

Grafham Grange School

Grafham Grange, Horsham Road, Grafham, Bramley, Guildford, Surrey GU5 0LH
Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Grafham Grange School, situated in Surrey, is a non-maintained residential special school for up to 52 boys aged from 10 to 19 years with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, with provision for 33 boarding places. At the time of the inspection, there were 21 pupils on roll, including eight who board. The Radius Trust operates the school. All pupils attending the school have complex and challenging needs. Many will have experienced breakdowns of previous educational placements and have had periods out of full-time education. The residential provision is currently organised into two living areas within the main school.

Inspection dates: 27 to 29 November 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate

The residential special school is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of previous inspection: 20 June 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement

Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school requires improvement to be good because:

- The leadership and management team has significant weaknesses. It has been ineffective in identifying and making improvements.
- The governing body has not provided sufficient challenge, and the skills within the governing body have not been reviewed to ensure that members are effective in their roles.
- Staff have failed to recognise the reasons behind some young people's behaviours, and verbal assaults and abuse have frequently occurred between particular young people.
- There is little insight or overview of peer-on-peer incidents and trends and patterns have not been considered.
- Leaders and managers do not demonstrate that they have the necessary skills to undertake their roles.
- The complaints policy has not been followed; when verbal complaints have been received, these have not been investigated.
- Key-work sessions are not consistently recorded and therefore staff are unable to review what advice and support have been offered to young people.
- Accident records are not completed when there have been injuries, leaving an incomplete audit trail.
- Staff are not provided with the necessary support in some cases and performance management arrangements are ineffective. Leaders have failed to recognise this.

The residential special school's strengths are:

- The organisation has very recently brought in an executive headteacher who is beginning to challenge practice and make the school safer.
- Good relationships exist in the school and young people generally describe positive relationships with residential staff.
- Staff have managed to defuse situations and this has led to no use of physical intervention during this inspection period.

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 standard(s) 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 who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 3.6 The school has, and implements effectively, appropriate policies for the care of children who are unwell, and ensures that children's physical and mental health and emotional well-being are promoted. These include first aid, care of those who have chronic conditions and disabilities, administration of medicines (including controlled drugs) and dealing with medical emergencies. Policies for administration of medication should reflect guidance provided by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (Handling of Medicines in Social Care).
- 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.
- 13.8 The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate.
- 18.2 The school's written record of complaints identifies those complaints relating to residential provision, and action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld).

Recommendations

- Review health and welfare plans to ensure that they are suitably individualised and detail professionals involved with the relevant child.
- Ensure that children's meetings are recorded to ensure that children's views are captured.
- Ensure that all staff who are involved in residential roles are provided with an induction suitable for that role.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Significant weaknesses exist in the leadership team and in the management oversight of this school. Young people's individual needs are not always effectively met. The leaders and managers have provided only limited opportunities for children to progress. A new executive headteacher has very recently been appointed to the post. She is starting to prioritise and address concerns and ensure that children are being supported to progress and risks towards them minimised.

Young people and care staff generally have positive relationships and young people state that they are able to speak to staff if they have any concerns. Some young people have built trusting relationships with the staff and staff try to spend individual time with the young people. However, this has been inhibited by the staffing levels.

Young people would benefit from having more individualised support in areas such as education and emotional well-being. Young people identified as requiring support in areas such as speech and language therapy, and occupational therapy, are not receiving it. Care staff are not sufficiently ambitious for young people and do not recognise when additional help in education may be needed to ensure that young people achieve. In addition, the lack of key-working documentation prevents individualised work from being reviewed to determine if it is effective.

The school has now employed a registered nurse who has started to implement a number of changes within the short amount of time she has been in place. She has recognised weaknesses in the medical arrangements and has clear plans in place. However, accidents and injuries have not routinely been recorded within accident books. For instance, when there have been incidents of assault from one young person to another and injuries have been sustained, these have not been recorded. In addition, accidents are not always recorded in a timely manner. Records do not consistently show what action was taken to ensure that no injuries were sustained and if any medical treatment was required. Audit trails are not strong. Health and welfare plans are in place. However, they do not detail strategies from professionals involved to guide staff and they are not sufficiently individualised.

Young people can put forward suggestions for menu and activity choices. They feel that they are listened to in these areas. Young people were keen to share stories of recent activities they have been involved in outside of the school. A high number of activities are based within the school grounds. Young people were happy with the opportunities on offer. There are no records of individual or group consultation to establish children's views.

Views by young people and parents of day-to-day experiences of being a residential pupil are mixed. Some young people enjoy staying while others do not. Several talk

very positively about boarding and feel that they progress as a result. However, other young people feel isolated and targeted by other young people.

The staff team looks to develop young people's independence skills. Goals are reviewed to prepare young people for moving on. Young people are actively involved in cooking and budgeting for the week's menu.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The majority of young people said that they feel safe. However, some young people have accepted certain behaviours by others towards them as being normal, which they should not have had to do. These young people have developed coping mechanisms to be able to function in the school. The strategies they have developed to feel secure have then been challenged by the staff team. Staff do not seek to understand and instead a reactive approach is used. There is little consideration by the residential staff team of the reasons for behaviours and there appears a culture of staff being unaware and therefore ineffectively addressing young people's behaviours. Through observation, there appears to be an acceptance of bullying-type behaviours and verbal abuse with little challenge. The victims have frequently felt blamed. There are individual staff who attempt to work with young people around what they describe as 'antagonistic behaviours'; however, this is not done consistently and additional specialist support is not being provided. Incidents of verbal assaults still continue. Young people were heard to consistently make negative comments towards and about certain individuals and these went unchallenged. The emotional harm this may cause is not recognised.

Behavioural analysis takes place. However, peer-on-peer incidents have not been properly scrutinised, learned from and remedial strategies devised.

Safeguarding policies are not in line with statutory guidance; they do reflect the support to be given to young people who are subject to peer-on-peer assaults. In addition, young people's individual risk assessments do not reflect young people's vulnerabilities in this area or give staff information and strategies on how to support them. Any allegations or safeguarding concerns are reported to the necessary professionals. The local authority reported that there is an open relationship with the school with the safeguarding lead requesting advice as required. The executive headteacher has taken necessary action to ensure that the safety of the young people is prioritised.

Since the last inspection, there have not been any instances when physical intervention has needed to be used within residential time. Staff have managed to defuse situations due to the relationships they have with the young people. Young people did consider that the support provided by residential staff has taught them that they can walk away from certain situations, and the strategies they have learned

have also helped them when they go home. There have been no instances of children going missing during residential time.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The effectiveness of leaders and managers in this school is inadequate. The senior leadership team has been ineffective in understanding weaknesses and therefore in taking actions to make improvement. The organisation is in a period of change and, with the absence of the headteacher, an interim executive headteacher has stepped in. There is genuine confidence in this executive headteacher; she has begun to prioritise concerns and issues relating to the safety of young people. She has only been in post a few weeks and the impact of this new appointment is yet to be seen. Prior to this appointment, the head of care was not supported to fulfil his responsibilities. Leaders do not demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role. The monitoring that has taken place has failed to ensure that standards are met and individual responsibilities are fulfilled.

There is not sufficient external scrutiny. The skills within the governing body are insufficient for the task and no review has taken place of the effectiveness of this governing body. This has been delayed due to changes currently taking place within the trust. There has not been a governor with specific oversight of the care provided in the residential accommodation for some time. There is little awareness by the governing body of current issues. Governors have undertaken a range of training; however, this has not yet translated into improved monitoring practice.

High aspirations for young people are not evident, and plans for young people are not well understood by leaders. This inhibits them from purposefully monitoring the progress that young people have made or actively driving forward achievement in areas such as therapy, education and young people's well-being. There is a statement of purpose in place; however, the residential provision is not achieving its stated aims and objectives. Young people are not being provided with the support specified in this document.

Staff receive regular supervisions; however, this is not the case for the head of care. Supervision records are detailed but lack evidence of the support that may be required following allegations and complaints. Performance management occurs; however, all targets and reviews recorded of staff practice are identical. This lack of individual targets means that the appraisal of staff performance which takes place is of limited value. Professional development of the staff team to successfully provide a supportive environment is therefore of limited effectiveness. Staff have undertaken a range of training including epilepsy awareness since the last inspection. There has been a very low turnover of residential staff. However, when staff employed by the school take on additional responsibilities in residential care they are not provided with a formal induction programme.

The policy and procedure for recording and responding to complaints are not being followed. No response by the school is on file for complaints raised. Although some

meetings have taken place, it is not evident if recommendations were made and a written outcome sent to the complainant. In addition, when verbal complaints and concerns are made to staff, these are not recorded as a complaint and only logged on the school's computer system. There is no evidence that these have been passed to the necessary people or that any appropriate action and investigation have taken place.

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: SC013920

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Mr Martin Saunders

Type of school: Residential special school

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Inspector(s)

Emeline Evans, social care inspector (lead)
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