

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC038435
Inspection date	24 February 2010
Inspector	Dawn Taylor
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	17 June 2009
--------------------------------	--------------

© Crown copyright 2010

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

The 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

Service information

Brief description of the service

This provision is a children's home registered by Ofsted and a 52 week independent residential special school, registered and approved by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) for boys and girls aged six to 18 years with severe and complex learning needs. It has 10 residential homes with places for a total of 72 children. All students' have a statement of special educational needs and are funded, currently, by 38 local authorities. Many who enter this service have had several unsuccessful placements in previous schools. Each home is managed by a team leader and line managed through the Care Management team and the Head of Care.

The homes are as follows and accommodate the following number and age range of children:

Beech is a group home that accommodates six children and young people over 14 years,

Birch is a group home that accommodates 11 children and young people under 16 years,

Bracken is a group home that accommodates seven children and young people under 14 years,

Maple is a group home that accommodates three children and young people under 16 years,

Elm is a group home that accommodates seven young people over 14 years,

Firs is a group home that accommodates seven young people over 14 years,

Orchard is a group home that accommodates seven children and young people under 16 years,

Home Farm is a group home that accommodates four young people over 14 years,

Oak is a group home that accommodates six children and young people under 16 years and

Rowen is a group home that accommodates six children and young people under 16 years.

This service is a charitable organisation run by a board of trustees.

Summary

This inspection was an unannounced interim visit. The inspection focused on the arrangements for keeping students safe.

The overall quality rating for this setting is good, with a good outcome judgement for staying safe. Students live in a home that proactively safeguards and protects their welfare.

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

The school has met the one action and three recommendations set after the last inspection. All assessments of risk are now carried out to a high standard and identify and address all concerns across the whole site. All designated safeguarding officers have received local authority safeguarding training at level 2 and all written references are followed up by a verbal check,

that is recorded in writing prior to a staff members' employment. National Vocational Training is in place for all staff at appropriate levels.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Students safety continues to be effectively promoted because staff listen and take appropriate actions to ensure their welfare.

Staff ensure that students privacy is respected by modelling and teaching appropriate sensitive practice. This is reflected in the school's policies, procedures and guidance to staff. Confidential information about students is appropriately stored. All staff as part of their induction learn how to undertake personal care, however, they are not able to undertake any intimate care until they have completed behaviour management training and safeguarding training. This rule also applies to agency staff.

The school has an effective complaints procedure and information about this is available to students and parents in a range of formats. Whilst no formal complaints have been raised since the last inspection the school has processes in place to manage complaints and concerns quickly and to resolve complaints in a manner students and their families both understand and can agree with. Parents and carers are fully aware of the complaints process and staff use an outstanding variety of communication aids to help students raise any particular issues. Students' are assisted to communicate their concerns through the use of the 'Listen Up' pack promoted by Mencap. This is specifically designed to help children and young people with learning disabilities complain about the service they receive. Staff are also trained in and promote the use of this tool to assist students in communicating their views.

There is a safeguarding procedure that is reviewed and updated on a regular basis by the school. Staff are well informed and have up-to-date information and training on local safeguarding procedures. The school has nominated safeguarding officers who have attended the local authority's safeguarding training.

Students and parents receive clear information about countering bullying. Staff are very clear that any form of behaviour that causes distress to others, regardless of intent, is treated as a serious matter. Staff are provided with effective procedures to investigate any incidents and monitor outcomes. A new system of managing challenging behaviour has been introduced into the school. This is strengthened by outstanding support and guidance from the psychology department and there is regular monitoring and reflection of practice. Clear records are maintained of sanctions and physical interventions. The school's policy and procedure on unauthorised absences are clear and staff are aware of them. There have been no incidents since the last inspection.

The school has regularly updated risk assessments for all aspects of safety of the premises and grounds including fire, and students' behaviour and activities. These assessments are taken into account in the daily activities of the school as well as the houses and any activities off site and enable students to fully participate in activities, which could potentially present significant or unusual hazards.

Students continue to be protected by the setting's robust recruitment systems that ensures all staff employed complete the necessary recruitment checks and are deemed suitable to work before commencement of employment. A high number of key staff have attended safer recruitment training, this demonstrates the school's continuing commitment to the further development of the staff vetting procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is not judged.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is not judged.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
----------	--------	----------

Recommendations

There are no recommendations.