

# The Harbour Hostel @ Tipner

The Harbour School, Tipner Lane, PORTSMOUTH, PO2 8RA

<b>Inspection dates</b>	24/02/2014	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of residential provision and care	Outstanding	1
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 residential provision is good. Pupils receive good quality individualised care within a nurturing and stimulating environment. By participating in a range of social and recreational activities both within the hostel and local community pupils are exposed to experiences that contribute significantly to their social, educational and moral development.
- Academic outcomes for pupils are positive and evidence indicates attendance levels and educational performances significantly improve during their placements. The majority of pupils leave the school with qualifications.
- There is a well-developed safeguarding culture within the school that ensures the safety and well-being of both pupils and staff remains paramount. Good working practices ensure pupils are not subject to unnecessary risks.
- Staff have high expectations of pupils and operate within a set of behavioural boundaries that are consistently applied. Pupils generally respond positively to the attention and support they receive from staff. Hostel staff liaise effectively with parents and this contributes to placement stability.
- The hostel is operating with a new head of care and new resident group. Evidence indicates it is working extremely well although new systems are still bedding down.

### 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 inspection took place at short notice and the inspection activities included: meeting with the head teacher, the head of care, other key staff and stakeholders; meeting residential pupils; tour of the premises; and scrutiny of a range of records and policy and procedures documents.

## Inspection team

David Coulter

Lead social care inspector

# **Full report**

## **Information about this school**

The Harbour School is a special school that became fully operational in September 2007. The hostel is the school's residential facility which can accommodate up to 8 pupils in single rooms. The aim of the hostel is to provide a safe and stimulating environment that will support young people in their educational development. While most of the hostel's residents attend the Harbour School, placements can be referred from any Portsmouth school. The hostel is a self-contained unit attached to the school. Staff and young people in the hostel can access many of the school's facilities. The hostel operates with a dedicated residential staff team. The hostel operates on a Monday to Friday basis, with young people returning home each weekend. The hostel has been subject to a comprehensive redecoration and refurbishment since the last inspection and is now fully operational. The school is located in a quiet coastal location on the outskirts of Portsmouth.

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

- provide an opportunity for pupils who have been physically restrained to make a written comment in the hostel's record.
- ensure all the progress pupils make in their hostel activities is reflected in the schools social and emotional skills reports.
- incorporate hostel, school and outreach staff in the further development of the school's holistic approach to meeting the educational needs of its pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for residential pupils

### Outstanding

Outcomes for residential pupils are outstanding. Most of the pupils enter the hostel following difficulties they have experienced in maintaining their educational placements. In many instances they have negative views about their educational abilities and experience low self-esteem. Staff have high expectations of the pupils in their care and all are expected to conform to the clear behavioural boundaries that are consistently applied by staff. By the application of individualised support and positive reinforcement pupils are helped to channel their emotions into constructive, rather than destructive, behaviours.

From Monday to Friday pupils live full and active lives by participating in a diverse range of social and recreational activities aimed at extending their experiences and widening their social horizons. Activities take place both within the school and local community. Success in such activities, is recognised and reinforced by staff through the schools social and emotional skills training programme and contributes significantly to an increase in the each individual's self-confidence.

Staff respond appropriately to the specific care needs of pupils and establish trusting and meaningful relationships with them. Pupils are actively involved in the development of the hostel and their views are continuously sought about all aspects of their lives. Pupils can exercise choice over their food, how they spend their spare time and the activities they wish to participate in. The social interaction between pupils and staff was observed to be both spontaneous and warm and based on a concept of mutual respect. One pupil felt that staff were, 'very kind and always willing to help'.

The majority of residential pupils not only benefit from an improvement in their educational performance but are, during their placements, also able to acquire a range of independent living skills that will equip them for the responsibilities of adulthood. There is an expectation that pupils will, over time, assume responsibility for their personal hygiene, keeping their rooms tidy, carrying out their own laundry and contribute to aspects of communal living such as helping in the preparation of meals. Staff are in the process of developing an award that will recognise the independent living skills individual's acquire during their placements. Access to a balanced diet and an increase in physical activity also contributes to better physical health and fitness. The majority of pupils leave the hostel having acquired educational qualifications, such a GCSE's, that allows them to carry on to further education or training.

### Quality of residential provision and care

### Outstanding

The quality of residential provision is outstanding. A well-established assessment process ensures that the specific educational, care and cultural needs of all prospective entrants to the hostel are identified prior to any placement. Staff glean information from a variety of sources including parents, previous placements, teachers and the pupils themselves. Details about the hostel and its specific role within the school is provided in a number of informative publications that are supplied to all prospective entrants and their parents. Placements are only offered to those who are likely to benefit educationally and socially and are willing to undertake the challenge of living with other pupils in a communal setting. Consideration is always given to the likely impact a new placement might have on the existing residential group. All admissions are carefully planned and most pupils are introduced to the hostel gradually via after school visits and introductory overnight stays. Much of the success of the Hostel lies in its flexibility and ability to respond positively to the changing needs of pupils and their families. For example, the number of nights each young person stays can either be increased or decreased in response to changing circumstances at home.

As pupils only reside on a weekly basis their parents retain primary responsibility for ensuring their routine health needs are met. While at school the health and well-being of each individual is monitored with support provided by hostel staff. Staff promote the concept of healthy living and all pupils are made aware of the importance of eating wisely and taking regular exercise. Staff encourage discussions around health education issues and raise awareness of the health consequences that can arise through the use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs. Issues relating to existing medical conditions or personal hygiene are dealt with sensitively. There is excellent provision for the management and administration of both routine and emergency medications. All staff undertake first aid training. Pupils frequently assist staff in producing well-balanced meals containing fresh ingredients. Meals are social occasions and staff and pupils eat together. Mealtimes provide regular opportunities for informal discussion and social interaction. The regular participation in recreational activities contributes significantly to each pupils physical and emotional well-being.

Each pupil is treated as a unique individual with their own specific care needs. A comprehensive care planning system provides staff with clear guidance on how the specific physical, social and emotional needs of each young person should be met. The excellent lines of communication that have been established between education and hostel staff ensures key information is shared and a consistency in approach maintained. The school makes appropriate provision for addressing any specific religious or cultural needs.

The hostel has recently been subject to a comprehensive redecoration and refurbishment programme and now provides high quality accommodation. All pupils are provided with their own rooms that they may personalise with posters and pictures. The central heating system has been upgraded with the introduction of a new boiler and now provides consistent warmth and an ample supply of hot water. The hostel's facilities were observed to be clean, tidy and well maintained. There are appropriate bathroom and toileting facilities throughout. While communal areas are clean and bright the introduction of new seating would enhance them further. Young people spoken with said they liked their rooms and appreciated the hostel's facilities.

### **Residential pupils' safety**

**Good**

The hostel operates within an established risk assessment framework. The safety and well-being of pupils and staff underpins all policies, procedures and working practices. All staff are appropriately vetted and deemed suitable to work with vulnerable young people. Staff are always deployed in sufficient numbers to provide appropriate supervision. Risk assessments are extensively used to assess the environment, activities and the behaviours of individual pupils. Staff are not risk averse and pupils are encouraged to engage in exciting activities such as climbing. All activities are subject to detailed risk assessments and are run by suitably qualified and experienced staff. Participation in such activities provides opportunities for pupils to develop safe practices and develop their abilities to identify hazards and assess risk. All off-site activities are subject to risk assessments that identify potential hazards and provide informed guidance.

The main school site and its outlying buildings are subject to regular health and safety checks. Specialist contractors are used to check and maintain fire alarm systems and equipment. Regular fire evacuation practices are carried out at different times of the day. Security arrangements ensure restricted access to both the hostel and the wider school site. On arrival all visitors must sign in, produce personal identification and sign out.

One of the schools senior management team is responsible for ensuring the school adheres to good safeguarding practices. There have been no safeguarding concerns relating to any pupils resident in the hostel since the last inspection. Staff within the hostel have all completed safeguarding training and are clearly aware of their individual responsibilities to report any

worries or concerns relating to any pupil. The school has established good working relationships with local authority safeguarding staff.

There is an expectation that pupils within the hostel will respect each other and peacefully co-exist. Staff are aware of the many forms bullying and discriminatory behaviour can take and monitor the mood and behaviours of each pupil on an on-going basis. Staff will not tolerate any form of bullying. Staff are pro-active in encouraging pupils to resolve the inevitable niggles associated with communal living before they develop into major concerns or complaints. There have been no complaints registered since the last inspection.

Pupils are assisted in gaining an insight into their own behaviours and helped to develop strategies to manage their emotions. Positive behaviours, such as consideration for others, are reinforced with praise and encouragement. Pupils gain rewards for displaying positive behaviour in both the classroom and hostel. Sanctions, when used, normally consist of the withdrawal of access to a favoured recreational activity for a limited period. Physical interventions are only ever used if it is felt an individual is putting themselves or others at risk. While there is a written record made of physical interventions, the current recording format does not include the views of the pupil concerned. Strategies for managing pupils behaviours are shared with parents and can contribute to an improvement in family relationships.

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

Leadership and management of the school's hostel is good. The hostel plays an important role within the school and residential pupils are supported in engaging in all aspects of school life. Teaching, care and therapeutic staff work effectively together to ensure the specific educational and care needs of each pupil are met.

The hostel operates with a small group of well motivated staff who are led by a new head of residential care who is focused on further improving the quality and nature of the provision being offered. There is a culture of training and professional development within the staff team and expectation that each individual will regularly access training opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills. Staff are pro-active in seeking out training that will equip them to meet the increasingly complex needs of the young people being referred. All staff receive regular supervision that allows them to reflect on their practice.

The hostel has only been fully operational for a relatively short period since its recent refurbishment. Although the new resident group is still settling, evidence indicates all are appropriately placed and are taking advantage of the many new social and recreational opportunities now available to them. Hostel staff regularly liaise with parents and keep them abreast of the progress their children are making. The operation of the hostel is subject to regular monitoring. The school's head is a frequent visitor, and a member of the school's governing body also undertakes unannounced visits. The visiting governor always spends time with both young people and staff. The head of residential care prepares a written report for governors on a termly basis that details residential pupils progress. The last report indicated further progress in school attendance and a reduction in exclusions

The recommendations and points for improvement from previous inspections have been acted upon, a new life skills programme has been developed and information for parents about the hostel is now available on the school's website. The recent refurbishment of the hostel indicates the commitment of the governing body to its residential provision. The hostel clearly provides added value to the schools provision and plays a key role in ensuring that a number of its most vulnerable pupils get the support they need to access their education.

## 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>	135308
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC012026
<b>DfE registration number</b>	851/7472

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>	
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	Mixed
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	
<b>Headteacher</b>	
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	19/03/2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	023 9266 5664
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