

Cicely Haughton

Inspection report for residential special school

Unique reference number	SC038731
Inspection date	12 March 2008
Inspector	Jackie Callaghan
Type of Inspection	Key

Address	Staffordshire County Council Cicely Haughton Special School Westwood Manor Wetley Rocks STOKE-ON-TRENT ST9 0BX
Telephone number	01782 550202
Email	
Registered person	Cicely Haughton
Head of care	N Philips
Head / Principal	K Rutter
Date of last inspection	17 October 2006

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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

Cicely Haughton is a Staffordshire Local Education Authority school offering day and residential places to girls and boys age five to 11 years who have a range of social, emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties. The school is an extended and modernised Victorian manor house standing in approximately twenty acres of parkland. It is located in a rural area between Cheadle and Leek. The classrooms, main staff office plus laundry and catering facilities are located on the ground floor of the building. The residential accommodation is located on the first floor. The grounds contain a football pitch, softball area and an adventure playground. There is also a tarmac playground with flood lights, an outdoor pursuits room and woodwork and craft room. The boarding provision operates on a Monday to Friday basis during school term-time. Flexible boarding arrangements are encouraged, according to individual children's needs and circumstances, ranging from one night up to four nights per week. There are 22 residential pupils and a further 22 day pupils.

Summary

This was an announced full inspection undertaken by one Ofsted inspector. The inspection looked at the key Residential Special School National Minimum Standards (NMS) under the Every Child Matters outcome groups. All outcome areas were inspected with the exception of Economic Wellbeing. At this inspection Being Healthy was judged as good, with Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Positive Contribution and Organisation judged as outstanding. Two recommendations were raised in relation to Being Healthy and Organisation. Children enjoy being at school and benefit from clear, professional, effective and imaginative management and a staff team who are skilled, knowledgeable and enthusiastic.

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 setting was asked to improve issues relating to staff training and recruitment, child protection, care planning, diversity and one-to-one planning. The head teacher and the governor have applied to attend child protection training to ensure that they are up to date with current legislation and practice. Improvements have been made to the staff recruitment process so as to safeguard children's welfare. Children's individual placement plans now detail essential information which is consistent with educational objectives and strategies. The function of the one to one work with pupils has been reviewed and improved to effectively support children's overall development, and staff receive a wide training package to enable them to effectively support and care for children at the school. This has a positive impact on children's care.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted. Whole school initiatives and direct input around mental, physical and emotional health ensure that children's general health needs are met. Case records contain a range of information relating to the health and wellbeing of children and the information is coherent and concise to provide a clear picture of how staff support them. As a result, children

receive care that actively promotes their welfare. Staff know about children's health needs and have the skills to manage the administration of medication and first aid. Current medication policy and procedure administration takes into account that some medications such as Ritalin-type drugs are considered controlled drugs and as such, have robust recording and monitoring procedures in place. The school effectively stores controlled drugs because they have a double medication storage cabinet, although this was not in place at the beginning of the inspection. Practice is sound and generally promotes children's health and safety. Although, staff are not aware of the wider recommended occupational guidance and practice, which has the potential to compromise children's wellbeing. Children learn about the benefits of healthy living. They sit at a table laid with a tablecloth and jugs of fresh water to enjoy healthy and nutritious meals such as flour tortillas filled with chicken, lettuce and tomatoes. Food is excellent, freshly prepared and enthusiastically appreciated by the children. The school provides a range of food choices that helps to promote a healthy lifestyle. For example, a salad bar where children queue and serve themselves. This promotes a range of skills including independence, turn taking and portion management. Meal times are orderly, social occasions where they sit with their friends and staff members to happily discuss a wide range of topics. Children enjoy the responsibility of clearing the tables and catering staff praise and encourage them to be involved, which helps the children to adopt a positive attitude towards food. The catering area and residential provision as a whole is kept very clean and is a warm and homely environment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Overall, the school has an excellent focus on safeguarding and protection issues with clear guidance that is communicated effectively to promote the wellbeing of children. Adults and children follow comprehensive guidelines for privacy that keeps everyone safe. The school has outstanding leadership that consistently promotes an environment where safety and children's welfare is paramount. Children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept well informed of progress in their consideration. Staff are fully informed about the range and significance of their role in regard to the complaints process because they receive specific training in this area. The arrangements for protecting children who may be at risk from running off or away are well established. Children are protected from harm, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse. Excellent working relationships have been forged between the school and external safeguarding professionals. This ensures that children's welfare is actively promoted at all times. Children are protected through a an extensive range of policies, training and staff guidance about behaviour management. Children are encouraged and supported to behave in ways that are socially acceptable. As a result, children are very courteous and have exceptional manners. Staff promote behavioural boundaries that are fair and consistent. Staff continually use praise and positive feedback when children are successful at behaving well or show improvements. Staff communicate clear expectations regarding boundaries and use a range of consequences for poor behaviour. The school approach to behaviour is insightful, skilled and is based on redirection and purposeful intervention to calm the situation quickly. This enables staff to maximise the positive aspects of care and truly develops children's strengths. Children live in a school that provides physical safety and security. The environment is extremely safe for children. Rigorous, well established health and safety systems ensure that it continues to be so. There is clear, well informed risk assessment and management of risk from fire. There is a procedure for selection and vetting of all staff, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers, so as to safeguard their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy in the setting's caring environment and they have positive relationships with staff. Children are helped and encouraged by all adults at the school, which includes residential staff, teachers, teaching assistants and domestic staff, to achieve and to progress in education. The school takes a holistic view of the child and their need to learn and to make use of their learning in their everyday lives. Therefore, children thrive. Written plans and monitoring systems are used to guide children's progress and to reflect on their learning. These plans are regularly reviewed and evaluated in order to ensure the environment is tailored to further every child's unique steps in learning. Consequently, children take part in a deeply stimulating and challenging range of indoor and outdoor experiences. The children are confident, lively and friendly. They are eager to take part in group discussions and show real enthusiasm to share their personal experiences and knowledge with both staff and visitors. Staff create a positive environment where learning and taking part is fun. The outstanding literacy hour within the classroom is extended into the residential provision as residential staff receive training on delivering reading through the use of synthetic phonics. Parents also receive literacy workshop events to equip them with the necessary understanding and knowledge to be able to fully support their child within the home. Family links feature strongly at the school which values the role of parents as joint educators. This exceptional support enables the school to educate and develop the whole child and the school is extremely successful in re-integrating children back into their home community and mainstream schooling. Children access a diverse range of materials, toys and resources within the residential units, so helping to ensure they are consistently stimulated. Their thinking is challenged as they learn about interesting themes, for example, they participate in art activities about Easter where excellent peer relationships are developed through subtle nurturing and direction from staff.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are developing a superb 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 encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run. They receive the best possible care as meticulous systems are in place to support their continuous wellbeing. For example, the organisation of the curriculum, the way that subjects are taught in school and the residential forums and consultations that take place are all very child-centred. Staff make time to communicate well with children and encourage them to have a positive voice. Staff are well informed about each child's needs. The school gathers a comprehensive range of information before their arrival that includes pre-admission information. Through close working relationships with parents, professionals and children, the setting ensures all children play and learn in an inclusive environment. Each child has a key worker who makes sure their needs are fully met. The school places a strong emphasis on developing effective and supportive relationships. The school is sensitive and responsive to the needs of parents regarding information about their children's care and progress.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for life in residence. There is outstanding management of both the school and of residence. The senior management team comprises of the head teacher, head of care and two assistant head teachers who clearly work well together and along with the governors share a positive practical vision for the children at Cicely. Quotes from parents in a school survey include. 'I hold all care staff in high esteem', and 'they are doing a excellent job'. Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently. Staff are experienced, skilled and confident. Staff are well qualified and National Vocational Qualification systems are well established. Relationships between children and staff are excellent. Children appreciate the care that staff give. Current staffing levels are workable due to the outstanding commitment made by the staff group and the head of care. However, changes to local policy guidelines and the current staffing levels places the school at risk of being under resourced. The school are having discussions about how they intend to fill this void but have yet to formally address the issues within a strategic plan. Both the head teacher and the head of care recognise that current suggestions are workable in practice for the short-term, only as long-term the school are at risk of staff 'burn-out'. This potentially compromises children's welfare as the current outstanding level of service is at risk of being diminished. Children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare. Staff have great confidence in the people who manage them and managers value the staff. Professional supervision is well established and effective. Children and staff enjoy the stability of an efficiently run school. Systems for monitoring the operation of the residential school are excellent, and the school has an atmosphere of purposeful and imaginative direction.

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
----------	--------	----------

Recommendations

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

- ensure controlled drugs are consistently stored inside a metal cabinet that meets standards (NMS 14)
- explore and develop a specific policy and practice for staffing cover arrangements until the residential staff compliment is back up to full capacity (NMS 28).

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.