

Vale of Evesham School

Half Termly Monitoring Report by the Independent Care Standards Visitor (Standard 20)

1. **Times & Date of Visit: Tuesday, 4th February 2020, 3.15 – 7.15 pm**
 - 1.1. As detailed in my last report (24th January 2020) this was an unannounced visit following an announced visit on the 21st January 2020.
 - 1.2. The Head of Care was absent due to ill health and the Deputy was acting as Interim Lead.
 - 1.3. The foci of this visit was to:
 - Follow up on the visit on the 21st January of the Head, the Link Governor and the Interim Head of Care to St J's School, a non-maintained special school with outstanding care provision;
 - Observe Care practice;
 - Discuss with Interim Lead how she is managing and organising the work and responsibilities of her new role; and
 - Discuss the role of the recently appointed Care Improvement Partner (CIP), Mr Roy Walker, an experienced social worker who it is planned will provide supervision to the Interim Lead and work with her on management development issues and compliance.
 - 1.4. Time was spent with the Head, the Interim Lead, her team and with pupils which included joining pupils and staff at supper in the early evening. Telephone contact was made with the Link Governor.
 - 1.5. The following records were scrutinised:
 - Behaviour Record;
 - Physical Intervention Record;
 - Bullying Record;
 - Complaints;
 - Consequences Log.
 - 1.6. Accommodation was made available to me had it been necessary or appropriate to see a pupil or a member of staff in private.
2. **Behaviour Records**
 - 2.1. Since my visit last term on the 4th December twenty-four incidents have occurred in the Care setting involving seven pupils, two of who are girls. The majority of the incidents involved threatening, disruptive or aggressive behaviour. This included biting, damage to property and one to a pupil stripping.

2.2. The action taken by staff is tabulated on the system which refers to:

- Change of staff;
- Clearing up mess;
- Contact with member of team;
- Referred to Head of Care;
- Directed to room;
- Logged;
- Redirected to alternative activity;
- Tactical ignoring;
- Loss of opportunity to choose activity;
- PPI.

2.3. Nine of the twenty incidents were addressed by a pupil being directed to his/her room. Six referred to either changing the member of staff, clearing up the mess and redirecting a pupil to an alternative activity. Only one referred to an intervention.

3. Physical Intervention Record

3.1. One intervention involving a male pupil has taken place in care since the 4th December. The intervention involving a male pupil (AS) lasted approximately fifteen seconds and consisted of a guided move to his bedroom by two staff.

4. Bullying Record

4.1. No incidents of bullying have been recorded since my last visit on the 4th December 2019.

5. Complaints

5.1. No complaints have been lodged since my last visit in December.

6. Consequences Log

6.1. No entry has been made in this log since my last visit in December.

6.2. It is not entirely clear how the use of this log sits with the information recorded and analysed as the school system under “Action Count By Student By Action” which refers to elements such as “referred to the Head of Care” which could also result in consequences.

7. Compliments Log

7.1. On an earlier visit I suggested to the Head of Care the use of a compliments or plaudits log. At that time I gathered that there had been one in the past and that the intention was to resurrect it. However, it is unclear whether this has happened or not. The use of such a log would capture the positive feedback from families and visitors which would support and encourage staff and the school

8. Staffing

- 8.1. The Head is providing good support to the Interim Lead and for the residential provision. She is actively involved in the weekly residential site checks and the regular checks on the procedures in place for the administration of medication.
- 8.2. The Head accompanied the Link Governor and the Interim Head of Care on the one day visit to St John's School. She and her colleagues found the visit very useful in discussing with the Head of Care and his Deputy the coordinated systems which underpin the monitoring and development of the Care practice and which secures the safety and wellbeing of the pupils.
- 8.3. The Head is keeping the Trust fully informed of the progress and developments that are taking place in Care as well as the forward planning.
- 8.4. It is not currently clear whether the Head of Care will return to work after half term or not. The school is therefore planning for the current interim arrangement to remain in place for the rest of this term.
- 8.5. The Link Governor has over December and last month been making informal visits to the residential provision to support the developments that are taking place as well as to support the Care Team. She is also taking the opportunity to "deep dive" into discrete areas such as the health and safety. Where she is able to do this she will be reporting in writing to the Interim Lead and the Head and will be updating her fellow governors on a regular basis. The school is also looking to form a small group of governors, which will include the Chair, who will focus on the work and development of the residential provision. It is hoped that some of the recently appointed governors will be able to join this group.
- 8.6. The Interim Lead is working very hard and effectively with the Head, the Link Governor and her team to maintain and further develop the provision. She is realistic and clear as to the need to retain her core Deputy responsibilities but also absorb the key elements of her new role. The input of the CIP will greatly assist her in prioritising her workload giving her advice and providing supervision. She has recently undertaken one day training in safeguarding and in safer recruitment.
- 8.7. The Care Team are now more settled than they were at the time of my December visit following the Ofsted inspection in November. Several new staff have been appointed, are in role and have been inducted. They appear settled and are enjoying being part of the team.
- 8.8. I shared the draft guidance which was published in January on the engagement model which will, in the autumn, replace the P scales for those pupils who cannot be assessed by the national curriculum. The guidance will apply to academies. The five areas of engagement for learning could provide a joint approach in education and care to assess the small steps significant progress of some pupils.
- 8.9. The staffing level in the units was good and the Interim Lead was actively involved with pupils as well as keeping good levels of overall monitoring and support. Staff were effectively deployed which ensured pupils' needs were met and they were safe. There were no safeguarding concerns.

9. Children and Young People

- 9.1. All of the units were visited and time was spent in each of them. Pupils were engaged in a range of activities which included making biscuits, drawing and colouring, reading and playing games.
- 9.2. Pupils showed pleasure and enjoyment in being involved with each other and staff during the activities. They also worked and played well together in what was a homely, relaxed atmosphere. Behaviour was very good.
- 9.3. Some of the older pupils had been on a shopping trip after school and showed off their purchases to peers and staff.

10. Accommodation

- 10.1. The Monday residential site checks are working well in ensuring identified shortfalls have and are being robustly addressed.
- 10.2. A fire risk assessment by an external agency took place on the 14th November. Two fire drills have taken place since my December visit, one on the 9th December at 7.45 pm and the 27th January at 8.10 pm. They were not planned drills but a result of the activation of the system. Issues and learning points were identified. Evacuation times were good. However one issue arose around how best to manage a scenario when a pupil refused to evacuate. There is a need for notices identifying the Fire Marshals to be displayed in the residential provision. All fire doors are fully functioning.

11. Input from the Residential Link Governor

- 11.1. All of the recommendations made in my report following my visit in early December have been addressed.
- 11.2. Since the last inspection carried out by Ofsted at the beginning of November I have worked very closely alongside Sharan, Deputy Head of Care to offer my support in any way that I can. I have been making regular visits and have worked closely with all staff to ensure that they feel that they are being listened to.
- 11.3. Sharan has worked closely with the SLT to ensure that progress is being made within the Residential Action Plan. I have met regularly with Sharan to keep regularly updated of progress.
- 11.4. I have completed a Health and Safety walk around school, and in particular Residential to monitor progress.
- 11.5. I was fortunate to be able to visit St John's School near York and met with the Headteacher, Head of Care and Deputy Head of Care. I felt this was of huge value to myself, Sharan Brain and Rachel Perks to share best practices. We intend to keep in touch with the staff and complete peer reviews in the future.

- 11.6. We also met Roy Walker, who will also be supporting Residential with their auditing processes.
- 11.7. I am also in the process of setting up a “sub-committee” alongside our Board of Governors specifically for residential. This sub-committee will then feed into our main full Governors’ meetings. The Governors on this committee will include myself, (acting) Head of Care, Headteacher, Residential Staff Representative, one Parent Governor (also a parent of a current boarder in residential) and a Community Governor.
- 11.8. I have also attended Team Teach training and have a much better understanding of how to understand the Physical Intervention Log.

12. Recommendations

- 12.1. All of the recommendations made in my report following my visit in early December have been addressed.
- 12.2. As a result of this visit the school needs to:
- Consider creating a compliments log.
 - Declutter and tidy areas in the units, the bathrooms and ensure the sleeping-in room is always locked.
 - Monitor from time to time the work of the Night Waking member of staff to ensure the reported checking is securely in place
 - Clarify, if necessary with professional input, the evacuation arrangements for a pupil who refuses to evacuate when the alarm is activated.
 - Clarify use of the Consequences Log.

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7th February 2020