

# Horton Lodge

Inspection report for residential special school

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<b>Inspector</b>	Jackie Callaghan
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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	4 July 2006

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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 outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## 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

Horton Lodge school is operated by Staffordshire County Council. The school is situated in Staffordshire Moorlands, approximately three miles outside the market town of Leek. The buildings are a mix of old and new, dating from 1890 to the present day and are set within ten acres of ground. The school offers education for boys and girls, aged between 2 and 11 years with physical disabilities. Many of the children have additional learning difficulties and some have additional visual, hearing and/or speech and language difficulties. The school's education system is based on 'Conductive Education' which aims to address all areas of a child's developmental needs. The school has qualified conductor teachers and works closely with the International Peto Institute in Budapest. The school also provides a 'learning centre' for parents on site and supports children from a range of different educational settings. The residential provision which is called Kiplings is sited on the ground floor, in a separate wing with an interconnecting corridor to a number of classrooms. The residential area comprises of a lounge, staff office, bedrooms, bathrooms and toilets. The bedrooms vary in size between single occupancy to a maximum of 4.

### Summary

This was an announced inspection that focused on the key standards. The inspection concentrated on the medication systems, keeping the young people safe and the school's behavioural management processes. The inspection also considered how the staff are supported and how the school is managed. This inspection did not look at the admission and leaving process for the children. This inspection found that the behaviour management recording system does not enable children to voice their views after an incident and the walk across to the new dining room exposes the children to bad weather conditions.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

### Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the school was asked to provide a facility that enables children to access drinking water when in Kipling's, ensure that staff receive basic child protection training when on induction and make sure staff names are recorded when undertaking a fire drill. The head teacher was also asked to make sure all furnishings comply with fire safety precautions and that daily recording systems involve the children. Staff were asked to ensure that pupil records detail sufficient information to demonstrate how they have dealt with any matters. Finally, the school was asked to undertake a rolling programme of re-decoration, closely monitor the use of the new dining room and ensure information about the school is available in various formats for parents and pupils. Drinking water is now readily available in the residential provision and all staff now receive child protection training when on induction. This promotes both children's well-being and safety. A detailed list has been compiled that records which staff have taken part in a fire drill. This list is monitored by the head of care and head teacher to ensure that all staff are exposed to a fire drill practice annually. All furnishings now comply with fire safety regulations. As a result, young people's welfare is safeguarded as staff are able to demonstrate a good knowledge and practise of emergency evacuations. Children now have more opportunities to contribute to the daily recording systems and staff now detail sufficient information that demonstrates how they have dealt with any matters arising. The school now has a programme

of re-decoration and the use of the new dining room has been closely monitored. The head teacher and head of care has creatively produced information on the school in several formats. This ensures that young people and children receive care that actively promotes their welfare.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Basic information regarding the health and medical histories of each pupil is gained as part of the schools' admission process. Parents retain responsibility for ensuring their child's health care needs are met. The school has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures that includes intimate and personal care guidance for staff working with the children. Children receive care that actively promotes their welfare. Children are consistently provided with a well balanced diet. Children's choices mean that they are receiving the range of nutrients required for healthy growth and nutrition. Staff are keen to promote healthy eating and are highly imaginative with activities to encourage children to eat fruit or try new foods. The use of story telling with visual prompts creatively promotes the children's participation. For example, a story of a caterpillar foraging for food who comes across some fruit. The fruit is illustrated by a large laminated photo. Children taste small pieces of fruit to enable them to experience the same food that the caterpillar eats. This exceptional practice ensures that children's health and well-being is extensively promoted and developed. Policies and procedures are in place for the safe storage and administration of medication. Children's health and welfare is safeguarded because staff are aware of the appropriate procedures to follow. Children's well-being is further promoted as staff receive training in the safe handling and administration of medication, and all staff are trained in basic first aid. Accident books are maintained and enhanced by half termly monitoring. The monitoring system informs risk assessments and reduces the likelihood of repetitive accidents so helping to ensure children's safety.

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

The provision is good.

Children's privacy is respected and promoted. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of this important aspect of children's care. Children's welfare is further promoted because they are clear about how to make a complaint. There is an effective system in place to record any concerns made known by children. Children's welfare is protected because staff receive training in child protection and demonstrate a good knowledge of policies and procedures. There are policies and procedures in place with regards to bullying and high adult: child ratios are maintained. The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance. Children's well-being is positively promoted. There are no physical interventions recorded. An appropriately bound and page numbered book is maintained to record any physical interventions. However, the records do not contain a section to record comments made by children. This potentially undermines children's ability to report injuries following an incident requiring physical intervention by staff. Children learn how to protect themselves in an emergency because they regularly practise the emergency escape drill and staff receive 'Fire Marshall' training. Safe procedures are in place to protect children through tests on fire systems and other electrical equipment at appropriate intervals. Staff recruitment files contain extensive evidence of recruitment checks that have taken place prior to staff being deployed. This includes an appropriate enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. This ensures that young people are appropriately safeguarded.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children's welfare and safety is well supported because placement plans, care plans and risk assessments are in place and include in detail children's social, sexual and health education. Children's education is fully supported. Each young person has their own personal education plan which is appropriately detailed and understood. Children's social skills are extremely well promoted as they are encouraged to engage in activities within their local community. For example, they enjoy attending a mainstream Brownie pack. Children benefit because the school are committed to providing good quality equipment for their enjoyment. Children receive a high and excellent degree of support. Children explore their potential and develop their personal interests because staff work in a very encouraging and supportive manner. Consequently the care and learning opportunities and activities are excellent. Children freely initiate interaction and seek help with various staff members on duty. Children's well-being is positively promoted as they are each allocated to a key person to ensure their continual care needs are met.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are developing awareness of others as they share and take turns. They are learning to take responsibility as they help to tidy up at the end of play sessions. Children are extremely well consulted about life in Kiplings. Their views and preferences are sought, including menu content, furnishings and activities. The school has two independent advocates. Both advocates have different backgrounds and experiences with disabilities. This enables the children's well-being to be truly promoted as the advocates are able to offer a wide and varying degree of support, empathy and understanding. This increases children's welfare by ensuring exceptional safeguards are in place. Children's care and welfare is promoted superbly as detailed placement plans are in place. They cover a range of important matters and are used in conjunction with behaviour plans and risk assessments. Children are supported to have contact with friends and family where appropriate. Friends and family are welcome to visit the school and suitable rooms are available for children to receive their visitors in private.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

The standard of accommodation is good at Kiplings, provides a comfortable environment for children and young people, to assist them with domestic-style living. Children actively choose decorations for their bedrooms and help to maintain the homely environment. This ensures that children take pride in their surroundings as well as helping them to develop ownership of the environment. Horton Lodge has a new dining room, providing a warm and enjoyable environment for the children to eat their meals. However, the new dining room is located in the building across from the residential provision. This means that children have to cross a small playground. This does not encourage an 'inclusive' feel. During inclement weather this has the potential for children to feel uncomfortable, when they eat meals. This has the potential to impact on the positive social experience they receive.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Horton Lodge school has a Statement of Purpose which is clear and concise. The children's guide gives all required information to children and their families on the services available. This includes the philosophy of care and the expectations of the school. The establishment's staffing policy is included in its statement of purpose and is broken down to reflect the minimum staffing expectations in the school. Children's welfare, safety and developmental progress are strengthened because staff receive a planned induction and regular supervision. As a result, they become sure of their job role and individual level of responsibility very quickly. Children benefit greatly from this positive approach as they are cared for by highly motivated, suitable and knowledgeable staff. Children are making good progress because of the excellent management systems that are in place. Their learning is effectively monitored for their continued progress and this is discussed regularly within staff meetings. Staff observe children regularly and use observations to detail their progress. Children also benefit because of staff's commitment to regularly attend training to update and improve their knowledge and practice. Children's safety, welfare and care is truly safeguarded because managers undertake regular quality assurance monitoring of the setting. As a result they evaluate and assess areas of development to continually develop the quality of care. Horton Lodge, as an organisation, has delegated the responsibility for its monthly review of welfare to an independent person from the local authority. These visits are supplemented by other special schools' heads of care visiting. Records indicate that these visits take place with appropriate regularity and some are unannounced. The visits provide excellent additional safeguarding mechanisms for young people by looking at staff and management practices. They also supply the head of care with additional managerial support. These monitoring visits cover all the standards and are organised under the 'Every Child Matters' headings. Reports promote good quality care and robustly ensure that minor shortfalls are quickly resolved to improve practice. This further promotes and safeguards children's welfare.

## What must be done to secure future improvement?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop a system that records children's comments following an incident (NMS 10)
- promote a more inclusive feel between the new dining room and the residential provision by ensuring the accomodation is consistent with children's needs (NMS 24).

## Annex

## Annex A

### National Minimum Standards for residential special school

#### Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted (NMS 14)
- children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs (NMS 15)

**Ofsted considers 14 the key standard to be inspected.**

#### Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled (NMS 3)
- children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration (NMS 4)
- the welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse (NMS 5)
- children are protected from bullying (NMS 6)
- all significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified to the appropriate authorities by the head of the school or designated person (NMS 7)
- children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return (NMS 8)
- children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour (NMS 10)
- children live in schools that provide physical safety and security (NMS 26)
- there is careful selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers (NMS 27)

**Ofsted considers 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- the school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school (NMS 12)
- children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities within the school and in the local community (NMS 13)
- children receive individual support when they need it (NMS 22)

**Ofsted considers 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run; no child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views (NMS 2)
- children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect (NMS 9)
- children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes (NMS 11)



- children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school (NMS 17)
- in accordance with their wishes children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while at school (NMS 20)

**Ofsted considers 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.**

## **Achieving economic well-being**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children can wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money (NMS 16)
- children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living (NMS 21)
- children live in well designed and pleasant premises, which provide sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs
- children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use (NMS 24)
- children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity (NMS 25)

**Ofsted considers the key standard to be inspected.**

## **Organisation**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils (NMS 1)
- children's needs, development and progress are recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions (NMS 18)
- there are adequate records of the staff and child groups of the school (NMS 19)
- children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently (NMS 28)
- children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs (NMS 29)
- children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare (NMS 30)
- children receive the care and services they need from competent staff (NMS 31)
- children and staff enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools (NMS 32)
- the governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school (NMS 33)

**Ofsted considers 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.**