

Grateley House School

Grateley House School, Pond Lane, Grateley, Andover, Hampshire SP11 8TA

Inspection dates

4 and 5 March 2021

Context of the inspection

A welfare inspection took place on 10 to 12 March 2020, alongside an education inspection. The judgement was inadequate overall.

An assurance visit took place regarding the residential provision on 20 and 21 October 2020. Serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of young people were still present.

The purpose of this progress monitoring visit was to assess if the breaches of the national minimum standards have been suitably addressed.

During this visit, the inspector met with the head of care, staff and young people on site. Telephone calls and virtual meetings were held with other key staff and stakeholders due to COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

Senior leaders are working with the host authority on their improvement journey. However, there is no single individual responsible as the designated safeguarding lead. The current arrangement splits responsibilities between care and education. This could result in concerns not being shared across the disciplines. The safeguarding structure is not in accordance with statutory guidance. Despite this, senior leaders have worked with other professionals to keep a young person as safe as possible while supporting the young person to be accountable, take responsibility and develop independence.

While strategies have been implemented in practice to keep young people safe, some of these are not recorded explicitly in the risk management plans. The lack of clarity could lead to an inconsistent approach. The previous concerns about assessing the vulnerability of young people when forming relationships have been addressed. Senior leaders are working with other agencies and parents to keep young people as safe as possible, given their age and level of understanding.

Senior leaders have taken suitable precautions during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has meant that staff are working in 'bubbles.' This has improved collaborative working and

communication between academic and residential staff. Senior leaders recognise the need to maintain this relationship as restrictions are lifted.

Current staffing arrangements are suitable. There is a mix of experienced staff and newer staff members. The head of care ensures that staff are suitably deployed to meet the needs of the young people in their care. Senior leaders acknowledge the potential for staffing shortages when they admit new young people into the provision again. They have a recruitment strategy to address the potential shortfalls. A headteacher and head of education have recently been appointed with an imminent start date.

Senior leaders have addressed the shortfalls found in the arrangements for accommodation. They have reconfigured some of the buildings to increase the communal space and access to cooking facilities. Accommodation is well presented and has the feel of a domestic environment. The head of care is reviewing all bedroom doors to ensure that there is a 'thumb-turn' lock on the inside of each one.

Senior leaders, including the governance board, have put systems in place to monitor the quality of care. This has included addressing the gaps in analysing and following up on safeguarding concerns. The high priority group meets regularly to keep action points on target.

In some respects, care planning has improved. Staff have considered the cultural and identity needs of young people and incorporated these into placement plans. They consider the mental and emotional well-being of young people, for example by considering the underlying reasons for self-injurious behaviour. Staff speak highly of their easy access to the on-site mental health specialist for guidance and advice. The head of care has improved the impact risk assessment and admission process to maximise the chance of a successful placement.

In other respects, care planning needs further consideration. There are conflicting views between the school, a family member and placing authority on the plans for one young person who has not been in the provision for some time. The young person remains on roll at the school but with limited educational provision while they are at home.

The number of incidents requiring physical intervention are low. The plans to install a centralised, school-wide system to monitor incidents and behaviour have been put on hold. This is not currently having a negative impact on young people. Senior leaders have created, and recruited to, a new role of a positive behaviour support lead. Staff have documented significant incidents well and reflected on practice. Their approach, in one incident, has meant that a young person has neither been criminalised or permanently excluded.

Senior leaders have not yet formed a consultative parent group even though they had identified this in the action plan. This is a missed opportunity to consult with, and work collaboratively with, key stakeholders. Some parents were positive about communication and others were negative. One parent said that there are mixed messages due to different staff saying different things.

Senior leaders have ensured that the remedial work for fire safety has been completed. The necessary fire safety precautions are in place. Young people in the residential setting know how to evacuate in an emergency.

National minimum standards

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

- Where significant changes are made to the placement plan there is appropriate consultation. (National minimum standard 21.1)

Recommendations

- ensure that the role of the designated safeguarding lead covers care and education.
- ensure that the consultative parent group is formed in line with the action plan.
- ensure that all established risk management strategies are documented.

Inspection team

Keith Riley

Lead Social Care Inspector

Information about this 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 with autism spectrum disorder. The school provides co-educational termly residential care and education for students aged from nine to 19 with Asperger syndrome and associated difficulties within the autistic spectrum. There are currently 25 residential pupils within the school who are based in residential accommodation provided in six separate areas within the main school site. The seventh area is currently closed for refurbishment. A further 10 residential places are also available within a Care Quality Commission registered home in Salisbury. The school is located in the village of Grateley in Hampshire. The residential provision's last full inspection was in March 2020.

School details

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

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

The inspection was conducted in order to monitor the progress the school has made following the assurance visit in October 2020.

Type of school	Residential special school
Number of boarders on roll	25
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	9 to 19
Headteacher	Post vacant
Date of previous boarding inspection	10 to 12 March 2020
Telephone number	01264 889751
Email address	Eva.Pereira@cambiangroup.com

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