

Baskerville School

The Baskerville School, Fellows Lane, BIRMINGHAM, B17 9TS

Inspection dates	06/06/2013	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding	1
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 provides a specialist service that supports individuals to achieve excellent outcomes. Students make outstanding personal progress socially, emotionally and with their communication and independence skills. They become active and valued members of the school community and develop skills that support them to successfully move on in their adult lives.
- The quality of residential provision and care is good. The school promotes a positive ethos that fully embraces diversity and difference. Evidence shows a consistent commitment to improving equality and diversity in practice. Students receive an individual service which is designed to meet their personal needs. All staff have good knowledge of the students they are working with, ensuring their needs are met. Staff also work with parents and other professionals to ensure a good quality service where the ethos is centred on meeting the individual needs and aspirations of students.
- The systems in place to safeguard students are robust. Parents and carers feel their children are safe. Students are happy and feel respected by staff and peers. Staff are professional, well informed ensure student safety is a priority at all times. Partnership working with parents, external professionals and agencies, is well established and effective.
- The school's management team and governors ensure proper scrutiny of all aspects of residential care. Any shortfalls are identified and addressed. This quality monitoring and other similar initiatives continue to be developed to ensure the improving quality of the provision.
- All of the national minimum standards are met.

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

This inspection was completed by one inspector following a three hour notice period. Time was spent within all four units over the three days. A range of records were examined relating to the care provided and a lunch and evening meal observed. Discussions were held with members of the management team, governors, head of care, team leaders, residential social workers, head of the 24 hour curriculum, health and safety coordinator, designated child protection officer and human resources manager. Students led a tour of the accommodation. An assembly was observed. Students were met and all also responded to a Widget questionnaire. Health and safety documentation; recruitment records; behaviour management records and other relevant documentation was inspected.

Inspection team

Dawn Bennett

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Baskerville School is a maintained day and residential school for students of both genders aged 11 to 19 with autistic spectrum disorder. There are currently 96 students, of whom 16 use the residential service. Students have a wide range of abilities from severe learning difficulties, to average, and above average ability. Many have behaviour which presents a challenge within a residential environment. Students stay Monday to Friday and return home each weekend.

Baskerville promotes a 24 hour curriculum and can accommodate students in four residential family units. Each unit has a particular focus and aim, according to student's needs, providing therapeutic care and education, supporting students through adolescence into adulthood. The school is located in Harbourne, a residential area close to the Birmingham City Centre. The residential provision was last inspected in February 2013.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Students make outstanding personal progress. All parents and carers believe the residential provision helps their child develop and progress well. Students make outstanding progress socially, emotionally, with their communication and independent living skills. One student stated 'I love it here. The staff support me and want me to do my best. I attend college, cook meals and go to clubs.'

Students lead a healthy lifestyle and feel good about themselves. Staff arrange activities that give students opportunities to develop physically and emotionally, and through which they experience positive well-being. Students themselves make the link between the range of sporting and fitness activities they do in the community and developing positive self image. The school curriculum explores health and one group of students have recently undertaken some additional educational work in the evenings focusing on physical activities and a developing a programme for 'feeling fit, looking slick'.

Students social development is promoted at all times and is outstanding. The enjoyment and achievement of the students is a key strength of the service. Students experience life-enhancing activities and new opportunities; which develop their social skills and self esteem. They access a wide range of activities that promote new interests and involvement in the school and wider communities. Activities, such as 'forest school' and trampolining, are run regularly on the school site alongside additional termly activities. Personal interests are promoted with some students accessing activities, such as, dance and drama in the community. Small groups of students access the local swimming pool and youth clubs. Parents recognise that the range of activities offered provides opportunities that their children would not otherwise have.

Students are valued, active members of the school community and develop excellent skills in interacting with others and expressing views and opinions. Students make decisions about their lives and the way the school is run. Staff facilitate student's meetings to ensure that everyone can take part, acknowledging and validating each young person's unique contribution. There is imaginative consultation and involvement using accessible communication aids like picture exchange communication schemes, symbols, photographs, Makaton, and sign supported English. Students learn to cooperate with their peers and the importance of social living is prioritised as a skill for adult life. For example, a social club also now operates one evening a week. This group focuses on the importance of friendships and the skills you require to be a good friend to others.

Students successfully develop the social and practical skills they require as adults. Staff tailor support depending upon the individual's needs and ability. The ethos of school and the residential experience is to work collaboratively and to involve and nurture students throughout their schooling. Students learn the skills they need for adult life and achieve their full potential through the excellent provision made. For example, learning to use public transport independently is worked on during education and while staying in the residential accommodation. Students learn about safety and keeping themselves safe, as well as handling fares, understanding timetables and social etiquette.

Quality of residential provision and care

Good

The quality of provision and standard of care is good. Placement planning is embedded in the assessment, planning and review of each student's care. Documentation fully supports each student's development and gives a good picture of their daily aims, likes and dislikes. Staff make good records of student's daily, weekly and monthly progress.

Staff have constructive relationships with students and assist them to communicate their views and opinions and to learn new skills. This positive engagement creates respectful relationships, which enable staff to have sensitive conversations with students. These day-to-day discussions support students to address difficulties and learn new skills to progress socially, emotionally and physically. Students are very positive about staff stating 'they work hard', 'they are fun', 'they will help you if you have a problem'. A parent stated 'My child sees the school as home from home. It has such a nice atmosphere and is so friendly. Whoever you speak to knows him so well and that is such a relief.'

The residential accommodation is adapted well to meet the individual needs of students and help keep them safe. Staff have high levels of expertise in working with students with autistic spectrum disorder and also meet many other additional needs that students have. They provide highly effective support that helps students to make outstanding personal progress in their mobility and independent living skills. They also support students to have positive relationships with each other and to share their views and opinions.

Staff have regular conversations with students and their parents or carers which in turn can help students overcome any difficulties they are facing. The independent listener stated, 'It is a very supportive but at the same time enabling environment. Students feel well cared for. They develop their own self-awareness. They are supported to develop themselves, understand their condition and how their behaviour impacts and effects those around them. As a result all students have a growing understanding of themselves, as well as their condition.'

Many students arrive at the school with limited personal and independent skills including hygiene and mobility. Excellent programmes, developed from careful assessment, help students to gain these skills. If students experience difficulties in these areas additional support is provided for a focused period during residential time and specific sessions are allocated within education.

Staff have high expectations of the students' abilities to progress and they promote this through participation and discussions. Students are actively involved in solving problems for themselves. Staff are keenly aware of promoting spiritual, moral social and cultural development. For example, there were many ethical issues highlighted in residential unit meetings and day-to-day discussions that focus on developing empathy with other people's experiences. For example, the staff are currently watching a series of films before watching them with students next term. These films have been chosen to explore and stimulate discussions about disability, diversity and positive role models.

Residential pupils' safety

Good

Safety of students is good. The strong whole school focus on safety means that students feel safe and are confident to share their views and any concerns. All parents and carers believe their child feels safe. Staff know what to do in the event of an allegation, or suspicion of abuse, and have a strong lead from designated senior staff. Arrangements for child protection are good. All staff have child protection training at induction, which is regularly updated and is autism specific. Staff take their responsibilities to students very seriously and act to safeguard where students cannot act for themselves. The school's ethos values whistle-blowing, personal responsibility and integrity amongst staff, and the Head Teacher takes action to ensure professional accountability of all staff.

Students behave well. All parents and carers are very positive about how the school promotes appropriate behaviour. Students are usually very supportive of each other and take pride in each others' achievements. The residential units are caring communities and are viewed very positively by the students and their families. Students learn quickly and any who find following the rules difficult are supported well with a personalised approach and improve their behaviour quickly.

The behaviour management system is underpinned by teaching students to understand the rights and wrongs and different perceptions of a situation. The rewards and consequences for students are consistently implemented and adapted well to suit the different ages and needs of students as well as the differences between education and residential provision.

Students make good progress in learning how to keep themselves safe and are supported in school and the residential units to understand different situations that may make them vulnerable. Additional curriculum opportunities and the focus on independent living skills make a significant contribution to increasing the students' abilities to keep themselves safe. There is a small amount of bullying or behaviour that can affect others but appropriate action is taken and staff from the residential provision and education take a strong line on teaching students why this is wrong.

Students express confidence in the safety and security of the school. They learn how to protect themselves in an emergency because they regularly practice the emergency escape drill and staff receive fire training. Safe procedures are in place to protect students through tests on fire systems and other electrical equipment at appropriate intervals. Environmental risk assessments are in place to ensure the school is fully informed about potential hazards to reduce risks.

Students continue to be protected by the school's robust recruitment systems that ensures all staff employed complete the necessary recruitment checks and are deemed suitable to work before commencement of employment. Proactive monitoring of visitors to the school takes place, to prevent students being exposed to unsuitable adults. This excellent practice further safeguards their welfare.

Leadership and management of the residential provision Good

The leadership and management of the school is good. All parents and carers stated they would recommend this school to another parent. Students continue to benefit from a well-managed school that is having a positive impact on their developmental outcomes.

At the last inspection the school was judged as good overall with outstanding outcomes for students and quality of care. There were no recommendations for improvement made.

The school's Statement of Purpose sets out all required areas of information about the school and residential facilities. Students are admitted to the school in accordance with the Statement of Purpose. Parents are provided with information that details the residential provision made at the school. The student's guide is produced in different formats and specific to each residential unit. It is adapted on each student's admission based on their individual needs and method of communication.

The management team and governors continue to raise standards of care and improve outcomes for students. Governors are proud of the residential provision describing it as the 'jewel in the school's crown'. The governing body is well organised so that all governors are involved in checking how well the school and residential provision is doing. Careful analysis of students' progress, attainment and other outcomes have helped to focus whole school improvements and support for staff. The rigour of this analysis continues to be developed so it is consistent across all areas of the school's work. For example, a new quality assurance system within the residential provision was introduced at the beginning of this year. The residential management team are evaluating practice against each national minimum standard. The findings are then being used to inform the residential provision's development plan.

There is good communication between the education and residential teams and this helps provision to be adapted for individual students and to promote the outstanding outcomes of

students communication, social and independent living skills. The staff team are positive in their approach to working with students. They are keen to achieve the best for the students in their care. Staff have access to a wide variety of training opportunities. They are well trained, especially with regard to the acquisition of skills and abilities in supporting students with autistic spectrum disorder. The staff attitude and approach to training opportunities is very positive with a high number of staff achieving a relevant level 3 qualification or currently undertaking one.

The structure of governance is effective in ensuring there are clear lines of accountability. Staff and students are fully involved in the school's persistent and effective work in promoting equality and developing a strong positive culture of diversity. The school has robust recruitment and safeguarding systems that help to protect students.

The school has substantial strengths and a sustained record of delivering good performance and managing improvement. Where areas for improvement emerge the school recognises and manages them well. There is clear determination to continually raise standards in the delivery of care and education to the students.

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	103606
Social care unique reference number	SC017168
DfE registration number	330/7016

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	
Number of boarders on roll	
Gender of boarders	
Age range of boarders	
Headteacher	Ms Rosemary Adams
Date of previous boarding inspection	07/02/2013
Telephone number	0121 427 3191
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