

# Northeast Manor School

Northeast Manor School, Newhaven Road, Rodmell, LEWES, East Sussex, BN7 3EY

<b>Inspection dates</b>	25/02/2014 to 27/02/2014	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Outcomes for residential pupils	Inadequate	4
Quality of residential provision and care	Inadequate	4
Residential pupils' safety	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings

### The residential provision is inadequate because

- The quality of outcomes for residential pupils is variable. Some pupils make good progress in their personal and social development; however, outcomes for other pupils have been unsatisfactory.
- The majority of parents and residential pupils have positive views about the boarding experience provided by the school. However, the provision of care for some residential pupils is weak.
- The school fails to adequately safeguard residential pupils' welfare, health and safety to ensure they are protected and kept safe.
- The leadership and management oversight and monitoring of the operation of the residential provision is inadequate. The school demonstrates insufficient knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of its boarding practice and thus, has not taken appropriate action to raise standards of practice to improve outcomes for residential pupils.
- The school's governors do not robustly scrutinise records and provide sufficient challenge to the senior leadership team, to bring about improvements in safeguarding and the promotion of residential pupil's welfare.

### 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 inspection of boarding/residential provision was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It 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.

The Department for Education instructed Ofsted to carry out this emergency, unannounced full residential inspection looking at all national minimum standards following receipt of a parental complaint that raised safeguarding concerns. A second complaint was received at Ofsted during the inspection and these concerns were also looked at within this inspection.

## Inspection team

Jennifer Reed

Lead social care inspector

Anna Williams

Social care inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

Northeast Manor is a co-educational, independent day and weekly residential special school for children aged between 10 and 17 years. The school also offers flexible boarding arrangements for individual pupils. The school provides educational and residential provision for potentially able pupils who have a range of specific learning disabilities: including dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder, dyscalculia, and social and communication difficulties which may include Asperger's syndrome and autistic spectrum disorder. The residential accommodation for pupils is provided within four separate boarding houses; three houses accommodate boys and one house provides accommodation for girls. The school is located near Lewes, East Sussex.

The school's last full residential inspection was completed on 16 May 2013. The Department for Education instructed Ofsted to carry out this emergency unannounced residential inspection following receipt of serious safeguarding concerns. A second complaint was received at Ofsted during the inspection and these concerns were also looked at within this inspection.

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

- Ensure fire drills are promptly undertaken in residential time, following the admission of new pupils to the residential accommodation, to evaluate the effectiveness of emergency evacuation procedures for all pupils.
- Undertake at least one night-time fire drill in any 12 month period to check that emergency evacuation arrangements at night are effective.
- Review the lone working policy to ensure it provides clear and accurate information and guidance to staff and to ensure that sufficient resources are put in place by the school to keep staff and pupils safe.
- **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)
  - Arrangements are in place to review how the child is settling following admission to the school. In an emergency admission a review meeting is initiated as soon as possible (and never longer than four school weeks after admission) to consider whether the child should remain at the school, or whether it is in that child's interests to move to a different placement. Such a review meeting may involve (where appropriate) the school, the placing authority, the parents/carers or those with parental responsibility, those with significant involvement with the child (such as social services or health services) and, where possible, the child. (NMS 2.5)
  - 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)
  - Prescribed medicines are given only to the children to whom they are prescribed. Children allowed to self-medicate are assessed as sufficiently responsible to do so.

(NMS 3.8)

- The school premises, accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured. (NMS 6.2)
- The school ensures that: arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (as referenced in 'Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards'). (NMS 11)
- A written record is kept of major sanctions and the use of any physical intervention. Records may include the information in Appendix 2 (Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards) - 'use of physical restraint'. The record is made within 24 hours of the sanction being applied and is legible. Children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records. The school regularly reviews any instances of the use of physical intervention restraint and examines trends or issues to enable staff to reflect and learn in a way that will inform future practice. (NMS 12.6)
- There is clear leadership and management of the practice and development of residential and care provision in the school, and effective links are made between academic and residential staff. The school's governing body or proprietor has a system to monitor care and welfare provision in the school. (NMS 13.1)
- The records specified in Appendix 2 (Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards) are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate. (NMS 13.3)
- Schools operate safe recruitment procedures and vet staff in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (as referenced in 'Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards'). (NMS 14.1)
- There is a sufficient number of competent staff deployed appropriately, both as a staff group and on individual shifts, to fulfil the school's Statement of Purpose and meet the individual needs of all children resident in the school. (NMS 15.1)
- The school's procedures are compatible with the local Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols and procedures applicable to the area where the school is located. Where children placed out of authority go missing, the Head of Care follows the local RMFHC protocol and complies with and makes staff aware of any other processes required by the placing authority. (NMS 15.7)
- New staff undertake the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction, beginning within 7 working days of starting their employment and completing training within 6 months. (NMS 19.3)
- All staff have access to support and advice for their role. They also have regular supervision and formal annual appraisal of their performance. (NMS 19.6)
- 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)

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for residential pupils

### Inadequate

Outcomes for residential pupils are inadequate. This is based on the impact of deficits in practice relating to health, behaviour management and safety of pupils. The older boys and the girls report that they mostly enjoy their time boarding in their respective houses. They have established positive relationships with their house-parents and peers and generally their houses provide a harmonious and mutually supportive living environment. These pupils usually show a tolerance of each other's differences and show respect and consideration for each other.

As they grow older, residential pupils can take more responsibility for their own well-being and personal care. Pupils are supported to develop some basic independent living skills. Pupils go shopping, cook meals and learn to keep their rooms tidy. These first steps will support pupils to move successfully towards adulthood and increased independence.

Residential pupils benefit from taking part in the range of activities provided during residential time. Staff encourage and support pupils to take up new opportunities to widen their skill base. Pupils are gaining confidence through their increasing abilities and this helps them to risk trying out new things to support their on-going development.

Many boys living within younger boys' two boarding houses are also making good progress. One residential pupil said, 'I can play nicely now.' However, there have also been a number of incidents of unacceptable and poor behaviour demonstrated by residential pupils. The school has been ineffective in managing some risks and this has led to poor outcomes for those pupils involved.

The complex needs and presenting behaviours of some pupils can at times, adversely impact on other pupils. Some pupils say that they do not like the behaviour of particular pupils and their interaction with them makes them feel uncomfortable. When bullying between pupils occurs, this is satisfactorily dealt with by staff to stop such behaviour. Following appropriate action taken by staff to address a bullying issue, one parent wrote, 'my child is happy now'.

Pupils' health, safety and welfare are not secured within the residential provision. Significant risk factors have not been identified or robustly assessed by senior staff and this has resulted in residential pupil's potentially being at risk of harm. Ineffective management monitoring processes means that inadequate care has not been recognised and acted upon to ensure residential pupil's welfare is promoted.

The school does not provide residential pupils with clear contact details for the independent listener and the Children's Rights Director. This limits pupils' access to external persons to voice any concerns that they may have about their care.

### Quality of residential provision and care

### Inadequate

The quality of care provided to residential pupils is inadequate. The quality and quantity of referral information gained prior to admission for each pupil is variable. The headteacher reports that the school acts in accordance with parental wishes and does not seek relevant referral information if parents do not wish them to do so. Most residential pupils come to the school prior to admission, for a 'taster' visit. The school does not effectively implement its admission policy with regard to decision-making processes for new admissions.

The school does not draw up a placement or care plan for residential pupils who may benefit from such guidance being in place. However, health plans are in place for some residential pupils

who have specific health needs. The school's placement agreements do not clearly identify how the school will meet individual children's care needs on a day-to-day basis. This lack of clear guidance is a significant shortfall, particularly when new house-parents are appointed and they do not know each residential pupil's particular needs.

The school does not hold review meetings to check how a new residential pupil is settling in and to agree support plans if required. Staff keep in regular touch with parents by telephone and email messaging. However, this communication is not systematically recorded in central records and/or in residential pupils' file. Senior staff report that pupils' welfare information is shared via conversation and email messages within the school on a 'needs to know' basis. However, this informal process may not provide for the effective dissemination of information to all relevant persons to keep them informed to ensure children receive the best possible care and support. Some parents have made complaints to clarify and agree the level of support that the school provides to their child.

The school's medication policy is inadequate. Arrangements for dealing with medication and healthcare are not effective and are not safe. There are no risk assessments in place for those children who are self-medicating. Records of the administration of medication given in boarding time are not adequately monitored by senior staff. Omissions in giving medication to pupils in boarding time have not been identified and acted upon. The member of staff leading on healthcare within the school has not completed sufficient training to ensure they have sufficient knowledge to undertake this role. However, this staff member demonstrates excellent engagement skills when dealing with ill or injured pupils, who appreciate the warm and nurturing approach provided.

The minimal staffing levels provided across the school's residential provision adversely impacts on the quality of care and support provided to residential pupils. House-parents are not always able to satisfactorily meet the individual needs of one pupil, given the needs and demands of the group of residential pupils. This is particularly evident within the younger boys' house and the most populated house.

Pupils have good access to specialist therapists and medical practitioners to support their physical and emotional well-being. Residential pupils are offered a varied diet, with healthy eating options available and special diets catered for. Pupils have opportunity to take part in exercise and have sufficient time to relax and rest.

The quality of the school's residential accommodation is good. Northease House provides a high standard of family-style accommodation which the older boys enjoy. The residential houses are well maintained. However, portable appliance testing (PAT) has not been undertaken since 2012. This is in contravention to the school's policy which states that high risk items should be checked annually and any new electrical items brought into the residential accommodation by pupils must be tested.

## **Residential pupils' safety**

## **Inadequate**

Safeguarding arrangements within the school are inadequate and children are not kept safe. The school's three designated child protection officers have completed the requisite safeguarding training. However, they do not demonstrate a sufficient and robust understanding of current safeguarding practice and guidance. Inspectors found that the senior staff and governors had not identified errors within their child protection policy and had not realised that the key safeguarding guidance and local procedures used within the school for reference were very out of date and had been superseded by other documents. These shortfalls were rectified by the school during the inspection.

Lower level safeguarding concerns have not been recorded centrally since the end of the summer term, to identify the concern, show what action has been taken and to clarify how potential risks are to be managed. Some safeguarding factors have not been recognised by designated child protection officers and sufficient follow up action was not taken to ensure residential pupils were protected. These shortfalls were addressed by the school during the inspection to ensure children are kept safe.

Two significant child protection issues have been appropriately referred to safeguarding agencies by the school. However, senior staff could not satisfactorily identify effective protective measures, learning, or action taken by the school from these and prior incidents, to reduce such risk occurring again within residential accommodation. Individual risk assessments for residential pupils identifying risk factors have not been provided to guide staff in the delivery of safe care.

The school has a database to record disciplinary measures. A separate report for sanctions given in residential time had not been produced to monitor trends and patterns. Analysis of the data by inspectors showed that a high number of sanctions were given to the younger boys residing in The Paddocks accommodation for poor behaviour. However, there are no behaviour management plans in place specifically to address pupils' time spent in boarding to increase the school's capacity to keep pupils safe.

There have been no restraints undertaken and no pupils going missing from the school since the last inspection. However, the school does not have a satisfactory record in place to record any future restraints that may take place. The school's policy for missing pupils is inadequate. It does not reflect the individual vulnerabilities of pupils and it is not consistent with the local missing children's policy. The school does not have a copy of the local Sussex procedures.

Most staff have completed recent safeguarding training. House-parents and ancillary staff know how to report any safeguarding concern they may have. Senior staff have completed Child Exploitation Online Protection Service training to support pupils in safe access to the internet.

Health and safety checks are robustly carried out to provide a safe environment for staff and pupils to reside within. Fire drills have been undertaken once a term in 2013. However, these were not carried out promptly following the admission of new residential pupils in September, to ensure they knew how to safely evacuate the building in an emergency. Furthermore, there have been no drills at night, to ensure adequate fire safety arrangements are in place for all pupils.

The school's recruitment and selection processes do not meet the requirements of Safer Recruitment guidance and this potentially places pupils at risk of harm.

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

The leadership and management of the residential provision are inadequate. The school fails to comply with a significant number of national minimum standards and this means that residential pupils' welfare is at risk. The school demonstrates insufficient knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of its boarding practice and thus, has not taken appropriate action to raise standards of practice to improve outcomes for residential pupils.

Monitoring processes within the school are mostly ineffective. Records and procedures are not routinely examined for quality and accuracy and gathered information is not systematically evaluated to bring about improvement in practice. Senior managers and governors do not ensure that all the school's policies are robustly implemented.

The quality of the independent visits reports is poor. The reports do not provide sufficient and accurate details about the operation of the residential provision and rarely provide any evaluation

or make any recommendations for improvement. Although governors report that they visit frequently and talk with staff and residential pupils, their views are not routinely recorded.

Staffing levels within the residential provision are minimal and this impacts on the school's ability to promote children's welfare and keep them safe. There has been a high turnover of staff in the school, including within the senior management team and within the residential provision. Recently employed residential staff are not yet fully familiar with all aspects of the school's boarding practice. Inadequate levels of supervision have been provided to residential staff during this academic year.

The school's lone working risk assessment is inadequate to keep residential staff and pupils safe. It has not been updated to reflect changes made and identifies inappropriate resources as protective measures.

All new employees complete the school's induction programme. Residential staff do not complete the Workforce Induction standards and the school has not evidenced that their in-house induction programme is equivalent to this required training. House-parents complete Boarding School Association (BSA) training programmes rather than undertaking the level 3 Workforce Diploma award. During the inspection, the school contacted the BSA training department, which reported that the courses completed were equivalent or higher than the Workforce Diploma. Residential benefit from a range of training arranged by the school.

The school's governors do not demonstrate rigour in their scrutiny of records and practice. They do not provide sufficient challenge to the senior leadership team, to identify shortfalls in practice and to bring about improvements in safeguarding and the promotion of residential pupil's welfare.



## 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>	114645
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC050107
<b>DfE registration number</b>	845/6028

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>	Residential Special School
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	50
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	Mixed
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	10 to 17
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Carmen Harvey-Browne
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	13/05/2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 472915
<b>Email address</b>	office@northeast.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

