

Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education

50 Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 4NF

Inspection dates

8–9 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Inadequate
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision	Inadequate
Quality of care and support in the residential provision	Inadequate
How well children and young people are protected in the residential provision	Inadequate
Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers in the residential provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils and learners in the different phases of the provision are inadequate.
- Leaders responsible for overseeing safeguarding do not have the expertise or understanding to carry out the role effectively. Procedures for staff to report safeguarding concerns are unreliable, and put pupils and learners at risk.
- Governors have not monitored the school's performance or the effectiveness of its safeguarding arrangements well enough. The school's performance has seriously declined. Actions to improve have been ineffective.
- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. Teaching in the primary phase does not take enough account of pupils' needs. Teachers do not challenge the most able to achieve their full potential.
- Staff are not held to account for the quality of their work. They are poorly equipped to cater for the increasingly complex needs of pupils and learners admitted to the school.
- Communication across the school, college and residential provision is ineffective. Important information about pupils and learners is not being shared with those who need to know.
- School leaders and governors do not know how well pupils and learners are doing because systems for assessing pupils' progress are weak.
- The school does not meet the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities which enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils and learners enjoy coming to the school. Relationships between staff, pupils and learners are warm and caring.
- The interim senior leaders know what needs to be done to improve the school.

Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for residential special schools

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the national minimum standards for residential special schools and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and governors must take urgent and immediate action to assure secure safeguarding and child protection arrangements throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that leaders responsible for safeguarding have the experience, knowledge and understanding to carry out their duties effectively
 - providing high-quality training for all staff to help them identify risks to pupils and learners
 - installing a secure and reliable system for recording and referring concerns about pupils and learners
 - insisting that safeguarding procedures and practices are monitored closely, regularly and in accordance with expected good practice
 - making sure that risk assessments and care plans are comprehensive, up to date and shared routinely with those who teach and care for pupils and learners
 - implementing stricter procedures to maintain site security.
- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management by:
 - reviewing and evaluating the vision, values and purpose of the school so that they are relevant and clear to all
 - making certain that leaders, governors and staff at all levels are held to account for the school's performance through a rigorous review and appraisal process
 - ensuring that the concerns raised about staff's care and support of pupils and learners are thoroughly investigated and recorded systematically
 - implementing a clear communication policy, including a consistent approach to the use of British sign language (BSL)
 - establishing an effective system for assessing, measuring, tracking and evaluating the progress of pupils and learners
 - analysing information about pupils' behaviour in order to bring about improvements.
- Improve teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils and learners by:
 - making better use of assessment information to set targets and plan for their learning, particularly but not exclusively in the primary phase
 - providing a more inspiring and orderly environment for primary-aged pupils

- ensuring that the most able, including those who are disadvantaged, are stretched and challenged to achieve highly
 - focusing on improving the specialist college learners' communication and language skills, so that they are better equipped for their next steps and employment where appropriate.
- Ensure that the school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools listed below.
 - Ensure that monitoring undertaken by managers, governors and the independent visitor is effective in evaluating the quality of the residential provision and identifies areas for improvement.
 - Ensure that staff receive good-quality supervision that leads directly to good progress for all pupils and learners.
 - An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.
 - An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools

- Children's physical, emotional and social development needs are promoted. (NMS 3.1)
- 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 wellbeing is promoted. These include first aid, care of those with 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. (NMS 3.6)
- Where necessary, a child has a clear individual health and welfare plan or similar record, containing relevant health and welfare information provided by parents/carers and recording significant health and welfare needs and issues. (NMS 3.12)
- The school ensures that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified. (NMS 6.3)
- 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. (NMS 11.1)
- The school has and consistently implements a written policy on managing behaviour, including promoting good behaviour. This policy includes measures to combat bullying, including cyberbullying, and to promote positive behaviour; school rules; disciplinary sanctions; when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and how this will be recorded and managed; and arrangements for searching children and their possessions. (NMS 12.1)

- 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. (NMS 13.1)
- There is clear leadership and management of the practice and development of residential and care provision in the school, and effective links are made between academic and residential staff. (NMS 13.2)
- The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role. (NMS 13.3)
- The school's leadership and management consistently fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met. (NMS 13.4)
- The school's leadership and management actively promote the wellbeing of pupils. (NMS 13.5)
- The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate. (NMS 13.8)
- The issues specified in Appendix 3 are monitored, and action taken to improve outcomes for children as appropriate. (NMS 13.9)
- 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. (NMS 19.1)
- All staff have access to support and advice for their role. They also have regular supervision and formal annual appraisal of their performance. (NMS 19.6)
- The school produces a written placement plan, agreed as far as is practicable with the child, the child's parents/carers and any placing authority for the child, unless the information is held elsewhere such as in the child's statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan. The placement plan identifies the needs of that child that the school should meet and specifies how the school will care for the child and promote their welfare on a day-to-day basis. Where significant changes are made to the placement plan there is appropriate consultation. Where applicable the plan is consistent with the care plan of the placing authority for any child placed by a local authority. The placement plan is regularly reviewed and amended as necessary to reflect the significant changes in the child's needs or progress in his or her development. Where feasible, children in the school are aware of the content of their placement plans, and confirm that the school is providing care for them that is consistent with the plans. (NMS 21.1)
- Every child has an accurate, permanent record of their history and progress which can be read by the child at any time, and add personal statements or statements correcting errors. (NMS 22.1)

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers in the residential provision	Inadequate
How well children and young people are protected in the residential provision	Inadequate

- School leaders and governors have not taken effective action to ensure that pupils are safe. Recent changes made to the school's child protection procedures are misguided and not effective.
- School leaders, including governors, have not reviewed the overall purpose and performance of the school with sufficient insight, detail and depth. Concerns raised about some staff's care and support of pupils in the recent past have not been rigorously or purposefully investigated by the school. Senior leaders and governors do not accurately understand the culture and practices in the school, college and residential provision.
- Leadership and management of the residential provision are not effective. School leaders have not ensured that all the national minimum standards are met or that recommendations from the previous inspection have been implemented fully.
- Leaders have not managed staff performance rigorously. They have not ensured that staff are sufficiently well prepared to teach and care for the pupils and learners in the school, particularly the increasing number of pupils whose needs are complex and challenging.
- School leaders have not checked that care staff receive frequent, good-quality supervision and appraisal. Systems are not in place to monitor the supervision of care staff and the impact of their work with residential pupils and learners.
- Communication is poor between leaders and staff and between residential and teaching staff. Important information about pupils is not shared with those who need to know. For example, written handover information between residential care staff and teaching staff is not sufficiently detailed. Staff do not always take responsibility for checking the handover information, and it is sometimes difficult to access promptly. As a result, staff responsible for leading handover meetings do not have all the information they need to manage other staff appropriately and keep pupils safe.
- Staff are not all sufficiently trained in using BSL to communicate with pupils and learners in and out of lessons. School leaders recognise that staff need to be trained to a higher level and have plans to do so. Pupils' academic and personal progress is limited because it is not always clear when BSL, spoken communication, cued speech or visual prompts should be used. The school's communication policy is not well defined.
- School leaders' systems for the assessment of pupils' progress is ineffective. Different assessment systems have been trialled and revised over the last year but none of them have worked well. Consequently, staff have no reliable overview of how well pupils are doing from their different starting points. Leaders are unable to assert with confidence that all pupils are making good progress.
- Leaders and managers have not analysed the impact of additional funding, such as the

pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding. School leaders do not have information about the progress of disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able. There are gaps in the school's tracking records because of staff changes and absence. Inspectors identified that although specific programmes of extra support are in place to help particular pupils and groups, the impact of these programmes has not been evaluated.

- Primary sport premium funding has been used to finance tuition in swimming and develop the sports leadership programme for older learners who are aiming to work with younger pupils in the school. While the programme has developed older learners' skills and confidence, it is too early to evaluate its impact on the younger pupils.
- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, including BSL and a range of academic and vocational subjects. School leaders have made recent changes to the curriculum for Year 7 pupils, designed to help them to gain more confidence and catch up. However, not enough has been done to measure the impact of the changes to the curriculum on pupils' academic progress.
- Staff's actions and support to promote pupils' and learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are strengths. Pupils develop a strong understanding of British values through the democratically elected school council which is an increasingly influential forum to share ideas. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to get involved in charity work, take part in trips and visits, and learn about different cultures and religions. These underpin the school's drive to develop the positive identity of deaf pupils and learners.
- The school offers a 'virtual academy' to support pupils who find it difficult to settle into the main academy programmes. Leaders of the virtual academy can identify how some pupils subsequently make progress. However, the provision is not meeting the needs of a very small number of pupils whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable.
- Middle leaders, including those responsible for English, mathematics, and information and communication technology (ICT), work well as a team and demonstrate a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve teaching, learning and assessment in the school. However, it is too early to evaluate the impact of middle leaders' work.
- When the interim principal and interim head of school were appointed in September 2016, they quickly identified key weaknesses and accurately judged that standards had seriously declined in the school. The interim leadership team has identified sensible priorities for the future, including reviewing the school's admissions policy, but it is too soon to assess the impact of any changes.
- School leaders reacted promptly in response to the inspectors' findings. Leaders made some immediate modifications to safeguarding arrangements and risk assessments, and have since begun to review their procedures and practices.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance

- Governors have not ensured that arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- Following a period of staff change and absence during the summer term of 2016, the governors' key priority was to stabilise the school and recruit suitable interim leaders. The local authority provided governors with appropriate advice and guidance about safeguarding procedures and managing staff. However, governors did not make sure that the new processes for reporting and dealing with safeguarding concerns worked effectively or kept pupils and learners safe.
- Governors have not ensured that staff responsible for overseeing safeguarding and child protection are sufficiently well trained or knowledgeable to carry out their roles effectively.
- Governors have been too ready to accept assurances from school leaders that they have managed staffing concerns appropriately. Governors have not ensured that any concerns have been thoroughly examined or that meetings to discuss staff performance have been professionally and systematically recorded.
- There is no doubt that governors are well meaning and loyal to the school. However, because governors have not resolved weaknesses in either the systems or leadership, the school's performance has seriously declined and pupils are at risk of harm.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- The newly implemented system to report, record and manage child protection concerns is not fit for purpose. Despite receiving training, staff are not confident about reporting concerns and do not demonstrate the necessary expertise to identify early warning signs and indicators of abuse or exploitation. Senior leaders who are responsible for safeguarding do not have enough experience, understanding or time to oversee all the child protection referrals made. As a result, child protection concerns have not been managed effectively, which is putting pupils at risk.
- The systems used to document safeguarding concerns are confusing and unreliable. Records of concerns are stored in different places, which increases the risk of errors or missed information. The online system is not secure and does not provide a detailed chronology of incidents. As a result, some serious concerns have been reviewed in isolation and staff are not able to identify any trends or patterns.
- Staff are not clearly identifying risks for pupils, nor do they understand or manage risk well. Risk assessments do not help staff to reduce risks or keep pupils and learners safe. Care plans and risk assessments do not always include the most serious risks or comprehensively outline the strategies for staff to use. Staff do not update risk assessments and care plans quickly enough when pupils' and learners' needs change. Important information is not shared with the staff who teach and care for pupils and learners.
- School staff do not pay enough attention to pupils' and learners' attendance. Inspectors noted some poor practice when afternoon registers were not taken properly. Teachers do not follow up all unexplained absence promptly and systematically.
- Security around the school site is a cause for concern because access to the site is open to the public and there is no gate to the entrance which is on a busy road. Procedures for managing these risks are not good enough.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not take enough account of what pupils already know and can do when planning work, particularly in the primary phase.
- Teaching in the primary provision is weaker than that found elsewhere in the school. The primary classroom areas are uninspiring and untidy, and too little use is made of the resources available, including the outdoor area.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are not stretched and challenged to achieve highly. Pupils are not pushed to think deeply about key concepts. In some cases, leaders' and teachers' expectations for pupils are pitched too low. Some pupils have to wait too long to communicate with adults and each other. Those pupils who have some hearing do not experience enough spoken language.
- Teachers provide written feedback for pupils, according to the new marking policy, but the feedback does not lead to enough improved progress, particularly for those pupils who do not read well. Pupils' books sometimes contain repeated targets and advice, and little evidence that teachers are tackling weaknesses to ensure that pupils get it right next time.
- Pupils struggle to acquire good reading skills, although the most able pupils demonstrate that they can read longer and more sophisticated English texts. Teachers plan carefully in order to support pupils' understanding of English sentence order, from the level of simple sentences through to the use of more complex structures using connectives.
- As part of a commendable commitment to improving pupils' reading skills, school leaders have recently introduced an interesting project in which pupils are able to read to specially trained 'therapy dogs' in order to develop confidence and fluency in reading.
- Teaching assistants and members of the support teams work effectively to help pupils sign and learn BSL. Inspectors observed some very clear communication with pupils and learners which helped to reinforce both BSL and the content of the lesson.
- The increased involvement of specialist speech and language therapists in day-to-day planning and teaching is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress and development.
- Pupils are keen to learn and make progress. For some, it is a huge and tiring effort to keep communicating but they persist and make progress. Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong and pupils genuinely want to learn.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Pupils' welfare, physical health and emotional well-being are not being developed well because of the serious shortcomings in the school's arrangements for safeguarding.

- Programmes designed to teach pupils about emotional and physical health and keeping safe are well intentioned but are not having enough impact. Younger pupils interviewed by inspectors understand about healthy lifestyles and what they need to do to keep safe online, but some older pupils place themselves at risk through inappropriate use of social media.
- Staff do not take enough account of some pupils' communication difficulties when managing their concerns. For example, inspectors found examples of pupils not being able to talk about problems because some members of staff were not proficient enough with BSL.
- A minority of pupils told inspectors that there was occasional bullying and teasing but that any instances were usually managed well by staff and that relationships then improved.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because a small number of pupils do not regulate their emotions well and persist with challenging behaviour which is disruptive and puts their safety and welfare at risk. School leaders have rightly identified that they are unable to manage the increasingly complex needs of some pupils.
- However, the majority of pupils conduct themselves in an orderly manner around the school. They are friendly, polite, attentive in lessons and respectful to staff.
- Pupils get along well during social times and enjoy their lunchtimes and breaks together. The school is generally a quiet and calm place. During the inspection, part of the school had to be evacuated when the fire alarm was raised. Pupils and learners all followed the correct procedures and safely left the building to muster on the agreed site.
- Pupils attend well. They like coming to the school and value the importance of education.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, an increasing number of pupils with complex needs have been admitted to the school. For some, their starting points are much lower than expected because of their difficulties with communication, behaviour and emotional health. Some pupils are at an early stage of learning BSL, which slows their progress in learning.
- School leaders were unable to provide records of complete and up-to-date assessment information of pupils' work. Consequently, inspectors evaluated the quality of work and pupils' progress from their folders and books. This provided evidence that pupils' rates of progress are inconsistent and their gains in learning are patchy, including for disadvantaged pupils.
- Standards and expectations of pupils' progress are not high enough in the primary school provision. Assessments of younger pupils' progress and their books demonstrate that they are capable of more challenging work. Teaching does not take into account the different abilities and ages of the pupils, particularly in the primary phase.

- Pupils' progress in mathematics requires improvement. The most able pupils get off to a good start because they are often well suited to number work. However, their progress too frequently slows or stalls because their communication and language difficulties are barriers to progressing with problem solving and mathematical reasoning.
- Pupils' overall achievement in mathematics lags behind their progress in English. Their English books and folders demonstrate that over time they gain more confidence and staying power, particularly with extended writing in English.
- Pupils achieve well in drama and expressive arts. A recent project with a local theatre company was highly successful and enhanced pupils' personal confidence and expressive skills.
- Pupils are given helpful advice and support for their next steps and transitions to college. The school makes effective use of a careers advisory service to guide pupils in their choices. However, pupils' preparation for their next steps requires improvement because they do not all make as much personal and academic progress as they should.

16 to 19 study programmes

Inadequate

- Safeguarding arrangements in the specialist college provision are inadequate. Similar weaknesses in risk assessments, care plans and the reporting of serious concerns are found in the college as seen elsewhere in the school. In particular, some of the older learners in this provision are putting themselves at risk through their dangerous use of social media and harmful relationships. These risks have not been tackled effectively by the school leaders responsible for safeguarding.
- The behaviour of college learners is not always managed positively by staff in the residential homes. Rules and boundaries are applied differently by staff teams with sometimes disproportionate punishments for relatively minor issues. Some staff do not fully understand the importance of learners having a secure home and stable attachments.
- College learners do not make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematical skills and their attainment is low. Learners are over-reliant on a narrow range of communication methods, which limits their attainment by the time they leave the college.
- Unlike pupils in the primary and secondary phases, the older learners who join the college do not make enough progress in BSL because the teaching is too variable and, in some cases, adults' command of BSL is not secure.
- Leaders of the college do not provide parents with clear information about learners' progress in all areas of their programmes. Records of their achievement are not presented in ways that families can easily understand.
- Learners have good relationships with teaching staff, who typically have higher expectations of what learners can do independently than those who care for them in the residential homes. As a result of some carefully tailored individual programmes of study, learners develop strong practical and creative skills that prepare them well for employment and leisure time.
- Learners rise to the challenge of being treated as young adults during their college courses. Their social skills and confidence grow as they become more competent and

self-aware.

- A key strength of teaching and learning is the development of the sports leadership programme, which promotes learners' physical health, sense of responsibility and personal confidence.
- The range of specialist therapeutic support for learners is better in the college than in the rest of the school. Although it is early days, it is clear that the college therapists make an effective contribution to establishing learners' starting points and identifying their key needs.
- Leadership is improving in the college. The interim head of school and the college leader work together positively, have an accurate view of the college's strengths and weaknesses, and have a realistic and coherent vision for the future.

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision

Inadequate

- There are serious weaknesses in how well pupils are protected and how effectively staff promote their welfare in the residential provision across the school as a whole, including the specialist college.
- Senior leaders and governors have not monitored the residential provision well enough to ensure that pupils and learners are safe and making progress.
- Staff do not promote a sufficiently aspirational culture in the college residential provision. Learners are not encouraged to be ambitious.
- School-age pupils who contributed to the inspection were positive about their residential experience and the atmosphere in the homes is pleasant. Pupils value opportunities to make friends and socialise. They join in with a wide range of activities.
- During the inspection, positive and caring interactions between care staff and pupils were observed. Residential pupils come across as confident and assured young people. They are generally respectful, kind and caring of each other.
- Since September 2016, the 'key worker' system has been revised. Each pupil now has an identified member of staff in both the residential and education provision responsible for overseeing and supporting their needs. It is too early to determine the impact of this arrangement on improving pupils' outcomes.

Quality of care and support in the residential provision

Inadequate

- The quality of care plans is poor. The plans do not provide staff with key information to ensure that residential pupils' needs are identified, understood or managed well. In particular, care plans lack important information about how staff should manage residential pupils' mental health needs and personal well-being.
- The management of medication for residential college pupils is unsafe. Residential pupils are required to visit the staff office to receive their medication. Staff responsible for administering medication do not observe residential pupils after it has been given out. As a result, staff cannot be sure that prescribed medication is taken as required. This weakness poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of residential pupils.
- The arrangements for staff to communicate with residential pupils when they are off-site

are unreliable because mobile phones are not kept in working order. For example, there was a recent incident when pupils were unable to contact staff to arrange transportation back to the school. This weakness placed residential pupils at risk.

- Residential pupils are able to meet with the clinical psychologist, counsellors, therapy team and school nurse. However, the information from these meetings is not used routinely to update care plans or risk assessments, even when pupils' emotional health deteriorates.
- Overall, the residential accommodation is not good quality throughout and does not provide pupils with a welcoming and relaxing home to live in. Senior leaders recognise this weakness and plans to relocate to better premises are under way.
- Since the previous full inspection, there have been more opportunities for residential pupils to share their views with governors and the head of care. Pupils now have more choice about their leisure activities, and plans are in place for pupils to contribute to school leaders' reviews of key policies.

School details

Unique reference number	113654
Social care unique reference number	SC022216
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10025763

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

The inspection of residential provision 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	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	5–25
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	41
Number of boarders on roll	43
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mandi Street
Principal	Arnet Donkin
Telephone number	01392 267 023
Website	www.exeterdeafacademy.ac.uk
Email address	info@exeterdeafacademy.ac.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 May 2014

Information about this school

- Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education is a non-maintained special school for moderate, severe and profoundly deaf pupils. Most pupils are learning English as an additional language and some have delayed use of their first language, BSL.
- Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious allegations of a safeguarding nature had been investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the allegations were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.
- There have been a number of staffing changes since the previous inspection. An interim principal and interim head of school were appointed in September 2016.
- The school caters for primary and secondary pupils. There is also specialist college provision which caters for learners aged 16 to 25. The inspection of the college provision was integrated with the inspection of the school provision.
- At the time of the inspection, there were no children in the early years foundation stage. One child below the age of five attends part time and is taught within the primary school. There is no provision for two-year-olds.
- Over half of the pupils are residential.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Trustees, governors and leaders are currently developing plans to relocate the school to a new site.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website. The admissions policy is out of date and the website has not been updated with the names of the recently appointed interim principal and head of school.
- The academy does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the admissions policy.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection began as a no formal designation inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. It was converted to a section 5 integrated inspection on the second day.
- Inspectors checked the school’s arrangements for safeguarding, records of child protection concerns, risk assessments and care plans for pupils and a range of documentation relating to the school’s performance.
- Meetings were held with the interim principal and other senior leaders, governors, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the school, including the college provision. They spoke to pupils in and out of lessons and reviewed their books and folders.
- Inspectors spent time in the residential accommodation, met with care staff, reviewed documentation and spoke to residential pupils and learners.
- Inspectors were accompanied by BSL interpreters.
- An inspector spoke to parents and pupils at the start and end of the day.
- Eleven responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account.

Inspection team

Janet Pearce, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Catherine Leahy	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Pippa Wainwright	Ofsted Inspector
Paula Lahey	Social Care Regulatory Inspector
Sharron Escott	Social Care Regulatory Inspector
Tracey Ledder	Social Care Regulatory Inspector
Norma Welsby	Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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