

# Hunters Hill (Residential) School

Inspection report for Residential Special School

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<b>Inspection date</b>	17/03/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Andrew Hewston
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Key

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<b>Setting address</b>	Hunters Hill School, Spirehouse Lane, Blackwell, BROMSGROVE, Worcestershire, B60 1QD
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 445 1320
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Birmingham City Council
<b>Head/ Principal</b>	Kenneth Lewis
<b>Nominated person</b>	Bonnie Bates
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	24/03/2010

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## 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 outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

## 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**

Hunters Hill (Residential) School is a Special School providing residential boarding for up to four nights and five day educational placement. The school can cater for 75 pupils, girls and boys from the age of 11 to 16 years. The pupils who attend Hunters Hill School have been identified as having moderate learning, emotional and behavioural needs. Some pupils can have other associated health problems. The school is split across two sites and the grounds are in the countryside on the south side of Birmingham.

Residential provision is provided within four main home areas, although one of these was closed for residence at the time of the inspection due to refurbishment.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was a key announced inspection completed over a three day period. All the key national minimum standards were inspected and all outcomes have been judged.

The school continues to offer a high level of care to the young people who reside for any period of time. Staff are positive role models to young people and are fully involved in ensuring that school is a pleasant place to be to learn and develop. Effective systems are in place to support young people's health needs and their safety throughout their time in residence. Links between school and the residential provision are particularly strong and ensure a consistent level of care and education is given to young people. Planning for young people is appropriate, but sometimes does not show some of the additional creative and thoughtful work completed by the staff. The senior management team is strong and effective in providing leadership to all of the staff within the school.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The previous inspection highlighted a need for the updating of the recording system relating to young people who absent themselves without permission. This has been completed.

## **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The systems for promoting health within the school are appropriate and meet the needs of the young people. Information about specific health needs is clear within young people's files and staff are aware of these. Links are in place with external health professionals to support young people's mental health needs. As pupils generally reside at their home address, they are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians that are local to them. However, emergency treatment can be accessed at the local hospital and appropriate permissions are in place for this. All staff are trained in first aid and those that are involved with the training of restraint have completed the more in-depth training to further ensure the safety of both staff and young people.

The quality of medication recordings are generally good, although there are some discrepancies relating to the actual amounts of some medication that is on site and those that are recorded. Some medication is not appropriately disposed of and staff were not aware of how this is to be recorded. Inappropriate recordings could affect the safety of young people.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Arrangements to ensure the privacy of young people are in place with all records being appropriately stored. Telephones can be used in relative privacy. Recent staff training in appropriate searching and screening shows the schools' commitment towards ensuring young people's rights to privacy are upheld.

Young people are aware of how to make complaints if they are unhappy. These are thoroughly recorded and investigated. Young people are expected to be involved with signing off complaints when they are satisfied with the outcome of the investigation. Responses from questionnaires showed that approximately 25% of the young people think that there is bullying within the home areas. Discussions with young people suggest that when bullying occurs it is responded to by the home's staff most of the time. The schools senior management have discussed this issue and there is a response planned to further combat bullying and support young people in addition to the current expectations to challenge any such behaviours. All bullying behaviours observed during the inspection were seen to be appropriately challenged by staff.

Staff are fully trained in responding to safeguarding issues and effective reporting procedures are in place. Where disclosures or allegations have been made these are swiftly responded to and appropriate local safeguarding boards informed. The school is fully involved with safeguarding meetings when these are necessary. Systems are in place to respond to young people who absent themselves from the school grounds without permission. Information regarding the schools responsibilities in these

instances is given to parents. Reporting protocols have been developed with the local police to promote the safety of the young people while at the same point ensuring that police time is not overly used.

Unacceptable behaviour is quickly and skilfully managed by staff who act as good role models for young people. A profile system is used throughout the school and enables young people to gain rewards for achieving behavioural goals. Young people are able to discuss this system and improvements they have made while being at the school in their behaviour. Behaviour management recordings are effectively monitored with trends examined and responded to.

Effective and robust systems are in place to ensure that the health and safety of the young people and staff is met. Fire checks and drills are completed on a regular basis and certification is available for all necessary areas. Recruitment procedures are clear and thorough including all the necessary range of checks and references.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

The school's residential provision strongly supports young people's educational progress. It enhances the opportunities available to young people by providing an extended curriculum. This allows very good progress both academically, socially and emotionally by means of improved attendance and engagement in classes. Teaching and residential staff work in close liaison, with some staff working across both settings and sharing ongoing issues relating to the young people. The individual profile system further supports consistency of practice within both settings.

Good communication between the school and the residential area ensures that young people are effectively supported in times of crisis. Staff understand the importance of being good role models and they have an excellent understanding of the complex needs of young people. The school has two independent visitors who are aware of their role in supporting young people.

The wide range of leisure activities available is stated by the young people as being "the best bit of the school". Differing activities are offered on each night during the week and young people are able to choose what they are involved in to an extent. Activities are led by both teaching and care staff. Young people are able to discuss what they have been involved with making in the activities in addition to the classes during the day.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Young people have an involvement within their reviews and meetings relating to their placement at the school. There is a school council in place that highlights specific views of young people and these are then responded to.

Plans are in place for each young person and these link effectively to their statements. These plans are in line with the expectations of the standards and give a basic awareness of how the staff are working with the young person regarding highlighted needs. Staff are able to give a stronger awareness of additional plans in place for individuals and how they are working with parents and different professionals. Some of these additional ways of working with young people are well thought through and sympathetic to their needs, but these are not regularly recorded.

Arrangements for maintaining contact with families is good and parents and carers are informed about progress and issues as they occur, although this is not always recorded. All young people go home each week and the majority of students do not stay for longer than two nights a week. There are therefore no concerns about the ability of young people to continue regular contact with home. Specific contact arrangements form part of young people's plans.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Young people reside within well cared for accommodation. Each of the residential areas is comfortable, and has a homely atmosphere. Communal areas are well decorated with individual young people's work, either completed within school or through activities completed in the home. Young people are generally positive about their bedrooms, with some liking sharing rooms, while others preferring to have their own rooms. There is an ongoing rota of decoration across the school site including the residential areas.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Young people, staff and parents have access to the school's Statement of Purpose, which clearly states the expectations of how the school supports young people within the school and residential areas. Young people and their parents or carers have access to good information about the school and residential area which describes the facilities available. The school website provides good information relating to the available facilities.

Staff are well trained and are extremely familiar with the needs of individuals. They know how needs should be met. They are very committed to ensuring that they create a fun, warm and caring environment as well as an environment where students can be supported to learn. Staffing levels are high so that the time spent with the young people is quality time. All residential staff have obtained a National Vocational Qualification at Level 3 or above. Residential staff receive formal supervision and annual appraisals to support their development.

The management and organisation of the school delivers very positive outcomes for young people. The head of care is an effective manager. She knows the operational issues of the school and the needs of the students well. The support and management of staff is very competent. Monitoring is completed by the management team, and the school is visited on a regular basis by an external party to examine the residential provision. These visits are completed each term rather than each half term basis.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good and the staff ensure that each young person is seen as an individual and highly respected for their own qualities and attributes. The school completes an effective self evaluation of its ability to offer an inclusive service to the young people and responds to any issues raised within this.

## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Compliance with national minimum standards**

The school meets all the national minimum standards, with the exception of any listed below. To ensure that the school meets the national minimum standards the school needs to...

- ensure written records of medication administered are fully completed (NMS 14.2)
- ensure staff are aware of systems for the recording of refused or none administered medication (NMS 14.2)
- ensure plans fully document the care arrangements provided to the young people (NMS 17.5)
- ensure visits completed in line with standard 33 are completed on a half term basis (NMS 33.2).