

# Hamilton Lodge School

Hamilton Lodge School, 7-9 Walpole Road, BRIGHTON, BN2 0LS

<b>Inspection dates</b>	04/06/2013 to 06/06/2013	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Outcomes for residential pupils	Good	2
Quality of residential provision and care	Good	2
Residential pupils' safety	Good	2
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Good	2

## Summary of key findings

### The residential provision is good because

- The school has a strong leadership team that has benefited from the new head of care. The school knows its strengths and has put in place measures to address its weaknesses, with very good results.
- There is extremely strong deaf studies input within the school and externally from the deaf studies team. Good use of deaf awareness training for staff and support workers at local colleges as well as external professionals such as police to provide strong insight into the deaf child's cultural background and linguistic needs.
- The majority of pupils feel safe at the school and all parents who responded to the Ofsted parent view on line questionnaire were very positive about the school. The school takes good measures to keep pupils safe through its child protection policies and procedures. Recent collaborative work with child protection agencies has resulted in improved and safe practices.
- Staff training meets national minimum standards but could be improved with additional training in fire safety, cyber bullying and related courses that will benefit staff in their career progression.
- Pupils care plans are generally of a good standard but do not fully evidence the ways pupils are involved in their development which would make them more meaningful for the pupils.

### Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools

## Information about this inspection

The school was given 4 hours notice of this full welfare inspection. All four boarding houses were visited. Meetings were held with the headteacher, head of care, senior staff, key workers, learning support staff, deaf awareness coordinator, safeguarding lead, special educational needs coordinator, health and safety officer and pupils. Records, policies and relevant documents were viewed as were parent view on line results, information held on the Ofsted database and the school's pupil and staff survey results.

Contact was made with the local authority designated officer. There were two British Sign Language interpreters present during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Liz Driver	Lead social care inspector
Pippa Greed	Social care inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

Hamilton Lodge School is a co-educational residential school which caters for pupils between 5 and 18 years of age who are hearing impaired, with some pupils having additional specific needs. The main form of communication used is British Sign Language (BSL). English and Sign Supported English communication is also used. The school is situated in a residential area of Brighton. The four boarding units are adjacent to the main school site. At the time of this inspection there were 62 residential pupils. The last inspection was carried out in July 2012.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Consider ways to evidence how pupils are involved in their care plans which would make them more meaningful for them.
- Consider additional training opportunities for staff in relation to cyber bullying awareness, fire safety and career progression related courses/qualifications.

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for residential pupils

**Good**

Outcomes for residential pupils are good. The majority of residential pupils enjoy the residential experience. The experience of boarding helps residential pupils to make personal developments such as developing life skills, gaining confidence, making friends and achieving good academic progress.

Residential pupils are supported to manage or change behaviours that may at times be challenging and are encouraged to engage in multi-professional management strategies that are reviewed and known to all staff. As a result, many residential pupils have seen positive changes to their social skills and daily life activities. They are assisted to make progress in areas, such as, nurturing their self-identity as a deaf person, experiencing deaf culture in a positive way and ensuring they have the skills for adult and independent life. Progress made in these areas ranges from good to exceptional.

The school offers pupils a strong independent life skills programme that is supported by the further education provision. Residential pupils engage in the wider community through work experience that is tailored to their individual specific interests. Very good planning and excellent liaison between the professionals at the school has resulted in very good outcomes for residential pupils over the age of 18.

### Quality of residential provision and care

**Good**

The quality of care of residential pupils is good; with extremely strong deaf studies input within the school and externally from the deaf studies team.

Residential pupils benefit from having good care plans that contain clear and relevant information provided by parents, however individual care plans do not show the full extent of their involvement in drawing up or reviewing care plans.

Residential pupils are cared for by committed and motivated residential staff who provide strong quality care. Good behaviour management means that their behaviour improves. There is a robust approach to anti-bullying including cyber bullying. Staff and parent awareness training could be improved to further enhance safe use of information technology.

Residential pupils live in gender and age separate houses that are furnished to a high standard and have suitable adaptations. All areas are 'pupil-centred' with a wealth of pictures, posters and photographs displayed. Toilet and bathing facilities are of a good standard and afford suitable privacy. Pupils said they enjoy living in the residential units.

Improved health provision has resulted in the school nurse being more integrated into the daily lives of the pupils. All the parents who responded to Ofsted's on line parent view questionnaire said that their child is well looked after at the school. The vast majority of residential pupils acknowledged that they get help if they have a problem.

Residential pupils receive a very good standard of catering. All meals offer a suitable choice and much variety. Overall meals are of good quality, well presented and plentiful. The catering staff have British Sign Language skills which enable them to communicate well with pupils.

Residential pupils are encouraged to participate in purposeful activities of their choice. The range of activities are wide and provide stimulating experiences. This enables residential pupils to integrate into the local community and increase their self-esteem and self-confidence. Residential

pupils stated that if they could suggest something to improve, they would like some activities to include all age groups to promote stronger unity and quality social time together, such as team building/fun events.

### **Residential pupils' safety**

**Good**

The arrangements for the safety of residential pupils are good. There are improved procedures for safeguarding the welfare of pupils and promoting their good health. Much collaborative work has taken place with child protection agencies such as the police and the local authority designated officer to review and improve the school's practices and procedures. The school responds well to the high level of vulnerable learners present, ensuring their protection is a priority.

All residential pupils spoken with said they feel safe at the school. They have trusting relationships with staff who are very well informed about the appropriate safe management of challenging behaviours. The residential pupils acknowledge that if bullying does occur staff are very quick to act. Residential pupils do not generally go missing, however, there are sound procedures to assist their safe return.

There are appropriate fire systems and robust policies and procedures in place to protect residential pupils from the risk of fire. Staff training covers basic fire safety. Pupils also undertake regular fire drills and are clear of what action to take.

Well organised and robust records evidence very good recruitment practice. This safeguards residential pupils from unsuitable people working within the school and residential provision.

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

**Good**

The leadership and management of the residential provision are strong. Since the last inspection a new head of care has been appointed. He has been effective in driving practices in the residential side of the school forward, particularly in regards to safeguarding and child protection.

A wealth of information is available to residential pupils and families that covers all aspects of the residential provision. Regular newsletters also keep families up to date and celebrate the numerous individual and group achievements.

The staff team are stable, strong and experienced. Staffing levels are good and meet the needs residential pupils have. Training is good but lacks career progression training for senior staff. There is improved communication between residential, therapy and teaching staff resulting in effective sharing of information.

The complaints procedures is effective. Information is on display around the school detailing how and who pupils they can raise a concern or complaint with, including an independent adult.

High quality and effective monitoring of the residential provision ensures the school knows its strengths and addresses its weaknesses. The school has shown capacity to improve, benefiting the outcomes for residential pupils.

The school embraces diversity with all individual needs recognised and met. Residential pupils are treated fairly and accorded equality of opportunity. Deaf awareness is highly promoted both in school and externally with other agencies who are involved in residential pupils' lives.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114619
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC050400
<b>DfE registration number</b>	846/7003

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	62
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	Mixed
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	5 to 18
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Graham Sheppard
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	04/07/2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 682362
<b>Email address</b>	graham.sheppard@hamiltonlsc.co.uk

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