

# Hailey 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**

Hailey Hall School is a residential and day special school for boys aged 11 to 16 with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school is operated by Hertfordshire Education Authority. All young people who attend the school have a statement of special educational needs and a small number are also looked after by the local authority. The school has places for 68 pupils. The residential facilities can accommodate a maximum of 24 boarders. Young people board between Monday and Friday in term time. The school occupies purpose-built premises with accommodation on two floors. The residential provision for young people comprises three units leading from the school's main hall and dining area. Each unit has a lounge and a kitchenette, one single bedroom and a dormitory which is divided into individual sleeping areas. The school's recreational facilities include a football pitch, an outdoor swimming pool and a sports hall. The school is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of Hoddesdon.

### **Summary**

At this announced inspection, all of the key standards were inspected. The Achieving economic wellbeing standards relating to accommodation were also inspected. Eleven young people were boarding at the school and all of them participated in this inspection. There were no recommendations from the last inspection. Since the last inspection, the school has experienced a change of Headteacher and a higher than usual turnover of care staff. The recently appointed Headteacher and other senior managers are currently reviewing a range of policies and practices. A number of developments are being implemented, but it is too early to assess their effectiveness. This is a satisfactory service in most respects, with some good features. Overall, the school's procedures and practices provide a safe environment for young people. The school provides a good standard of individual support to young people who board and they respond well. There are warm and positive relationships between staff and young people. Young people feel valued and have good opportunities to make their views known to staff. The young people are keen to board and standards of behaviour are good. Care staff are enthusiastic and strongly committed to meeting the young people's needs. The residential accommodation is well maintained and offers a reasonably homely environment for young people. However, some areas have been identified where the school does not meet National Minimum Standards. These areas include: aspects of the storage and administration of medicines; the frequency of fire drills during residential time; the content of young people's placement plans; the frequency of formal supervision for care staff; the provision of written information about boarding in a format suitable for the young people; the arrangements for monitoring visits to be made to the school on behalf of the governing body.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

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

The last inspection, which was carried out by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) in December 2006, did not identify any areas where the school needed to improve the care being provided for young people.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The school promotes a healthy lifestyle for young people. For example, young people are encouraged to eat healthy food and to take part in physical activities during the lunch break and after school. Staff identify the health needs of individual young people and actively promote their health care. The school maintains good links with health professionals, such as the school nurse. Staff have a good general understanding of the health needs of the young people in their care. The young people's care plan files include information about their health needs, but this is not always updated in line with other health records. A regular bulletin is produced to inform staff about the young people's medical needs, including any changes to their medication and treatment. Records are kept of medical checks and any other health-related appointments that the young people attend. Staff liaise with parents and with the school nurse to ensure that young people receive regular medical, dental and optical checks. However, not all of the young people have a health plan or similar document where all of the required information is collated to make it easily accessible for staff. Staff receive training in first aid and there is always a qualified first aider on duty in the school. Appropriate records are kept of any accidents involving young people. The necessary parental consents for medical treatment, administration of medicines and the use of first aid are held on young people's files. There are clear records of the administration of medicines to young people. There is a good system for auditing medication entering and leaving the school. The school has a policy and written guidance on the administration, storage and recording of medicines. There are, however, three areas where the arrangements for storage and administration of medication are potentially unsafe. Although the staff who administer medication to young people have received training from an experienced member of staff, there is no system for assessing their competence before they take responsibility for this task. Prescribed medication is not always administered from its original packaging. The arrangements for the storage and recording of controlled drugs are not consistent with current good practice. The school provides young people with good quantities of nutritious food. Meals are well presented and are generally enjoyed by the young people. However, the choices offered for some main meals are limited. The school has already identified the need to offer a wider range of vegetarian options and there are plans for further developments to promote healthy eating. Young people and staff eat together at mealtimes, which are calm and orderly social occasions with clear expectations about behaviour. Fresh fruit is provided for main meals and is also available in the residential units. Young people have access to drinks and a variety of healthy snacks during the day.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Young people who sleep in dormitories are able to arrange their beds and other furniture to provide a reasonable amount of privacy. Staff demonstrate an appropriate approach to handling confidential information. Young people are able to make and receive phone calls privately, either from their own mobile phones or from the telephone which is provided by the school. The school has a policy and procedure for dealing with complaints. Young people say that they are able to talk to staff about any issues or concerns and they generally feel confident that such matters are taken seriously. Regular meetings in the residential units provide young people with opportunities to discuss their views about boarding and to raise anything that they are unhappy about. However, young people are not provided with written information about how to complain and not all young people are fully aware of how to make a complaint or what would happen should they decide to do so. Child protection issues that have arisen since the last inspection have been referred to the appropriate agencies. However, the school did not notify the inspecting body of the commencement of these child protection enquiries as required by

the relevant standard. The school has reviewed and strengthened the process for recording and monitoring child protection concerns and referrals, following consultation with the local authority's safeguarding service. The designated person for child protection has received training for this role and further training is planned. The majority of staff have received recent child protection training and an additional training session has been arranged for the remaining staff. Guidance produced by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is available within the school. The school's child protection policy and written procedure are currently under review and are due to be updated with details of the LSCB and related developments. There is an anti-bullying policy which contains guidance for staff on how to deal with any incidents. The measures taken by the staff reinforce the school's anti-bullying ethos. Young people say that bullying is not tolerated and any incidents are dealt with promptly. Few of the young people who board say that they have experienced any bullying and there is no reported bullying in residential time. The school has arrangements to ensure that staff know the whereabouts of the young people. A procedure is in place to ensure a prompt response in the event of a young person leaving the site without permission. Information provided by the school shows that there have been very few unauthorised absences of this type. There are effective strategies for helping young people who board to develop and maintain acceptable behaviour. Positive relationships with staff play an important part in helping the young people to improve their behaviour. Staff work effectively as a team to encourage the young people to behave well and achieve success. Young people receive awards and certificates for their achievements, both in the residential units and in the school as a whole. They know what is expected of them when boarding and consider that the rules are fair. All young people are able to earn points for effort and achievement during the school day and care staff take these points into account when they make decisions about access to certain evening activities. There is very little use of sanctions during boarding time. Some recent developments in relation to behaviour management during the school day are at an early stage of implementation, but the school is making progress in providing a more settled environment for young people. For example, behaviour support arrangements during the school day have recently been strengthened by creating a dedicated team of staff to work with any young people, including boarders, who need intensive support. Residential time continues to provide a generally calm and relaxed atmosphere for young people. All care and teaching staff are trained in the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) approach to behaviour management. Initial and refresher training is provided by an accredited instructor. Records are kept of incidents involving physical intervention. Physical restraint is very seldom used with young people who board. The school provides young people with a satisfactory overall level of physical safety and security. The premises are well maintained. Risk assessments are carried out for the premises and for individual young people and their activities. However, there are times when young people are present in one residential unit without a member of staff being in the unit to supervise them. The young people living in this unit have responded positively to this level of supervision by acting responsibly. However, there is potential for the safety of young people to be at risk during these periods and the school has not completed a written risk assessment. The school has an up to date fire safety risk assessment. Records of checks on fire safety equipment are satisfactory. Fire drills have been carried out during the school day, but the frequency of drills held during residential time is not sufficient to ensure that all young people and care staff have practised evacuation from boarding accommodation. The school has plans to make further improvements to the external security of the premises by, for example, extending the lighting and CCTV coverage. Checks carried out on staff and visitors ensure that the young people are protected. Visitors are required to sign in and out of the school. There is a thorough selection and vetting process for staff employed

to work with young people. Overall, the school keeps good records of the checks that are undertaken in respect of new staff to demonstrate that they are suitable people to work with young people. However, there are no records of the outcome of interviews and these are required in order to evidence this part of the recruitment process.

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

The provision is good.

The school's teaching and care staff work well together to support the young people's education and personal development. Care staff help young people to attend lessons on time and to remain in class. They also set personal targets for each young person, taking into account the targets set for class time. Young people's care files contain information about their education plans and progress. Care staff contribute information to the annual reviews of young people's statements of special educational needs. Young people have opportunities to take part in a varied programme of activities in residential time, both within the school and in the wider community. These activities provide valuable learning opportunities and expand their experience. The young people particularly enjoy the activities on offer and this provides a strong incentive for them to maintain a good standard of behaviour. Staff support young people and encourage them to try new activities. Photographs of young people participating in activities are displayed around the school. Staff seek young people's views as part of the selection and planning of activities. The young people enjoy helping with the school's annual Christmas party for a large group of older people and there are other positive links with local community groups. There has, however, been a reduction in the involvement of teaching staff in organising activities during residential time, resulting in some reduction in the range of activities. For example, the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme is not currently available, but the school hopes to be able to reinstate it later this year. There is an appropriate balance between free time and organised activities in residential time. The school has arrangements to protect young people from exposure to unsuitable videos, computer games and internet material. Young people live in a caring and supportive environment. The school's approach to the care of young people promotes a good level of individual support. Care staff understand the needs of the young people and demonstrate awareness of their backgrounds and difficulties. Young people say that they are able to talk with staff about personal issues. Care staff provide a good level of consistent support and encouragement to help the young people achieve their personal targets. However, as noted elsewhere in this report, the young people's written placement plans do not fully reflect the range and quality of the support that the staff provide. The school has not yet identified to each young person someone independent of the school and the placing authority whom they can contact about any concerns. This limits the options available to young people if they wish to talk to someone outside the school.

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

The provision is good.

There are good arrangements for encouraging and supporting the young people's involvement in decisions about daily life at the school. A survey of young people's views about a range of issues affecting them has been carried out within the last year. Young people who board are represented on the school council and they have regular meetings with the staff in their residential units. Young people are able to share their ideas about boarding and feel that the staff take their views seriously. There are examples of young people's views being considered in relation to such matters as evening activities, the décor in residential units and the availability

of snacks. Staff encourage young people to take an active part in their annual reviews, ensuring that their views and wishes are known. Young people who board at the school benefit from very good relationships with the care staff. The young people know and understand the boundaries, which helps them to feel secure, and disagreements are resolved reasonably. Each young person has a placement plan (known as the care plan file) containing a range of relevant information. Achievable targets are set for each young person, based on an assessment of their abilities in various areas and progress is reviewed periodically. However, some placement plans do not contain sufficient detail about the young people's other care needs in each of the areas specified in the relevant standard and how these needs are to be met by the school. Consequently, this information is not readily accessible to the care staff who are looking after the young person on a daily basis. There is, therefore, a risk that young people's needs may not be met consistently. Placement plans contain information about the young people's contact arrangements. Staff help the young people to stay in contact with their families and friends while they are at school. The young people have access to a private telephone and are allowed to bring their own mobile phones to school. Communication between residential staff and the young people's parents or other carers is generally good and one parent described this aspect of boarding as 'excellent'.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is satisfactory.

All of the residential units are furnished and equipped to a satisfactory standard. The accommodation is well maintained and in good decorative condition. Most of the young people sleep in dormitories. A few single rooms are available for young people who have specific welfare needs and these rooms are also offered to older boarders as a privilege. The young people are generally pleased with their accommodation and those sharing dormitories appear to be happy with this arrangement. Dormitories are not overcrowded and this enables young people to have an adequate amount of privacy. There is adequate space for storage of clothes and other personal items. The efforts of staff and young people have helped to make the communal space and sleeping areas bright and homely, with a variety of photographs, posters and pictures on display. The young people clearly value their environment and take good care of it. Young people are able to personalise their sleeping areas, with help and encouragement from staff. Each unit has a small lounge and a kitchenette where the young people can relax and prepare drinks and snacks. The young people have the use of televisions, DVD players and music centres, together with a variety of books and games. Residential units have adequate numbers of suitable bathrooms, showers, and toilets. School facilities that are available for the young people to use after class time include the hall, dining area, sports hall and computer room.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The school has a written Statement of Purpose. There is also a prospectus, a document explaining the care curriculum and a booklet for prospective pupils and their parents. Some of these documents are about to be updated following recent changes, but they provide most of the required information about the school, including its aims, ethos and values. Some written information for young people is displayed in residential units, but the school does not have an up to date guide to boarding in a user-friendly format suitable for the range of abilities of the young people. The school has a skilled and enthusiastic team of care staff, all of whom are committed to providing a good standard of care for the young people. Staffing levels are

generally adequate for the number of young people currently boarding at the school and their identified needs. However, as noted elsewhere in this report, there are periods, both before and after school, when there are no staff on duty in one of the residential units. During these times, a member of staff working in another unit visits periodically to check on the young people's welfare, but the young people do not have a member of staff to provide consistent support and supervision when they are preparing to start school or returning from classes at the end of the day. There has been good progress with care staff completing the relevant National Vocational Qualification at Level 3 and the school is continuing to work towards achieving the required level of 80% of care staff holding this qualification. Handover arrangements between members of the care team are informal and sometimes depend mainly on staff having the opportunity to read daily records before starting work with the young people. Staff make every effort to seek relevant information when they start their shifts and also pass on important details about significant incidents or issues involving the young people to other staff. However, the lack of a structured handover system has the potential to allow important information about young people's day to day care needs to be missed. This is particularly relevant because the care team includes a relatively high proportion of part-time staff who do not all begin and end their shifts at the same times. There are adequate arrangements for staff to meet and discuss the young people's welfare needs. The whole school staff team meets at the end of each week. The Head of Care meets with other members of the senior management team on a weekly basis. Meetings of care staff take place periodically and there are plans for these meetings to be held on a regular basis to improve communication. The Head of Care and the deputy provide support and supervision for the care staff. However, at present, most supervision for care staff is provided on an informal basis. Formal individual supervision does not take place once every half term and is not sufficient to ensure that all care staff have adequate support and guidance in relation to practice issues and personal development. A new system of performance appraisal has been introduced recently and some care staff have started this process. The school has started to review and update the key policies and written procedures that are available to support the staff team. The previous Headteacher left the school in Spring 2007. The present Headteacher joined the school, in an acting capacity, during the autumn term and has recently been appointed to the permanent position. The last year has also seen a higher than usual turnover of care staff. During this time, the Head of Care has provided consistency and continuity for the school's boarding provision. The Headteacher has delegated areas of responsibility to members of the senior staff team. Some shortfalls referred to elsewhere in this report, such as the content of placement plans and the frequency of fire drills in boarding accommodation, have not been identified through the school's internal monitoring processes. This indicates that some aspects of the monitoring system are not sufficiently well developed to identify all issues which may affect the welfare of young people. The Headteacher is keeping the governing body informed about issues and developments relating to boarding provision. The governing body has not received a written report about the operation of boarding within the last twelve months and the Headteacher is taking steps to address this. Arrangements have only recently been made to introduce half-termly monitoring visits to the school by members of the governing body, in order to meet the requirements of the relevant standard. Reports on the conduct of the school following such visits are, therefore, not available. These shortfalls limit the effectiveness of the governing body in carrying out its monitoring function in relation to the welfare of young people.

## 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 each young person has a clear written health plan, or similar document, covering the required areas. (NMS 14.6)
- review the written policy and guidance for staff on storing and administering medication, with particular reference to controlled drugs and administering medicines from their original packaging. (NMS 14.17)
- implement a system for assessing the competence of staff who administer medication and keep records to evidence this process. (NMS 14.4)
- provide young people with written information about how to make a complaint. (NMS 4.2)
- notify Ofsted of all significant events relating to the protection of young people in the school. (NMS 7.1)
- ensure that regular fire drills are held for young people and staff to practise evacuation of residential accommodation. (NMS 26.5)
- ensure that staff recruitment records include a written record of the outcome of interviews. (NMS 27.2)
- carry out and record a risk assessment for any periods when young people may be present in a residential unit and not under the direct supervision of a member of staff. (NMS 26.3)
- ensure that the school identifies to each young person at least one person independent of the school and the young person's placing authority, whom they may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school. (NMS 22.8)
- ensure that each young person's placement plan specifies how the school will care for them in accordance with their assessed needs. (NMS 17.1)
- provide information about boarding at the school in a format suitable for the range of young people's abilities. (NMS 1.4)
- ensure that there is always at least one adult in charge of each identifiable group of young people in the school, with the means to call for immediate back-up, if necessary. (NMS 28.7)
- ensure that all staff receive at least one and a half hours of one to one supervision from a senior member of staff each half term. (NMS 30.2)
- strengthen the staff handover arrangements and ensure that duty rosters allow time for a structured handover. (NMS 31.5)

- review and, where necessary, strengthen the arrangements for monitoring the range of records specified in Standard 32. (NMS 32.2)
- ensure that the governing body receives a written report on the conduct of the school, from a person visiting the school on their behalf, on a half-termly basis. (NMS 33.1).

## 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.**