

# Lakeside School

Welfare inspection report for a residential special school

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<b>Unique reference number for social care</b>	SC012456
<b>Unique reference number for education</b>	116603
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29/02/2012 to 02/03/2012
<b>Inspector</b>	Thomas Webber

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## **Purpose and scope of the inspection**

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools, in order to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided.<sup>1,2</sup>

## **Information about the school**

Lakeside School is a day and residential special school, provided by the Local Education Authority, for boys aged 11-16 years, who have emotional, behavioural, and/or social difficulties. Boys are referred to the school from across the county of Hampshire. The school can accommodate 78 pupils with a maximum of 17 weekly residential pupils. At the time of inspection there were 70 day pupils and 8 residential pupils.

The boarding house, which is split in two, is located on the school campus. There is a dedicated team of care staff who are managed by the school's head of care.

The boarding provision was last inspected on 25 March 2011.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools).

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>good</b>
Outcomes for residential pupils	good
Quality of residential provision and care	good
Residential pupils' safety	outstanding
Leadership and management of the residential provision	outstanding

## Overall effectiveness

The key findings of the residential inspection are as follows.

- The overall effectiveness of Lakeside School is good with some outstanding features. The school provides strong and effective leadership which positively impacts on the overall care provided to residential pupils.
- The school continues to comply with all recommendations made at previous inspections. It continually strives to improve the practice provided to residential pupils to enhance their experiences within the residential provision.
- Effective and robust safeguarding practices are implemented for the safety and well-being of residential pupils.
- Residential pupils are cared for by a small, committed, dedicated, stable staff team who are qualified, competent and have considerable experience in the care provision. Staff continue to enhance their skills and expertise through undertaking appropriate training.
- Residential pupils live in a warm, nurturing, structured, supportive environment where traditional values are promoted. Positive relationships exist between the residential pupils and staff. The parents of residential pupils value the care and support provided to their children at the school.
- Effective communication is maintained between the school and the residential provision. This enables residential pupils to make significant progress emotionally, socially and academically, which in turn enhances their self-esteem and confidence.
- The behaviour management of the residential pupils is excellent and assists them to make significant progress.

- All the national minimum standards are met.

## **Outcomes for residential pupils**

Outcomes for residential pupils are good. Residential pupils live in a warm, nurturing, structured, supportive and relaxed environment. Positive relationships exist between residential pupils themselves and with staff. Staff undertake their duties in a very caring and supportive manner. Residential pupils are relaxed within their environment and at ease in the company of staff. Residential pupils enjoy and benefit from the positive experience they receive from boarding. They are supported to make significant progress emotionally, socially and academically. This in turn enhances their self-esteem and confidence.

Residential pupils feel safe and are treated fairly by staff. These sentiments are supported by comments made by their parents who also feel that staff look after their children well. They feel that the boarding experience helps their children to develop and make significant progress. The parents also feel that residential staff recognise their children as individuals and are responsive to their individual needs.

One of the many strengths of the school is that it actively promotes traditional values of respect and manners, which it expects all its pupils to adhere to. Residential staff actively and effectively promote positive behaviour. The support residential pupils receive enables them to make significant progress. Some residential pupils confirmed that the school has assisted them in improving their behaviour.

The school operates a positive culture of consultation. Residential pupils are encouraged to contribute to decision making regarding developments to the school and the residential provision. The school council is well established and contributes positively to the overall provision. Residential staff also fully support and encourage residential pupils to make decisions on a daily basis. They are supported to express their views freely about any issues, which staff listen to and act upon.

Residential pupils live in an environment where their physical, emotional, social and educational needs are well met. Residential staff routinely provide residential pupils with opportunities to acquire life skills in preparation for independent living.

## **Quality of residential provision and care**

The quality of care provided to residential pupils is good. Residential pupils receive a very good standard of support from a dedicated staff team who are very committed to providing them with a high level of consistent care. Excellent communication systems are well-established between the residential and teaching staff. These actively support and enhance the personal and academic development and progress of residential pupils. Staff work collaboratively to identify individual targets and ways of working with residential pupils. Close links are also maintained with the school's

literacy co-ordinator, which significantly benefits the care and support of residential pupils. The boarding provision provides residential pupils with facilities that are conducive to private study. Residential pupils are provided with excellent access to computers as well as to the school library facilities during evenings.

Admissions to the boarding provision are carefully and sensitively planned providing prospective pupils with opportunities to attend the school for taster sessions including overnight stays. The needs of residential pupils are fully assessed as part of this process. Although residential pupils are provided with an individual placement plan, these are not sufficiently recorded in detail and do not reflect their emotional needs and strengths. However, the placement plans, together with a range of other supportive documents, reflect residential pupils' needs, targets and progress achieved. These documents are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect their changing needs. Residential pupils are supported and provided with the opportunity to contribute to their annual reviews.

The school provides residential pupils with a wide range of opportunities to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the wider community to enhance their social development. These include street surfing, ice skating, bowling and swimming. Residential trips are also organised which involve adventurous pursuits and other activities. Residential pupils can choose which activities to join in and all activities are well staffed.

Residential pupils receive care at the school on a weekly basis only. As a result, the primary responsibility for meeting residential pupils' healthcare needs remains with their parents. However, appropriate systems are established for obtaining all relevant healthcare information on new boarders prior to their admission. Healthcare plans are implemented for residential pupils who have specific healthcare needs. Staff, where necessary, fully support residential pupils with any involvement of external healthcare professionals. Care staff are trained in first aid and there is always a member of staff on duty who has a current first aid qualification. All residential staff are trained in the management and administration of medication and assume the responsibility for administering any medication to residential pupils. Appropriate practices and arrangements are well established for the safe storage, receipt and administration of medication.

The school actively promotes healthy lifestyles for its pupils. A comprehensive personal, social, and health education programme is delivered. This covers topics such as healthy eating, fitness, and hygiene as well as risks to health including drugs, alcohol, and smoking. Leaflets, relating to these topics, are displayed within the boarding houses.

Residential pupils are provided with a nutritious, varied and balanced diet. The religious, cultural and special diets of residential pupils are well catered for, where required. Residential pupils are able to access drinks and snacks as well as a selection of fresh fruit on a daily basis. Mealtimes are conducted in a relaxed and

congenial setting where open discussion is fully promoted. Good table manners are promoted and reinforced. Residential pupils are happy with the range, quality and quantity of food provided, stating this has improved.

The residential provision provides residential pupils with a good level of accommodation to meet their individual and collective needs. This is maintained to a good standard, being clean, tidy and comfortable. The provision is also well furnished. There are plans for some redecoration to be undertaken during the summer holidays. This will further enhance residential pupils' living environment. Residential pupils are accommodated in one of two houses within the same building. Both houses provide suitable communal space, together with a good number of bath, shower and toilet facilities, to meet the individual and collective needs of residential pupils. Suitable locks are now fitted to these facilities to promote their privacy and dignity. Residential pupils are provided with their own bedroom and can have their own keys to their rooms. They are supported to personalise their bedrooms to their individual tastes. Most of the residential pupils confirmed that their personal belongings are kept safe and suitable arrangements are in place to facilitate this practice.

Residential pupils' contact arrangements with their families are positively promoted and supported. Suitable arrangements are well established for residential pupils to maintain contact with their families in private. These include the use of the school's landline telephones, as well as being able to access their personal mobile telephones at certain times of the day. Residential staff maintain strong links with the parents of residential pupils. The school also provides practical support and guidance where necessary to parents to assist them with the behaviour management of their children. Effective communication systems are well established. These ensure that parents are kept informed of their children's welfare and ongoing progress.

## **Residential pupils' safety**

The school has outstanding provision that fully safeguards the welfare of residential pupils. The boarding provision of the school provides residential pupils with a secure environment where they feel safe and they are suitably protected from harm. Robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and staff are acutely aware of their safeguarding responsibilities; they receive annual refresher training. The school maintains strong links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are referred promptly to them. This supports and promotes good practice across the school and contributes effectively to the protection and promotion of the welfare of residential pupils.

The school has effective procedures to protect residential pupils from bullying. An anti-bullying policy is well established and known to residential pupils for their protection. They do not currently see bullying as an area of concern within the residential provision. This is attributed to the good staffing levels maintained. However, some residential pupils did express concern that incidents of bullying do

occur when they receive education. They feel that these incidents are not always dealt with. Staff acknowledged these comments and have recently undertaken additional training with respect to the prevention of bullying.

The school has effective policies and procedures to ensure the safety of residential pupils where they may go missing. These procedures ensure that any incidents are dealt with promptly for the safe return of residential pupils at the earliest opportunity, and that they are responded to positively on their return. There have been no incidents where residential pupils have gone missing since the last inspection.

Staff provide residential pupils with clear and consistent boundaries and adopt a positive approach which encourages and promotes the development of socially acceptable behaviours. This emphasis is to support residential pupils to make positive choices. All residential pupils have individual targets linked to their behaviour. They are clear about the expectations placed on them by the school and conduct themselves in an exemplary way, being polite and well mannered. The support they receive enables them to make significant progress in the management of their behaviour. Parents reported very positively on the progress their children have made and some residential pupils confirmed that the school has assisted them in improving their behaviour.

Staff are suitably trained in the use of physical intervention, which is rarely used and only as a last resort. Only low level sanctions are used and amendments have been made to the recording system to ensure that the effectiveness and duration of any sanction is always recorded.

The school takes positive steps to keep residential pupils and staff safe from the risk of fire and other hazards. A tour of the premises identified no significant health and safety issues. Residential pupils and staff regularly practice fire evacuation procedures. Effective systems are in place to ensure that the various fire and health and safety checks, tests and servicing arrangements, are carried out within the required intervals. Detailed risk assessments are also carried out in respect of all activities undertaken by residential pupils and the building. These also include a fire risk assessment. These are reviewed and updated where appropriate.

Robust staff recruitment procedures and practices are maintained for the protection of residential pupils. New staff do not commence employment in the school until all the relevant checks are completed.

## **Leadership and management of the residential provision**

The residential provision within the school provides outstanding leadership. This ensures that the management of the residential provision is outstanding. Clear lines of accountability are well established throughout the staffing structure of the school. The Head of Care is well qualified and has considerable experience. A small staff



team is well established within the residential provision. They are extremely dedicated to ensuring that residential pupils receive the best level of care and support.

The aims for the residential provision are clearly set out in the school's Statement of Purpose and are reflected in the practice provided. The school's Statement of Purpose and young people's welcome booklet provide residential pupils and their parents with clear information relating to the provision. This describes the level of care and service residential pupils can expect to receive. The promotion of equality is well understood and practiced consistently within the residential provision. The diverse and complex needs of residential pupils are well catered for.

The general routines of the residential provision are extremely well managed. The school ensures that there are always suitably qualified and experienced staff on duty to care effectively for, and to support residential pupils.

Residential pupils are looked after by a very dedicated staff team who are trained and competent to meet their individual care needs. Residential staff are supported and encouraged to update their knowledge, skill and expertise by attending ongoing training. Residential staff commented positively about training opportunities available to them.

Residential staff are extremely positive about the support they receive from all levels within the school. Excellent communication systems are well established. These ensure that residential staff are kept up to date about the day-to-day operation of the provision and the residential pupils. This also ensures that they receive consistency and continuity of care. Residential staff receive formal and informal supervision as well as annual appraisals. As a result the professional development and practices of residential staff are properly managed and appropriately monitored.

The school maintains regular and positive links with the parents of residential pupils. This ensures that they are provided with information relating to the well-being and progress of their children. Parents feel that the residential provision is well organised and effectively managed. They feel that residential staff are also easily contactable and respond appropriately to any of their concerns.

Residential pupils and their parents are fully aware of how to complain. Residential pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff. Residential pupils are clear that there are a number of adults with whom they could go to should they have concerns or worries. They are also confident that these would be fully acted upon. The school continues to receive no complaints relating to the boarding provision.

The school ensures that the records of residential pupils are safely stored. Effective arrangements are also in place so that these records are maintained and suitably monitored. The headteacher conducts regular monitoring reviews of different areas of service provision within the school and submits frequent reports to the board of

governors. In addition, the school is subject to regular monitoring visits from members of the school's governing body. Written reports are produced which identify any areas for development. The school produces an overall annual review of the operation and resourcing of the school's residential provision. This ensures that the residential provision is being managed in line with its Statement of Purpose.

## **National minimum standards**

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

## **What should the school do to improve further?**

- Review the arrangements for monitoring and managing incidents of bullying dealt with during the school day.
- Review the content of placement plans for residential pupils to ensure that they also include their emotional needs and strengths.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



29/02/2012

Dear Residential Pupils

### **Inspection of Lakeside School**

As you know, Ofsted recently inspected where you stay at your school. I spoke to some of you about your experiences of living at the school. Most of you also filled in questionnaires, as did some of your parents. Your comments were very helpful to me. I have rated the residential provision, in my report, as being good overall. This means that the school provides you with a very good standard of care.

I think that there is an excellent atmosphere in the residential provision and that you are very well looked after. The school ensures that you feel safe and well cared for. Behaviour is very important and you are aware of what is expected of you. I was very impressed in how well you all behaved during the inspection. You get plenty to eat and like the meals provided. You are provided with a vast range of activities which you can join in with after school. You enjoy the opportunities provided to you. I am very pleased to hear how well you are all doing and the support you receive from the staff to achieve this. The residential staff are very dedicated to looking after you to make sure that you receive the care and support that you need. You are provided with good accommodation.

I found that overall the school is very well managed. I have, however, made a few suggestions to further improve some of the practices within the residential provision.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Webber