ensured that all statutory requirements in relation to Grateley House are met.
- Directors recognise that the school is not currently as effective as it should be. However, although being rightly candid about areas of weakness, and frustrated by difficulties in recruiting staff and therapists, directors have not secured enough improvement to secure the overall quality that pupils deserve. Recent improvements aimed at bringing tighter checks of what is going well, and what is not, have not been in place for long enough to have made a marked difference.
- School leaders openly share detailed information about the performance of the school with directors. However, some information, for example about behaviour, is not shared in a form that makes it easy to identify patterns or trends over time. There is insufficient helpful challenge of school leaders by directors about the quality of education to drive faster improvement.
- The head of care reports regularly to directors about the operation of the school's residential provision. However, the review does not include all the matters required by the national minimum standards (NMS). An assessment is made of the school's compliance with the standards, but it is not incorporated into the review.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The culture of safeguarding is strong. Leaders manage well issues that arise, drawing promptly on external expertise where helpful and appropriate. Their actions are prompt and thorough to ensure that pupils are made safe.
- Leaders are deeply reflective about how pupils' special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities may influence their ability to keep themselves safe. Pupils' key workers, in particular, establish effective relationships with pupils. They regularly update individual risk assessments and plans, paying close attention to any changes or developments affecting each pupil.
- The school's safeguarding policy is suitably informed by relevant guidance from the Secretary of State and published on the school's website. It is necessarily detailed, but easy to navigate, with crucial information, such as to whom to refer concerns, and is easy to locate. Staff are typically well versed in how to put the policies into effect.
- Leaders identify and use wisely any learning from incidents to strengthen the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. However, the school's sex and relationships policy does not provide sufficient guidance on assessing whether older students are competent to make their own decisions in this area or, if they are not, when to involve those with parental responsibility to assist.
- A wide variety of thorough risk assessments are carried out in accordance with the school's policies, acting on potential problems to ensure that pupils are safe. Actions to strengthen security measures are proportionate and robust.
- The single central record meets and exceeds statutory requirements. Highly competent and knowledgeable maintenance of this register, and the associated checks, chart the precise details of a wealth of information and checks carried out to ensure the suitability of all adults to work with pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- When pupils successfully attend and take part in lessons, they benefit from strong teaching.
- Established routines and well-prepared lessons contribute to a purposeful and productive atmosphere. Teachers keep pupils' SEN and/or disabilities at the forefront of their minds when setting up the environment, resources and additional support aimed at ensuring pupils' success.
- Staff know individual pupils extremely well and typically maintain high expectations of what they can achieve. Pupils' individual needs and best ways of learning are generally well catered for in lessons. Despite high ratios of staff to pupils, pupils are encouraged to make choices. Their independence is nurtured according to their individual needs and abilities. Life skills sessions in the post-16 provision are particularly personalised and focused.
- Classroom relationships are strong, helpfully supporting pupils' learning and personal development. Teachers are adept at judging the right tone and approach to take with pupils. Daily teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

well. Very effective teaching in creative subjects complement regular opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to think, reflect and offer opinions. Classrooms are safe environments where pupils are willing to 'have a go'.

- Teachers' strong subject knowledge means that they are competent, confident and well respected by pupils. Carefully and logically planned sequences of work promote strong learning and progress for pupils who routinely attend lessons. This skilful and knowledgeable teaching deepens pupils' understanding of concepts, and supports them to build, develop and refine their own ideas, for example in art.
- The effective and proactive work of teaching assistants makes a significant difference to pupils' learning and the smooth running of lessons. Teaching assistants' own strong subject knowledge, especially in English, mathematics and science, is a particular asset.
- Adults combine their strong knowledge of both their subjects and each pupil to provide them with frequent and effective feedback. Teachers are watchful during lessons and judge carefully when to intervene to alleviate any building anxiety for pupils, tackle a misconception, or promote an important learning point.
- Leaders evaluate the quality of teaching accurately. They have identified the small variabilities and relative weaknesses within a strong overall picture. Leaders have devised a clear strategy for making the best practice the norm across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Despite significant strengths in this aspect of the school's work, shortages and turnover of staff in the care and therapy teams have undermined the school's previous success in this area. The assessment and addressing of pupils' individual needs, the promotion of their well-being and pupils' readiness to attend lessons have all suffered as a result.
- Staff take incidents seriously, including alleged bullying or other potentially discriminatory behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to report issues, which are acted on by staff and managers. Copious written records show that adults explore incidents thoroughly, doing their best to resolve sometimes complex situations and prevent them re-occurring. However, the communication about these efforts with all affected parties is not effective enough to instil sufficient confidence that matters have been suitably dealt with.
- Staff actively seek pupils' views and opinions through key-worker sessions, house meetings and a particularly effective school council.
- The day school environment, inside and out, is attractive and conducive to the well-being of the particular pupils that use the facilities. The purpose of each space is well established, and spaces are uncluttered and clearly labelled. Staff accompany pupils when using any alternative provision to ensure continuity of pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare when off site.
- While residential pupils may return to their houses, day pupils have their own comfortable and dedicated space, where they can choose to get refreshments and relax. Relationships

between supervising staff and pupils are strong.

- The introduction of 'student services', particularly to support pupils who are struggling during, or getting to, lessons, has been generally warmly welcomed. As well as housing some of the school's proactive strategies, such as pet therapy, it occupies pupils not coping in lessons, providing them with more meaningful activities than might have been available in the past. Early signs are that this is having a positive impact for particular individuals, helping to get them back on track.
- The recently introduced 'base camp' for younger pupils, aimed at supporting transition and preparing pupils for more formal learning, has established rapidly. It has already had a clear and demonstrable impact on these pupils' engagement and development. Indications show that it is providing a helpful bridge to gradually acclimatise pupils to the secondary timetable. However, until this transition is complete, it is too soon to fully evaluate the difference that base camp has made.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Although the rates of pupils entering the education provision for each half-day session are high, actual attendance in lessons is low. This has a marked effect in limiting the progress pupils could otherwise make, despite the strong teaching that exists. There are some individual success stories of significant improvements. However, recently tightened procedures for monitoring and tackling lesson attendance have not been in place for long enough to lift attendance to where it needs to be.
- When pupils are enabled and feel ready to take part in the school day, their behaviour is typically very positive. Pupils mostly listen respectfully to each other. They get on promptly with tasks and try hard to answer questions in class. Many are polite, confident and friendly as they move around the school.
- The assembly observed during the inspection reflected a well-established routine. It was a calm and uplifting start to the day. Pupils behaved impeccably, demonstrating suitably mature and respectful conduct according to the social situation. Those who wished to contribute, encouraged by the leader of the assembly, spoke confidently and articulately.
- In the residential provision, staff attempt to maintain consistent boundaries in order to help pupils. However, they admit that when under pressure, they do whatever they regard as best in the circumstances. Some staff lack confidence to manage disruption and feel at a loss when pupils do not stop anti-social behaviour when told.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- With the exception of post-16 students, overall pupils' progress is patchy as a result of the issues hampering their personal development and attendance. Even considering pupils' complex needs, with more consistent and targeted tackling of barriers affecting their readiness to learn, academic progress could reasonably be stronger.
- As a result of this variable progress over time, results at the end of key stage 4 have declined from the good levels of achievement found at the previous inspection. In recent years, pupils have attained a smaller range of GCSEs, often at lower grades. Fewer of the

most able pupils reach the best grades of which they might otherwise be capable.

- When attending lessons regularly, pupils of all abilities typically make strong progress and start to catch up where they have previously fallen behind. On entry, typically pupils have not attained the academic standards of which they are capable. Many have significant gaps in their learning and often negative prior experiences of education. There are striking individual success stories of pupils taking significant strides from this point, and achieving extremely positive results.
- The variable picture of progress linked with attendance is similarly evident in English, mathematics and science. Changes in staffing had an additional impact on rates of pupils' progress in English earlier this academic year, with progress in English overall still lagging behind mathematics as a result.
- The diverse and plentiful range of enriching activities, both within and beyond the school day, makes a very important contribution to raising pupils' self-esteem and cultivating more positive views about education. Pupils produce some breathtaking artwork, skilfully fashioned stringed instruments in design technology, and delicious-smelling and attractive products in food technology. Skilful and creative music-making also has a high profile in the school, embracing varied musical instruments, genres and styles.
- Work this academic year to extend the range of vocational qualifications available to pupils has got off to a promising start, although it is too soon to see a sustained impact on pupils' outcomes. In the past, the range of options for pupils that would lead to a qualification, certificate or accreditation has been more limited.

Sixth form provision

Good

- With strong leadership and much better attendance rates, outcomes for post-16 students are good. Working in close partnership with a number of sixth-form colleges, the school supports students to achieve positive results, with some particularly impressive individual examples.
- Leaders have successfully secured a number of very beneficial partnerships with a range of other providers of post-16 provision. Keen to support the interests, aptitudes and ambitions of each student, the particular links forged vary year on year. Tight management of these arrangements through written agreements and frequent liaison helps staff monitor closely students' attendance and punctuality, and how well they are applying themselves to their studies.
- Transition into and out of the sixth form is strong. Students very rarely leave part-way through their course. Leaders are tenacious in working with students' home authorities in securing the right support for particular students for when they leave. The absence of young people not in education, employment or training on leaving the post-16 provision is an especially noteworthy achievement.
- Students benefit from highly individualised programmes of vocational or academic courses, or a combination of both. Programmes and timetables are designed flexibly to support strong outcomes for each student. Where necessary, suitable provision is made for students to continue to work towards functional English and mathematics qualifications, or GCSEs, alongside other academic or vocational studies.
- A rich range of meaningful work experience, as well as creative opportunities for other

work-related learning, promote students' personal development and skills well. Where relevant, the school provides structured, meaningful and effective teaching of important life skills. Students have confidence in the impartial careers guidance they receive, which is sensibly personalised at critical points.

- Unmet independent school standards identified during this inspection are not detrimental to the post-16 provision, and nor do they have a significant impact on post-16 students. Leaders have a clear view of ways that the provision can be further improved. This includes sustaining and building on the recent successful work to further enhance the opportunities for the development of vocational and life skills.

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision

Requires improvement

- Pupils largely enjoy the experience of living in the residential provision. Older pupils getting ready to move on after completing this academic year credit the school with having helped improve their education, attainment, independence and social skills.
- The promotion of pupils' physical, emotional and social development means that some pupils have made considerable progress. Others have been unable to make any significant changes. For example, staff have not found ways of helping to improve the attendance of some pupils who refuse to go to school. However, staff do support the education of those pupils by helping them with work sent by teachers.
- Staff arrange constructive activities for pupils both on- and off site. Efforts are made to promote pupils' own interests, assisting them to access clubs and facilities in the community, such as aqua-fit and yoga.
- Some houses have excellent facilities, with large communal areas and their own gardens. Others lack sufficient room for pupils to gather, apart from in bedrooms. Some houses have no ready access to outdoor spaces and have a layout that means that unobtrusive supervision by staff is difficult to achieve. Although managers have placed pupils who only stay during the week in this accommodation, it is not conducive to children's positive experience of living at the school.
- Managers consider the matching of different pupils living together in the same house and can account for decisions made, based on issues such as shared interests with peers or healthcare needs. However, they do not record their rationale, and it is not necessarily clear from admission documents how staff should address known risks. Documentation does not demonstrate that managers have considered the impact of placing a pupil new to a house with those already resident there. Neither does evidence show how decisions, such as placing boys and girls in adjoining bedrooms, are safe, based on clear assessment and remedial actions.
- Parents have mixed views of the residential provision. Some, for example, are critical of communication with them, while others believe they are 'always kept informed'. What they have in common is a view that the school has enabled them to cope better because their children are able to access the residential provision. As one mother said, 'I'm pretty sure I would not be able to cope without my son being there,' adding, 'I've never had any anxieties about him being away from home.'

School details

Unique reference number	116588
Social care unique reference number	SC012450
DfE registration number	850/6058
Inspection number	10047029

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school. The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent residential special school
Age range of pupils	9 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of students in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	64
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	16
Number of part-time pupils	0
Number of boarders on roll	40
Proprietor	Cambian Group
Chair	Tommy MacDonald-Milner
Principal	Mark McQuillan
Annual fees (day pupils)	£70,890
Annual fees (boarders)	£141,780
Telephone number	0800 138 1184
Website	www.cambianguroup.com/ourservices/service/home.aspx?Id=41
Email address	grateley.admin@cambianguroup.com

Date of previous inspection

28–30 June 2016

Information about this school

- Grateley House is an independent residential special school for pupils, usually in the average- or higher ability range, who have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder. Many pupils have other associated difficulties. Each pupil has an education, health and care plan and is usually placed at the school by their local authority. The large majority of pupils are residential, although the school also provides for a small number of day pupils.
- Residential pupils are accommodated in one of seven houses. Some post-16 students are accommodated at Stratford Lodge in Salisbury, which is inspected by the Care Quality Commission.
- Following a brief interim period in an acting role, the principal took up the substantive position in June 2017. The head of education started in September 2017.
- This was an integrated standard inspection, meaning that the education and residential provision were inspected at the same time. Since the school's previous integrated standard inspection, on 28 to 30 June 2016, it was subject to an integrated progress monitoring inspection, on 13 to 14 March 2017. The residential provision has also been inspected separately once since the previous full inspection, on 10 to 12 October 2017.
- The school works in partnership with River Bourne Community Farm, Salisbury SP1 2SR to create part-time alternative provision opportunities. The school also works with a range of post-16 providers to enhance and extend the offer for post-16 students. The current links are:
 - Andover College, Charlton Road, Andover SP10 1EJ
 - Sparsholt College, Westley Lane, Sparsholt SO21 2NF
 - Peter Symonds College, Owens Road, Winchester SO22 6RX
 - Wiltshire College Salisbury, Southampton Road, Salisbury SP1 2LW.

Information about this inspection

- Her Majesty's Inspector made 11 visits to classrooms for varying lengths of time to gather evidence during lessons. All except one of these observations were carried out jointly with the head of education. During these visits, the inspector observed what was happening, spoke with pupils and staff, and examined pupils' work. He also reviewed teachers' planning, and records and assessments of pupils' progress. The inspector scrutinised an additional sample of pupils' work and reviewed with leaders their analysis of current pupils' progress.
- Social Care Regulatory Inspectors visited the residential accommodation during and after the school day to observe the provision and speak with pupils and staff.
- The inspection team spoke with pupils, parents, staff from education and care teams, therapists, leaders and directors. They also sampled a wide range of the school's documentation, and records relevant to the quality of education and compliance with the independent school standards and national minimum standards.
- The inspection team took account of all responses to the point-in-time survey received since the previous inspection from pupils, parents and staff. They also considered 32 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They took account of all of the written comments that were added to these, and email correspondence from parents, alongside other inspection evidence.

Inspection team

Clive Dunn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Chris Peel

Social Care Regulatory Inspector

Suzy Lemmy

Social Care Regulatory Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must meet the following independent school standards

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 30 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that, where the school provides accommodation, regard is had to standard 5 of the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school—
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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

- 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 (NMS 1.1).
- 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 (NMS 5.1).
- There is a sufficient number of competent staff deployed appropriately, both as a staff group and on individual shifts, to fulfil the school's Statement of Purpose and meet the individual needs of all children resident in the school (NMS 15.1).

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