

**OKLAHOMA COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH
OFFICE OF JUVENILE SYSTEM OVERSIGHT**

Name and Location of Facility: Oklahoma School for the Deaf
Sulphur, Oklahoma

Dates of Visit: October 4 and 30, 2006

Oversight Reviewer: Ellen Harwell, Oversight Specialist

Focus of Visit: Biannual Visit, 2006

Date: April 4, 2007

General Information

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) began a routine, unannounced visit on October 4, 2006, at the Oklahoma School for the Deaf (OSD), located in Sulphur, Oklahoma, and returned on October 30, 2006, to complete the visit. The OSD is a special school operated by the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS). The focus of the visit was to assess compliance with established responsibilities.

Persons Interviewed

- Entry interview and an exit conference with the superintendent
- Five students
- Three direct care staff members

Documentation Reviewed

- Personnel files of five direct care staff members

Observational Tour

- Entire facility

Overview

Interviews

The OJSO interviewed five students. The interview questions pertained to the residents' perception of safety, program services, the rights of residents, discipline practices, and other residential issues. All the interviewees reported feeling safe at the school.

Three direct care staff members were interviewed. The interview questions pertained to the staff members' perceptions of program services, the rights of residents, discipline policies, and other residential issues. Two staff members commented that the staff members with limited sign language skills caused miscommunications with the residents.

File Reviews

The OJSO reviewed the personnel files of five staff members. The files were well-organized and were complete for the items reviewed. No issues of violations were noted.

Observational Tour

The OJSO conducted a tour of the facility. Deficiencies noted were burned-out light bulbs, missing dresser handles, and damaged ceiling tiles. All deficiencies were corrected as confirmed by email.

Summary

On the days of the OJSO visit, the facility was clean and was well-maintained. The students interviewed reported feeling safe. Improvements were noted including the addition of video telephones for resident use in the dormitories.

The DRS and the OSD have requested a collaborative review with the OJSO of staff and resident communication concerns, admission policies, and independent living skills education. The OJSO's recommendations will follow.

EH:js

