

Grafham Grange School

Grafham Grange, Horsham Road, Grafham, Bramley, Guildford, Surrey GU5 0LH

Inspection dates

20 to 22 June 2016

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Requires improvement 3

The quality of care and support

Requires improvement 3

How well children and young people are protected

Requires improvement 3

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings

The residential provision requires improvement because

- Communication between residential, educational and health staff is not good and can lead to inconsistency.
- The health needs of young people are not well enough known or met, for example, staff have yet to be trained in supporting children with epilepsy.
- The arrangements for an independent visitor to review and report on practice six times per year have not been secured.
- Young people currently make good progress in relation to their starting points, as a result of accessing the residential provision. They progress educationally and develop social skills through their interactions while part of the residential group.
- The residential area is run with young people in mind, and there are adequate staffing levels to meet the current group's needs. Staff have been in their roles for several years and increasingly enjoy their jobs.
- Young people's demeanour shows that they feel safe and comfortable in the residential area. They are able to personalise their bedrooms. Staff have a good understanding of young people's needs and form positive relationships with them.
- Young people's views are sought through the school parliament and residential meetings. Young people have the opportunity to express their views, which are acted upon when appropriate.
- There has been a significant reduction in the number of restraints used in the

school. Analysis of data shows year-on-year reductions in the need for young people to be restrained, and a reduction in incidents of unwanted behaviour.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools:

- 7.1 The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 13.8 The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school, and action taken as appropriate.
- 19.1 Staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the children as they relate to the purpose of the setting. Training keeps them up to date with professional, legal and practice developments, and reflects the policies, legal obligations and business needs of the school.
- 20.1 The governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for carrying on the school arrange for one of their number, or a representative who is independent of the management of the school, to visit the school six times, spread evenly, over the course of a school year and complete a written report on the conduct of the school. Where the school has an individual proprietor, that person may carry out such visits personally if they are not also the headteacher (or school equivalent).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve handovers between residential and education time.
- Improve communication across all departments of the school, in particular between residential, education and health staff.

Information about this inspection

The inspection was announced by telephone to the head of school on the morning of the first day. On arrival, an initial meeting was held with the headteacher and head of care. Inspectors held discussions with parents, residential care staff, the assistant head and safeguarding lead, the facilities manager, the speech and language therapists, school nurse and safeguarding governor. All residential areas were observed and visited during the inspection. The inspectors observed and, when appropriate, took part in activities with residential students, in addition to having group and individual discussions with them. Inspectors held telephone discussions with parents and the local authority designated officer for child protection. Feedback was sought from social workers by email. Questionnaires for residential students were distributed during the inspection. The information gathered was evaluated, and any lines of enquiry followed up with relevant staff and young people. A range of documents and records were also examined during the inspection.

On the third day of the residential inspection, a progress monitoring inspection of education was conducted by Janet Pearce HMI.

Inspection team

Jennie Christopher	Lead social care inspector
Emeline Evans	Social care inspector

Full report

Information about this 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. The Radius Trust administers 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. The residential provision was last inspected in May 2015, with a progress monitoring visit in January 2016.

Inspection judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Requires improvement

Young people currently make good progress in relation to their starting points, as a result of accessing the residential provision. They progress educationally and develop social skills through their interactions as part of the residential group. Positive interactions have been helped enormously by some young people accessing the friendship group, in conjunction with the speech and language therapist. Staff have a strong understanding of young people's needs and work effectively to help young people to develop further. Parents comment positively about the progress that their child has made during their time at the school.

Leaders and managers in the residential provision have identified the strengths and weaknesses of the provision through a thorough review of the service, in line with the national minimum standards. While this highlights areas for improvement, it does not indicate the dates by which the actions should be completed.

The safety of young people is central to all practice and continues to be an area of development. Young people have good relationships with residential area staff, who respond well to their needs. They are able to approach them with worries or concerns, and also seek them out for social interaction. Staff have a strong understanding of young people's individual needs and respond well to incidents of unwanted behaviour. However, staff at times lack the information required regarding individuals' specific health needs.

The residential area is run with young people in mind, and there are adequate staffing levels to meet the needs of the current group. Staff have been in their roles for several years and increasingly enjoy their jobs.

Young people's views about the school and residential provision are sought through the school parliament and residential meetings. Young people views are acted upon when practical and appropriate. However, senior leadership team meeting minutes do not demonstrate who takes responsibility to ensure that these requests and ideas are taken forward.

Young people are positive about their time in the residential provision, and actively participate in the leisure pursuits available. They are engaged in deciding what on-site community-based activities will be available. These include fishing, drama and trainspotting.

The residential area is mostly well maintained and decorated. The facilities management team is swift to respond to any maintenance concerns and has an ongoing programme of redecoration, which is currently constrained by the school's financial situation.

Young people engage in a comprehensive life skills programme during both education and residential time. They are constantly supported to consider their actions and responses, and how these may be interpreted by others when in the community.

The residential provision staff work cohesively as a team and maintain strong links with

parents. However, there are concerns regarding information sharing and daily handovers between education and residential staff. Also, the school nurse is unaware of the content of health and welfare plans for individual young people.

The quality of care and support

Requires improvement

Young people's demeanour shows that they feel safe and comfortable in the residential area, and they are able to personalise their bedrooms. Staff have a good understanding of young people's needs and form positive relationships with them. There have been no new young people accessing the residential provision since the last inspection, and relevant procedures are in place to ensure individualised planning before they begin to stay overnight. Staff have effective relationships with external professionals such as social workers and mental health professionals.

While there is some good information sharing across the school, there is limited information sharing on a daily basis between educational and residential staff and young people, particularly at handover times. The head of care is involved in the handover of significant incidents, but not of day-to-day achievements and engagement.

Young people are treated with dignity and respect, and are afforded the opportunity to express themselves culturally and as an individual. Any unacceptable views regarding others based on their identity, culture or sexuality are challenged robustly and reported to partner agencies, as necessary. Young people are supported to develop a positive self-view and celebrate successes.

Young people are encouraged to consider a healthy lifestyle and what it means for them. This includes a balanced diet, taking exercise and engaging with others for social stimulation. Arrangements for the storage and administration of medication are safe. Audits for medication other than controlled medication are not routinely taking place. Staff have not received appropriate training in epilepsy awareness, despite it being highlighted as an action in a young person's health and welfare plan. This would support staff to understand the potential behavioural aspects associated with this. The protocol for the management of epilepsy describes the type of seizures that young people may display and have been ratified by the school nurse. However staff's understanding of different seizure types is minimal, and records of seizure activity are not available.

In-house placement plans are regularly updated, and achievable goals identified. However, one young person's plan does not detail any social or residential goals, and focuses on educational goals and development. Young people's plans are individually focused, and young people and parents have the opportunity to have an input to the plans.

Policies and procedures are easily accessible and available on the school website. There is confusion regarding whose responsibility it is to update policies, and some are vague or in direct contradiction to school practice.

How well children and young people are protected

Requires improvement

Young people say that they feel safe in the residential provision, and identify staff who they would go to if they were worried or upset. Staff have a sound understanding of child protection, and their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding young people. Staff benefit from training to support their skills in identifying safeguarding concerns, including radicalisation and exploitation in all forms. They have a good understanding of each young person's vulnerabilities, including when they are online.

Incidents and concerns are reported to relevant safeguarding professionals, who the safeguarding lead will often call for advice or guidance. The policy and procedures in place do not include how to respond if a young person discloses that another young person has harmed them. In addition, staff did not report a concern that a young person had raised to a medical professional, that a young person had allegedly hurt them physically.

Records and responses to safeguarding concerns are increasingly robust. Since the current designated safeguarding lead has been in post, records provide greater clarity of actions taken and the follow up with safeguarding professionals, parents and young people. There is a clear audit trail, with chronologies of events kept up to date. The school has recognised that the governor with responsibility for safeguarding requires further training, and this is ongoing.

Young people's risk assessments are robust and identify areas where they may be at risk of harm, both in the school and in their home community. Where appropriate, risks such as going missing, substance misuse and offending are identified, with responses to mitigate or reduce the risk. Risk assessments are updated as incidents occur, and staff are aware of the necessary strategies to help protect young people.

Procedures for behaviour management are robust. However, trust-wide policies are often in contradiction to the measures used in the school. It is unclear who has responsibility for updating all safeguarding and behaviour management policies. In particular, the e-safety policy talks of emerging technologies, yet it has not been updated for over 18 months and focuses on staff, not young people's use of social media.

There has been a significant reduction in the number of restraints used at the school. Analysis of data shows year-on-year reductions in the need for young people to be restrained, also a reduction in incidents of unwanted behaviour. Tracking of individual behavioural needs is robust, and debriefings after incidents are much more insightful since the safeguarding lead took over responsibility for this area recently. Behaviour plans are clear and consistent, and staff work cohesively as a team to ensure a consistency of approach. As a result, young people know what is expected of them.

Young people say that bullying remains a concern in the school, but practice responses to incidents have significantly reduced incidents, and the restorative approach to rebuilding relationships is effective. Where there are known concerns in friendship and residential groups, specialist groups are facilitated by the speech and language therapist to develop social relationships further. Topics include recognising exploitation and grooming by adults. When appropriate, the speech and language therapist liaises with

social workers to agree on set responses to incidents where young people have been at risk while away from the school.

Children in need plans are in place, and the staff attend reviews as necessary and complete any actions identified, such as referrals to emotional well-being professionals.

Young people are protected from avoidable hazards through a range of regular checks, in line with health and safety procedures. The facilities manager evidences that all checks and procedures are in place, such as water safety, including prompt action when issues are identified. Firefighting and protective equipment checks take place as programmed, along with fire evacuations. However, doors that were identified as fire doors were seen to be propped open with inappropriate items, such as a bin and a remote controller device. This fire risk assessment fails to identify this as a concern.

Recruitment is robust and follows safer recruitment guidance. This includes robust checks for volunteers and family members who live on site.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Requires improvement

The residential provision is effectively managed by the head of care and other senior leaders in the school. The head of care holds suitable qualifications for the role. There has recently been a restructure of the leadership team, and all are settling into their new roles. Staff say that leaders are accessible and that they feel well supported by the current team.

Staff have high aspirations for young people and want them to succeed. Leaders and managers have sound oversight to determine the progress that young people make while accessing the residential provision. However, there is a lack of joint working across the school to raise awareness of all relevant information regarding individuals' behaviour and engagement in the school day.

The school is currently appropriately staffed in line with the number of young people accessing the residential provision. The number of children accessing the service has reduced significantly in the last year due to moving on and the impact of the former inadequate judgement.

The head of care regularly monitors the functioning of the service, in line with the national minimum standards. He evaluates the current service provided and identifies areas for further improvement. While it is clear what has been achieved, term on term, there is no indication by when actions should be completed. The evaluation acts as a development plan, in line with the head of care's knowledge base and visits from the independent visitor. The visitor has been unable to make the required commitment to visit the residential provision six times evenly spaced throughout the academic year, and will not be available from September.

The national minimum standards that were identified as unmet at the last inspection have now all been fully met. Further shortfalls and areas for improvement have been identified as a result of this inspection. However, it is acknowledged that the residential provision has made significant progress since the last inspection, and that leaders and

staff are seeking to continue to improve it.

Governors and trustees regularly visit the school site and are providing a greater level of scrutiny. Leaders and managers benefit from regular supervision in order to support them to improve practice across the school. Training and development are vital for all staff, especially with regards to child protection and safeguarding. Staff and leaders have identified further training for the coming academic year.

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework'.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	125482
Social care unique reference number	SC013920
DfE registration number	936/7076

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 residential special schools.

Type of school	Residential Special School
Number of boarders on roll	7
Gender of boarders	Boys
Age range of boarders	10 to19
Headteacher	Martin Saunders
Date of previous boarding inspection	12 May 2015
Telephone number	01483 892214
Email address	m.sanders@grafham-grange.co.uk

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