

Hailey Hall School

Welfare inspection report for a residential special school

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Inspector	Karen Malcolm

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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.^{1,2}

Information about the school

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 situated in a residential area on the outskirts of Hoddesdon. 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 looked after by the local authority. The residential facilities can accommodate a maximum of 20 boarders but at the time of the inspection nine young people were boarding. Young people board between Monday and Friday in term time.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

² www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

The key findings of the residential inspection are as follows.

- This residential special school provides good residential provision. The standard of care is good and pupils enjoy the vast range of opportunities offered. Boarders reach targets they would not have achieved in mainstream schools. They are very happy at the school and extremely complimentary about the staff and the encouragement and opportunities they have.
- Placement and care plans for individuals are robust and comprehensive and clearly linked to each boarder's daily log of events.
- The leadership of boarding is good and the head of care leads by example. Boarders were very positive about the support they receive from the staff. They have sound relationships, built on trust.
- The school's robust safeguarding arrangements clearly protect boarders. There are excellent policies and procedures that work alongside local area procedures to ensure good practice and high levels of protection. Any concerns or allegations are managed by highly experienced and knowledgeable staff who take the lead in safeguarding across the school. Boarders say they feel extremely safe and well protected at school.
- The school has an excellent monitoring system to review the management of behaviour. The system is clear and robustly evidenced through statistics and data. The school has fully addressed the one recommendation made at the last inspection. This related to sanctions and boarders now understand why a sanction may be imposed and think the system in place is fair.
- There is excellent promotion of equality and diversity. This runs throughout all care practices and documentation. All boarders are treated fairly and without

prejudice.

- Parents are encouraged to participate in training workshops.
- Boarders gave the overall experience of being a boarder as 9/10 for support.
- Boarders get involved in community life such as the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, and raising money for local and national charities.
- The accommodation is subject to a review and is of a satisfactory standard. The boarders have mixed feelings about the accommodation and the main issue for them is lack of privacy. There is a clear commitment to review the fabric of the setting and proposals have been submitted to the local council.
- The school meets almost all the national minimum standards. The areas identified for improvement relate to the school updating the Statement of Principles and Practice, young people's transitional plans, the medication policy and procedures including clear guidance on receipt, return and disposal of medication and to ensure boarders' views about food and privacy are addressed appropriately.

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outcomes for boarders are good. There are harmonious and positive relationships among boarders and with boarding staff. Boarders said that they feel relaxed and safe in boarding. They are aware of individual cultural and religious differences, through celebrating Black history month, Chinese New Year and other religious ceremonies. They are helped to make sense of their background in ways they are able to understand. Staff are extremely sensitive to individual needs and any areas of difficulties. The staff team work closely to provide a fully integrated service for boarders, as a result they develop at their own pace. There are frequent meetings that explore boarders' educational and pastoral needs which enhance their overall well-being and development.

Boarders have developed good resilience and self esteem since residing in the school. A wide range of activities contribute to their overall social development with exposure to the wider community, through fundraising, helping-out and participating at local events. Boarders have gained appropriate experiences and skills to support them on activities that they can use in adult life. The school plans to have chickens and a coop to enable pupils to gain skills in other areas of their development. Boarders stated they enjoy all the activities and are happy with the choices on offer. They feel there is a balance between school and boarding life and there is plenty of free time.

Boarders feel happy and satisfied with boarding life. They thoroughly enjoy their time in boarding and actively encourage other pupils to board. They say they know who they can talk to if they are worried and have a number of staff they feel able to go to. All boarders have met the independent listener, but all said that if they had any

concerns they would go to a member of staff and discuss it with them. They do feel that they are able to contribute to the boarding community and that they are also listened to, through the school and boarding councils, questionnaires and by the boarding staff. There is a good formal complaints system, which is rarely used by the pupils. However, boarders did raise some concerns with regards to their overall privacy within the dormitories and meals provided. The headteacher is aware of the issues and has put together a proposal to the local county council to improve the building and have more private space. However, the issue regarding the meals has not been fully addressed. The headteacher is fully aware of the issues and have addressed this with boarders directly and changes have been on-going.

Boarders feel they are well cared for in relation to their health needs. Staff promote healthy lifestyles and encourage pupils to keep fit and healthy. Boarders' prepare for their transition into independence and adult life mainly the next stage of education, especially in relation to their education options. However, there is no clear plans in place to support boarders to develop daily living skills, in preparation for leaving care or home.

Quality of residential provision and care

The quality of residential provision, care and pastoral support for boarders is good. There is a sensitive and well-designed induction process which is tailored to the needs of new boarders. Boarding and academic staff work very effectively together to coordinate the provision for all. Boarders and parents are given an induction booklet which briefly outlines the expectations, daily routines and support provided to pupils once they board. Those who may need additional support are referred to the peer mentoring scheme which is in its infancy, but has been a positive resource for some pupils within the school. Boarders are supported by an experienced and competent staff team that work together for the needs of the child.

All boarders have a good opportunity to express their views, and to take responsibility for the operation of their house. Boarding meetings are held each day after school, to establish what will be current routine of the evening. The last questionnaire undertaken by the school related to food and the outcome of the survey was mixed. Boarders commented that there had been some improvements but it could be better.

Boarders' placement and care plans are detailed, up-dated and show individual life stories and how they are supported to make progress. Boarders are encouraged to take an active part in the planning and review of their care wherever possible. They can make comments in their care plans if they so wish, especially under the sections relating to 'all about me' and 'what support am I going to need?'

There is good information about pupils' medical, health care and support needs. All pupils are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians, either locally to the school or at their home. The pupils also have a close working relationship with other

healthcare professionals, including mental health services. The medical room is supported by the school's pupil welfare officer who ensures that all staff are aware of pupils' vulnerabilities and meet all their healthcare needs. Staff receive regular training in the safe handling of medication and first aid. The administration of medication is well managed in practice. However, policy does not include direction for the receipt, return to parents, or disposal of medication. The school's personal, health and social education and SEAL (Social Emotional Aspects of Learning) programmes cover areas such as sexual health, drugs, smoking, self awareness, managing feeling and healthy lifestyles, giving pupils a positive start towards their future plans.

The quality of the school's catering arrangements is adequate. Mealtimes are sociable occasions, where a variety of healthy food is served. Pupils generally like the food that is on offer but feel it could be improved. Pupils who require special diets due to allergies are properly catered for. Theme nights are held throughout the year to celebrate events from different cultures and beliefs. Boarding houses are small, dated and provide dormitory style sleeping accommodation. Although the sleeping accommodation is partitioned to provide individual sleeping spaces, boarders complain that they do not have enough privacy. Boarders say other accommodation is comfortable and homely. The headteacher and governing body are aware of the issues relating to boarding and have taken some action to address this. There are clear arrangements for boarders to keep in touch with families and friends.

Residential pupils' safety

The safety of boarders is outstanding. Their safety is at the heart of everything the school provides. The school works in accordance with local child protection policies and procedures to provide enhanced protection for boarders. Boarders feel safe and parents feel their children are safe at the school; the school is seen as haven of safety for some children. All staff have received training which forms part of the school's core staff training programme and they are competent in their knowledge of the school's child protection procedures. There is a comprehensive system in place to address and monitor all concerns about boarders' safety and these are referred to the school's designated child protection officer. The school has excellent communication and working relationships with local child protection agencies. Investigations into any allegations are handled fairly and quickly in line with the legislation and guidance.

Pupils are protected by the school's thorough recruitment procedures. Relevant staff are trained in safer recruitment standards. Boarders are further protected by the robust procedures for the vetting and supervision of all visitors. All visitors sign into the school and must show identification as well as sign a statement about the school's safeguarding procedures.

There is a positive and proactive behaviour management strategy in place which is consistently applied. The policy in place for the use of physical restraint meets the

guidance from the Department for Education and is consistently implemented. Restraint is only used in exceptional circumstances. Any incident of restraint is sensitively and appropriately followed up in discussion and reflection with the child or young person concerned, and all incidents of restraint are accurately recorded and monitored to bring about sustained improvement. The school ethos is based on positive behaviour linked to incentives and rewards. The school now has a clearer overview of what may cause certain behaviours and what strategies can help to improve them. Boarders said that they feel the current system is fair. They are very well informed about the sanctions for poor behaviour. Records show sanctions are low in number and are continuing to decrease. Staff are fully informed of appropriate sanctions they can give and those that are not to be applied.

The school promotes a clear and robust culture of anti-bullying. The vigilance and working practices adopted by the school go a long way to reducing opportunities for bullying to occur. For example, staff work with boarders to develop their understanding of the diversity of their community and the importance of tolerance of others. Discussion with boarders supported this. Boarders also said that they felt comfortable about reporting any concern, and had confidence that it would be addressed promptly and effectively by the school.

Boarders rarely go missing, but if they do, clear procedures and care plans identify the risks and any protective factors for individuals. They are comprehensive and are regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure any changes are addressed quickly. All staff are aware of the procedures to follow if a boarder goes missing, which protects the child and themselves. Boarders' health and safety is effectively managed and addressed. The environment is safe and subject to routine checks, including fire checks. Regular fire evacuation drills take place and pupils participate in evacuations.

Leadership and management of the residential provision

Leadership and management are good. Boarders and parents are given a welcome information booklet as part of their induction which highlights 'who's who' and what support is provided. The boarding statement of principles and practice and the boarding leaflet are separate documents.

There is a commitment to promoting equality and diversity and this is enshrined in the school's policies and procedures on equal opportunity, behaviour and the curriculum and forms a part of the school's ethos. There is a good understanding and implementation of the new national minimum standards. The quality of care provided is regularly and fully reviewed by an independent visitor. The boarding facility is effectively and efficiently managed and forms an integral part of the school. The school recognises the diverse needs of each boarder and this is reflected clearly in their individual placement and care plans which are comprehensive and securely stored.

There is a culture of celebrating and empowering each pupil to achieve their

potential. Boarders respond well to the supportive, nurturing environment that stimulates their personal development. They engage in a range of activities, which contribute to their educational learning. They benefit from a stable, committed and experienced team of residential care staff who are fully supported by an effective senior leadership team. The multi-disciplinary approach to care focuses on promoting the best outcomes for pupils. There is good communication with parents and carers and placing authorities. Parents are encouraged to participate in specialist training seminars on behaviour and anger management and E-safety. The school takes into account boarders' views about how to improve the quality of their boarding experience and care. Boarders said that they like the boarding experience and gave it a score of 9/10. They based this on the support provided by staff and that boarding life is orderly and a safe community. Boarders' two areas of concern relate to meals and privacy within the dormitories.

National minimum standards

The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools.

- A suitable statement of the school's principles and practice is available to parents and staff, is made known to children through an appropriate method of communication and is seen to work in practice. The statement describes the overall purpose of the school and describes any theoretical or therapeutic model underpinning the practice of the school. It also explains the ethos and philosophy of the school, and provides an outline of provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. (NMS 1)
- The school provides opportunities for all children to develop the daily living skills needed by the young person for their likely future living arrangements, taking account of their age and needs. (NMS 2.8)
- The school has, and implements, appropriate policies for the care of children who are unwell. These include first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, administration of medicines and dealing with medical emergencies. The provision of accommodation for children who are unwell has regard to any requirements set out in regulations relating to school premises. (NMS 3.6)
- Children have an opportunity to contribute their views to the operation of residential provision, are able to raise concerns and make complaints, and their views are given appropriate weight in decisions about the running of the school. Children are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. (NMS 17.1)

What should the school do to improve further?

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.



24/02/2012

Inspection of Hailey Hall School Residential Special School, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire

Inspection of Hailey Hall School

Dear Boarders/Pupils

I really enjoyed my visit to Hailey Hall School and meeting you all. Thank you for being so friendly.

During my visit I was able to see and hear what it is like for you to be at the school. You all seem to be happy at the school and have good relationships with the staff. The staff team work very hard to make sure you are safe and happy. I was impressed to hear how good you feel you are supported when boarding and that the staff keep you safe and secure. It is important that you have a say about the school and I know the staff take your suggestions very seriously.

You all know who you can go to if you feel unsafe. It is clear that you feel safe at the school and have many adults you can talk to if you are worried.

You did have concerns about the food and this view has been taken seriously by us on your behalf. However you are able to choose and have seconds.

Thank you to those of you who showed me around the accommodation. I understand your concerns relating to privacy. The school also know and is taken this on board with the local county council.

Hailey Hall School is a good school with lots of happy students. You all work hard and this shows in the progress you have made.

I wish you all the very best.

Karen M Malcolm
Ofsted Inspector

Yours sincerely,

Karen Malcolm