

Maplewell Hall

Maplewell Hall School, Maplewell Road, Woodhouse Eaves, LOUGHBOROUGH, Leicestershire, LE12 8QY

Inspection dates	11/03/2013 to 13/03/2013	
Overall effectiveness	Adequate	3
Outcomes for residential pupils	Good	2
Quality of residential provision and care	Adequate	3
Residential pupils' safety	Good	2
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Adequate	3

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is adequate because

- Pupils enjoy their residential experience. The residential provision is a cornerstone of the school. The inclusive nature of the residential provision promotes positive relationships, self-confidence and independence skills.
- Individuality, identity and achievement of pupils is celebrated. Residential pupils enjoy a range of activities and new opportunities. They feel valued, respect one another and develop strong social skills.
- There are adequate arrangements for promoting boarder's health, including healthy and enjoyable meals. However, there are some shortfalls with how medication is managed and recorded.
- Safeguarding is good. Residential pupils say they are safe. There are robust safeguarding procedures, with good staff training and significant improvement in pupils' behaviour. Rigorous auditing of the schools health and fire safety procedures have resulted in extensive improvements in safety throughout the school.
- Residential pupils' accommodation is adequate in terms of maintenance and cleanliness. However there are shortfalls in the personalisation of the pupils' bedrooms and communal areas.
- A recent change in headship at the school has resulted in robust auditing of the administrative and management processes throughout the school. Clear and strategic quality monitoring and assurance processes are now in place. These processes are yet to embed in the quality of the care framework, address some shortfalls and extend to meaningful consultation with pupils.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the national minimum standards for residential special schools. The

details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

This three day inspection visit was completed by one inspector following three hours' notice. Time was spent with residential pupils in their accommodation on the first afternoon and evening. They talked about staying at the school and participated in a range of activities; observed by the inspector. Residential pupils also conducted a tour of the accommodation on the second day of the visit. Residential pupils invited the inspector to join them for an evening meal, breakfast and a cooking session. Discussions were held with leaders and managers, one of the governors, the cook, the site manager, a range of residential staff and the designated child protection officers. Parents provided views via email. A range of records were examined; including policies, procedures and documentation relating to care, behaviour management, health and safety and recruitment.

Inspection team

Elaine Cray

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Maplewell Hall School is a local authority maintained residential special school for 155 boys and girls aged 11-16 years. There is a post 16 years provision for autism. The residential provision operates from Monday to Thursday each week with 12 to 20 pupils residing at the school on any one night. The vast majority of pupils stay in residence for a maximum of 2 nights for a half term and on a rotational basis. The residential accommodation is provided in the main school building. The school is situated in Woodhouse Eaves, close to Loughborough. The school caters for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and autism within Leicestershire.

The residential provision was last inspected in March 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the standards and personalisation of the residential accommodation to support the comfort and relaxation of residential pupils.
- Ensure fire drills carried out during residential time extend to evening time.
- Improve the recording of telephone verification of references for staff who apply to work in the school.
- The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools.
 - The school identifies at least one person other than a parent, outside the residential and teaching staff, who children may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school. The school ensures that children know who this person is, and how to contact them. Children are also provided with one or more appropriate helpline(s) or outside contact numbers, including the Children's Rights Director, to ring in case of problems or distress. (NMS 2.2)
 - 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. (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)
 - The governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for carrying on the school arrange for one of their number, or a representative who does not work at, or directly manage, the school, to visit the school once every half term and complete a written report on the conduct of the school. Where the school has an individual proprietor, that person may carry out such visits personally if they are not also the Headteacher (or school equivalent). (NMS 20.1)
 - Most monitoring visits are carried out unannounced. They include: checks on the school's records of attendance, complaints, sanctions, use of physical interventions, risk assessments, and where they exist, individual care plans for children; assessment of the physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment of the school; and opportunities for any child or member of staff who wishes to meet the visitor (in private if they wish). (NMS 20.2)
 - Written reports of all monitoring visits are provided to the Headteacher (or school

equivalent) and where applicable the governing body, organisation, or partnership. Reports are also provided to each member of that body (or the appropriate committee of that body), within two weeks and as written by the visitor without amendment or summary. (NMS 20.3)

- The Headteacher (or school equivalent), governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for carrying on the school carries out, and records in writing, once each year: a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for boarding pupils, in relation to: its Statement of Purpose, its staffing policy, the placement plans for individual children; and an internal assessment of its compliance with these Standards. Where appropriate such a report may be incorporated within a review of the whole school. (NMS 20.4)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Good

Outcomes for residential pupils are good. All residential pupils spoken with were unanimous in their positive view of the residential experience. Relationships between residential pupils are positive and valued. They live in an inclusive and harmonious residential community. Residential pupils have friends and they get on well together and feel included.

Residential pupils value staying at the school because the residential experience enhances all aspects of their development. Residential pupils enjoy significant improvements in their behaviour. They also make good educational improvement, develop self-esteem and become more independent. Their progress and enjoyment is reflected in residential pupils' comments which include, 'I do loads of sport, with my friends, learn how to iron,' 'It's good because you do different things, not just lessons. I do home maintenance and do some gardening' and some residential pupils rate their residential experience as their favourite thing about the school.

The positive relationships between residential pupils and staff are a key strength. Residential pupils feel relaxed and safe in the residential environment. They are assured and confident about being able to talk to the residential staff. Parents' comments state children are 'comfortable and feel safe.'

Residential pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own health and fitness. They take pride in participating in a variety of physical sporting activities to keep fit. They are particularly positive about the catering arrangements and also enjoy cooking some of their own healthy meals.

Residential pupils firmly believe staff listen to them, understand and respond to their views and ideas. They value how they can talk to the cook about meals, can choose activities and discuss who they might like to share a bedroom with.

Parents have positive views of the service and outcomes for their children. Their comments about children's progress include; 'Improving his life skills, social skills and confidence,' 'Overall confidence and independence has increased substantially' and that the service is 'An absolute godsend.'

Quality of residential provision and care

Adequate

The quality of the residential provision is adequate.

Induction processes are effective and include home visits and good retrieval of information about the needs of the residential pupils. Residential provision includes after-school activities and sleeping over. It is a cornerstone in the operation of the school and accessible to all pupils. Prospective pupils and families can visit the school. They can also access written information about the provision. New pupils are shown around by existing pupils. They quickly settle and feel included due to the very child-friendly approach to welcome and familiarise new pupils.

The quality of the pastoral support for residential pupils is good. The residential staff team is well-established. They have a good understanding of the backgrounds, behaviour and communication needs of the pupils. There are good links between the residential and education staff. Parents say, 'My child has been helped to mature remarkably by Maplewell Hall, and a lot of the credit must go to the residential team, as well as the teaching staff.'

Relationships between staff and pupils are a key strength to the service. Residential pupils are

very confident they can talk to staff and their concerns and ideas will be addressed. While these internal relationships are meaningful to residential pupils there is no independent listener currently available in the school.

The quality and effectiveness of the school's arrangements for looking after residential pupils' well-being and health is adequate. Comprehensive records ensure pupils are well looked after in the residential setting. Their health is monitored and supported by suitably trained staff. Good working relationships between staff, families and health agencies ensure health and medical needs are met. However, there are some shortfalls with how medication is stored and recorded. For example, storage of prescribed medication for asthma, recording for controlled drugs and authorisation for changing the administration of prescribed medication.

Residential pupils stay in accommodation located in the main school. Girls' and boys' bedrooms are on separate floors. Residential pupils usually share bedrooms, they enjoy being with their friends and appreciate they can keep their personal valuables private and secure in individual lockers. All residential pupils share the lounge, dining room and other areas used for activities. Communal living helps to support and foster good social interaction and friendships. This is particularly evident at mealtimes as pupils share tables, help with chores and enjoy serving food and pouring cups of tea for each other.

The physical environment is in a general good state of repair, but is institutionalised in presentation. For example bedrooms are basically furnished. While staff say pupils may bring their own items to personalise bedrooms, there is little evidence that this actually takes place. There is a significant lack of pictures, ornaments and soft furnishings throughout the accommodation. There are sufficient bathing and toilet facilities. Privacy is provided by individual cubicles. There is a further sense of institutionalised appearance as there are several cubicles in one area.

Residential pupils' safety

Good

The safety of residential pupils is good. Residential pupils overwhelmingly say that they feel safe and are safe in the school. This is successfully achieved by generating a positive safe environment where pupils develop a growing awareness about safety. Residential pupils have confidence in the staff to keep them safe.

The school provides a secure and safe residential environment for residential pupils. The health and safety throughout the school is significantly improved after a recent and rigorous audit of all fire, health and safety processes and checks. Fire drills are carried out during residential time, but not yet during the evening.

Safeguarding the welfare of residential pupils is also practically promoted in the day-to-day routines in the residential provision. Health and safety is covered in interactive activities during the residential time at the school. Residential pupils have a good self-awareness of promoting their own safety with clear internet and mobile phone procedures. They know what to do in the case of a fire and an emergency.

Robust safeguarding procedures and practices protect and support pupils. Senior staff taking the lead for child protection matters and all other staff are suitably trained in child protection and safeguarding. Safeguarding procedures are robustly managed and effective inter-agency working promotes the safety and welfare of the residential pupils. All staff understand the reporting procedures including those relating to acting on allegations and how to manage incidents should a pupil go missing from the school.

Residential pupils are effectively protected from bullying. Pupils have clear expectations regarding

behaviour and confidence that concerns will be dealt with. They are educated to understand the negative effect of all bullying behaviours, including cyber bullying.

Behaviour management is a key strength within the service. Residential pupils' behaviour is improved and seen to be exemplary during this inspection. There are many good examples of residential pupils being courteous and being considerate to others. Residential pupils know, understand and can explain the rules of the school. Good incentives such as good behaviour and rewards are used to recognise and celebrate pupils' effort and progress.

All pupils' protection and safety is promoted with thorough and robust recruitment and vetting procedures. Files are well organised following a rigorous audit to ensure best practice. However, the documentation of the telephone verification of references lacks some clarity in some files.

Leadership and management of the residential provision Adequate

The leadership and management of the residential provision is adequate.

The school has experienced recent changes in headship and leadership. Managers and leaders demonstrate a continuing and strong commitment to maintaining and developing the aims and objectives of the school. The residential experience is an integral aspect of school life and is well embedded across the school community.

Pupils are educated, grow and develop in an environment where individuality and diversity are explored and respected. Residential pupils are at ease, confident and sensitive to the needs of others within the residential community and throughout the school.

Staffing levels are good. Residential pupils benefit from the effective levels of support, supervision and guidance. There is good connectivity between the residential pupils, teachers and residential staff. There are also good relationships with parents.

Residential pupils are looked after by staff who value regular training and supervision. However not all staff have completed relevant minimum level 3 qualification training.

Leaders and managers are emerging as a cohesive and forward looking team. They have a keen and accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The management team are currently reinforcing good practice and planning and implementing change. However changes in legislation are not yet fully embraced and embedded. Monitoring processes are in place but have not yet fully addressed some of the shortfalls identified in this inspection. Similarly, policies and procedures are in place but do not benefit from full and extensive liaison with other agencies, pupils and families.

Monitoring visits and reports on the residential provision by the designated governor show a keen commitment to looking at the safety and enjoyment of pupils. However reports show a lack of framework in terms of the changes in legislation. While the designated governor provides verbal feedback there is a lack of accountability in the written reports. Frequency of reports do not reflect half termly visits.

Leaders and managers are open and motivated to address improvement and to develop the residential provision. However recent reports drawn up by the head teacher to submit to the board of governors lacks detail about the development plans for the residential service in the school.

Residential pupils live in an inclusive environment. Talking to staff about their ideas and views is part of every day life. They are able to confidently approach staff. Leaders and managers greatly

value the child's voice. They present as keen and committed to ensure consultation is a key strength in the monitoring and quality assurance of the school. However there are currently no strategic processes to consult and include pupils' views about how the service is being and may be developed and improved.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	120348
Social care unique reference number	SC001836
DfE registration number	855/7002

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.

Type of school	Maintained RSS
Number of boarders on roll	155
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	11 to 18
Headteacher	Mr Jason Brooks
Date of previous boarding inspection	20/03/2012
Telephone number	01509 890237
Email address	office@maplewell.leics.sch.uk

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