

# The Grange Therapeutic School

15-17 Somerby Road, Knossington, Oakham, Leicestershire LE15 8LY

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this residential special school

The school is an independent residential special school for 85 children aged eight to 18 years, 14 of whom can live at the school during the week. The residential accommodation is provided in two houses, one of which is located on the school site.

The second house is in the village of Knossington, a short walk from the main school building. The school caters for children with social, emotional and mental health needs, autistic spectrum disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorders and mild learning difficulties.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

### Inspection dates: 23 to 25 January 2024

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account**                      **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected                      outstanding

The effectiveness of leaders and managers                      good

The residential special school provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the school contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

**Date of previous inspection:** 21 June 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

Children live in a warm, loving home with a strong family feel. The atmosphere is calm and relaxed. Staff make every effort to ensure that each child feels comfortable, showing great warmth and affection towards the children. Staff have supported children to personalise their bedrooms to their individual tastes, increasing their sense of belonging. In both homes, there are areas that are starting to look tired. Senior leaders are putting plans together to enhance the environments.

Children have strong, secure and trusting relationships with the staff who care for them. The exceptional quality of these relationships is fundamental to the progress children make. One child said, 'It's amazing here. I am really happy. It's the best place I have lived. They are just the best.' This helps children to settle quickly and gain a true sense of belonging.

The children's own confidence in their abilities has significantly increased. Staff encourage them to safely explore new experiences and continue to develop independence skills. For example, children have been supported to independently dress, go out in the community, self-regulate their emotions and maintain positive relationships. One parent said, 'It has been the best decision of my life him [the parent's child] moving there. I struck the jackpot. He has a future now and is able to live his life.'

Children's health and emotional well-being are well supported. Staff enrich children's lives through promoting healthy eating, daily exercise and fun activities. Children have positive experiences to look forward to with the staff and others. This further helps to promote good relationships in the homes.

Children benefit from individualised support that is responsive to their known and emerging needs. Well-thought-out routines are designed to provide predictability, which the children thrive on. Furthermore, these enable children to overcome barriers so that they can participate in everyday life. Underpinned by the team's enabling attitude, children are making tremendous progress in many aspects of their lives.

Children who access the residential provision have excellent attendance at school. One child who had not accessed any form of education for some time before attending this school is now attending every day. This has been achieved through exceptional collaboration between professionals and parents. This highly successful approach provided a superb opportunity for the child to now succeed in education and improve their overall outcomes.

The residential, teaching and therapy teams are committed to the children in their care. They all work in partnership and have a seamless approach to ensure that

children receive the same child-centred therapeutic intervention from all staff. Overall, this provides children with exceptionally well-coordinated care that seeks to actively support them in all that they do.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

Staff have an in-depth understanding of each child's unique risks and vulnerabilities. Children are safer because there is a detailed, comprehensive risk management plan for each child. Staff ensure they read the plans so they have up-to-date knowledge about risks and adapt their practice when needed. This creates a culture whereby the children's safeguarding needs are embedded in everything that staff do.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. There are clear and effective systems to ensure the safety of children. Staff are knowledgeable about the process for reporting low-level concerns as well as more serious concerns. The safeguarding team includes members of the senior leadership group as well as the head of care. They foster strong relationships and work proactively with external safeguarding agencies to effectively support children and their families.

Children enjoy accessing the internet on varying devices. Staff can monitor what the children access via the home's online security system. Children can bring mobile phones into the residential provision, but usage is closely monitored. Staff work closely with parents to keep children as safe as possible while they are online.

There are minimal incidents of physical intervention in the home. Staff are very proactive and use their skills and experience to creatively respond to risks and deescalate situations quickly. However, managers do not have sufficient oversight of physical intervention records and case recording to ensure that any lessons learned are shared with staff.

Staff safely administer medication to children. All staff who administer medication have received the appropriate training. There is clear management oversight, including weekly and monthly audits. This ensures that children receive the medication prescribed to meet their health needs. When administrative errors have occurred, these have quickly been identified because of the effective auditing systems in place.

Recruitment processes are robust and designed to ensure that children are kept safe. Written references are always followed up with verbal verification, and more information is gained if needed. This ensures that safe and suitable individuals are recruited to work at the homes.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

Managers are experienced, passionate and dedicated. They lead an excellent, stable staff team that ensures outstanding care is provided in line with the organisational therapeutic ethos. Leaders and managers make child-centred decisions and have high aspirations for children. Children are included in decision-making about their care.

An independent person visits the school each month to monitor the effectiveness of the residential provision and ensure children are safe. They provide good, detailed and informative reports. Leaders and managers reflect on these and use recommendations to improve the quality of care provided.

Staff receive in-depth, tailored training. The managers are proactive in organising training for staff when emerging risks or needs are identified for children. Staff say that they find the training opportunities invaluable and can readily describe how the training has positively influenced their practice. The managers have ensured that training has been delivered to address the points for improvement made at the last inspection.

Team development is a priority in the home. The staff report that the team meetings are highly beneficial. These provide an opportunity for the team to share its experiences of working with the children and reflect on practice to determine how it can be improved.

Leaders and managers are in the process of moving to an electronic case management system. At present, managers oversight of children's records is not always comprehensive or gives enough attention to important detail. Managers are of the view that the new system will alert managers to where their attention is needed.

## **What does the residential special school need to do to improve?**

### **Points for improvement**

- School leaders should consider reviewing the residential environments to ensure the environment is modernised and refreshed. (Residential special schools: national minimum standards 9.4)
- School leaders should consider implementing a system that supports the managers in having increased oversight of records in the home. (Residential special schools: national minimum standards 2.4)

### **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people 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:** SC001831

**Headteacher/teacher in charge:** Jonathan Sleath

**Type of school:** Residential Special School

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## **Inspectors**

Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

Lizette Watts, Social Care Inspector

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