

# Penn Hall School

Inspection report for residential special school

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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**

Penn Hall School is a Wolverhampton Local Authority Community Special School for pupils aged three to 18 whose special educational needs fall predominantly in the category of physical disability. Some pupils will have an associated learning difficulty related to their physical disability. The school can accommodate 80 pupils. The residential hostel can accommodate up to six pupils for overnight stays. A flexible approach is maintained so that young people can stay from one to four nights a week with a maximum stay of 16 planned nights per year. On occasions the hostel can take young people on an emergency basis due to family circumstances. The unit consists of a number of bathrooms and dormitory areas together with a television room, games room, life skills room and dining area. The aim of the residential hostel is to encourage independence and long term emotional maturity.

### **Summary**

This was an announced inspection looking at the key Residential Special School National Minimum Standards (NMS) under the Every Child Matters outcome groups. All outcome areas were inspected and the only area not looked at in any detail was the recruitment procedures under the outcome Staying Safe. This was due to the fact that there has been no new member of staff in the residential unit since the last inspection and this area was well met at that time. At this inspection, Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving and Making a Positive Contribution were judged as outstanding and Economic Wellbeing and Organisation were judged as good. Three recommendations were raised in relation to Organisation. This resource is unique in that it provides a very flexible approach to residential provision and parents and young people make their own choices when it comes to deciding if they want to stay over at the hostel. Decisions are also made on which young people share the week together and these decisions are very much taken in consultation with the young people. This service provision is viewed by the young people as 'sleepovers.' It was found that the resource is outstanding in that the outcomes for young people are well met and young people really enjoy their stay.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

There were no recommendations made at the last inspection in February 2007.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Young people's individual health and intimate care needs are identified and assessed as part of the school's admission process. This is recorded in a clear, easily accessible plan for each young person detailing how specific and general health issues are to be addressed whilst they are in the residential hostel. Particular health needs which may impact on future outcomes for young people are identified at the earliest opportunity and staff actively ensure that the services needed to address these needs are met. For example, the physiotherapist or speech and language therapist. The school has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures that includes intimate and personal care guidance for staff working with the young people. This ensures that young people receive exceptional care that actively promotes their well-being and health. The school have two qualified nursing staff with specific responsibility for promoting the health of

the young people and they are on call when the young people stay over in the residential hostel. Health issues that relate to ethnicity, race, sexuality, faith or belief are fully assessed in respect of each young person and these are explicitly identified in the care plan with any actions that may be needed to address them. The food provided for young people shows that the staff responsible for the provision and preparation of meals have a very good understanding of what makes up a good balanced diet. Young people learn about the principles of healthy eating as they enjoy an interesting and varied range of meals. Young people have a variety of dishes to choose from and alternatives are also provided for those young people who are unable to eat the planned menus. In addition, fresh fruit is always available. Menu planning is adventurous, integrates culturally appropriate food and encourages young people to try new dishes. Cultural evenings frequently take place and the young people also dress according to the particular custom they are celebrating. The young people are seen to treat mealtimes as enjoyable social occasions and accept good standards of behaviour as the norm. The young people as part of their life skill programmes cook basic meals or foods which helps them to adopt a positive attitude towards food. This excellent practice ensures that children's health and well-being are extensively promoted and developed. Policies and procedures are in place for the safe storage and administration of medication and the nursing staff take full responsibility for ensuring safe practice. Young people's health and welfare is safeguarded because staff are made aware of the appropriate procedures to follow. Young people'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. Medication is transferred to the residential unit on a Monday morning by the nursing staff and any changes to the medication are explained to the staff on duty. The medication is then transferred back to the nurses at the end of the week and all medication further checked. Medication records are seen as key to the effective management of healthcare matters, staff are aware of the importance and necessity of them always being up to date and fully comprehensive.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Staff show a high regard for the privacy of the young people and intimate care tasks are carried out in a sensitive manner ensuring that dignity and privacy is upheld. There are also clear policies in relation to maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality. Children and young people's welfare is further promoted because the school has a well-written policy about how to make a complaint. The school prospectus clearly describes how to make a complaint, however, the name and address of Ofsted needs to be inserted into the brochure. There is an effective system in place to record any concerns made known by young people. Young people's welfare is fully safeguarded because the school has excellent, robust child protection policies and procedures. These policies are well established and understood by staff and there are good links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Training for staff is regularly updated and the Head of Care has accessed external training through the NSPCC. The school has a clear policy on young people who are absent without authority but young people choose to stay over in the residential hostel so this is never a problem. Young people are protected from bullying as there are clear procedures in place to deal with incidents effectively, which staff are knowledgeable about. The school's behaviour management policy and strategies have, as their prime objective, promoted the creation of a safe, supportive learning environment. The policy aims to gain achievement of a successful learning outcome for the young person in recognising and responding to their individuality. There have been no incidents of bullying in the residential hostel. Young people's well-being is positively promoted. The use of sanctions

and physical interventions are minimal, always appropriate and fully recorded in a bound and numbered book. The school has regularly updated risk assessments for all aspects of safety of the premises and grounds including fire, and young people's behaviour and activities. These assessments are taken into account in the daily activities of the school as well as the hostel and any activities off site. This further ensures the overall health and safety of the young people.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children receive a high and excellent degree of support. The school values, promotes and encourages all of their young people to make the best of their educational opportunities. Children explore their potential and develop their personal interests because staff work in a very encouraging and supportive manner. Consequently the care, learning opportunities and activities are excellent. Young people receive individualised assistance, with the appropriate assessments and plans in place. Considerable effort is put into combining social, educational, care and health needs into a package which, will not only meet identified needs but promote development. Young people freely initiate interaction and seek help from various staff members on duty. Young people's well-being is positively promoted to ensure their continual care needs are met. Thus, young people benefit from staying in the residential hostel because staff are focused on their success, needs and achievements. Young people's welfare and safety is well supported because care plans and risk assessments are in place and include, in detail, young people's social, sexual and health education. Young people's social skills are extremely well promoted as they are encouraged to engage in a variety of activities within their local community. For example, young people engage in wheelchair football at the local football training ground and enjoy going to the local horse riding stables. Staff share their own interests and enthusiasms with the young people and encourage them to try out new activities and interests. Young people's comments and conversation clearly shows that they enjoy these activities and the time they spend in the hostel.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Consulting with young people, listening to them, discussing decisions affecting their welfare with them, talking to them about their residential stay and helping young people make decisions on matters that effect them are all fully integrated into the care practices of the school. Staff demonstrate that they place great value on the views and opinions of the young people in their care and every effort is made to assist with their communication. The hostel has an independent advocate who visits regularly and is able to provide a wide and varying degree of support, empathy and understanding and the hostel's quality assurance systems are centred around the experience of young people and their families. Parents feel listened to and are consulted after every short stay their child has at the hostel. There is a very evident warmth in the relationship between the staff and the young people and the staff team, who have been working at Penn Hall for many years, and have built up a strong bond with the young people. Staff are very comfortable with their role of setting clearly understood boundaries while maintaining a high quality relationship between themselves and the young people. Each young person has clear records when they come into the residential hostel that have been drawn up between the school and the hostel. This clearly details how young people's needs are to be met during their overnight stays. Young people are only in the hostel for a maximum four night stay so contact is not a

major issue. However, parents or carers are encouraged to visit should they choose to do so and young people are able to telephone home as and when they wish.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Young people are encouraged to develop life skills that prepare them for adulthood and independence. There are life skills and Leavers Programmes that include links with Colleges of Further Education which help young people prepare for life after school. This programme includes regular visits from Connexions Service staff and local authority teams who work closely with the young people and their families to ensure that young people are well supported at an important stage in their lives. The residential hostel has a life skills centre dedicated to supporting young people to make informed choices about their lives and young people begin to feel empowered, motivated and more confident. The room itself is exciting with a range of special needs technologies and is attractive as well as functional. The use of environmental control systems provides access for all young people through controllers or communication aids. Structured sessions help young people practice the essential skills that will enable them to prepare for independence and adulthood. The residential hostel is on the same site as the school and is a listed building which has been sensitively adapted to meet the needs of the young people. The accommodation is homely and decorated, maintained and furnished to a good standard and there is ample space for young people to undertake a variety of activities. The main kitchen is not up to the same standard as the rest of the building.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Penn Hall School has a prospectus which is clear and concise. This includes the philosophy of care and the expectations of the school. There is also a page devoted to the flexible arrangements of the hostel. Young people are making good progress because of the good 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 young people regularly and use observations to detail their progress. Young people also benefit because of staff's commitment to regularly attend training to update and improve their knowledge and practice. The number of staff on duty is sufficient to meet the needs of the young people and there has been a consistent staff team in place for some time. There is often a crossover of staff from school which adds to the consistent approach for the young people. There is a competent, highly motivated staff team with a range of experience and these skills are well matched to the young people that stay in the hostel. The Head of Care meets the qualification standards and she is keen to further develop her professional competence. However the child care staff have not as yet achieved their National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. The Head of Care and Head Teacher have both established a pattern of monitoring records, through which they monitor the performance of the residential staff in meeting their requirements. Young people are well supervised because of the effective leadership and management of the setting. Efficient staffing rotas ensure adult: child ratios are met and staff are deployed appropriately. A parent governor will frequently visit the residential hostel to monitor the overall welfare of the young people. However, no written report is made and submitted to the Headmaster as a result of this visit.

## 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):

- ensure that care staff embark on the NVQ level 3 in the caring of children and young people or an equivalent qualification. NMS 31
- ensure that the visits made to the residential unit by a representative of the governing body are recorded and a written report is completed in relation to the residential unit's records, physical condition of the building and consultation with the young people. NMS 33
- ensure that the school prospectus and any other literature has the new Ofsted address. NMS 1.



## 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.**