

# Wells Park School

Wells Park School, Lambourne Road, CHIGWELL, Essex, IG7 6NN

<b>Inspection dates</b>	24/09/2014 to 26/09/2014	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of residential provision and care	Outstanding	1
Residential pupils' safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings

### The residential provision is outstanding because

- Residential pupils live in a safe and inclusive environment. All staff take their responsibilities to safeguard residential pupils seriously.
- Transition to the service is exceptionally well managed and residential pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their lives.
- There is an exceptionally experienced staff team providing excellent role models and continuity of care. Positive, nurturing and sensitive relationships enable residential pupils to thrive, develop as individuals and trust the adults who care for them.
- The leadership team shows a commitment to develop practice and continued development. There is a clear emphasis and willingness to reflect on practice and implement changes that will further enhance practice and the quality of care and safeguarding procedures.

### 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 is able to have 40 residential pupils as agreed by Department for Education in four residential flats. At the time of the inspection all these places were taken.

Three hours' notice was given prior to the start of the inspection. The inspection methodology included: observation of boarding routines and practice; scrutiny of school policies and records; discussion with parents on site and six by phone; meetings with staff and residential pupils. Discussions took place with a range of staff responsible for leading; managing and organising residential care these included residential staff, support staff, the director of care, head teacher and chair of governors. External professionals supporting the service were also spoken with and include: school's safeguarding advisor; mental health worker for local Child and Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and local pharmacist.

## Inspection team

Gwen Buckley

Lead social care inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

Wells Park School is a residential special school for 50 pupils of either gender aged between 5 and 11 years. Forty of these pupils reside at the school for four nights a week. The residential accommodation is provided in four linked houses located on the school site. The school is situated in a residential area of Chigwell and caters for pupils who have emotional behavioural, and social difficulties. The residential provision was last inspected in June 2012.

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

- Continue to develop the quality of monitoring reports produced by the governors.
- Improve the quality of records relating to restraints and enhance the monitoring of these records to ensure they provide a clear picture of the event.

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for residential pupils

### Outstanding

The outcomes for residential pupils are outstanding in all aspects of care. Parents and external professionals consider the residential pupils thrive as a direct result of their residential experience and one parent states: 'My son is no longer isolated from society, the improvements in his behaviour and education are exceptional. He now has friends and takes part in community events.'

Residential pupils consider that living at the school has helped them learn to respect and care for themselves and others. They develop high levels of independence through daily routines and special events in the residential provision and in the community. These range from developing self-care skills: keeping their room tidy; helping set and clear the dinner table and to making decisions about activities they want to take part in. Residential pupils are supported to visit friends in the other houses and to continue to attend activities they may have taken part in prior to attending the school.

Residential pupils like the token reward system in place and say the rules are fair and encourages good behaviour. The 'pathways' initiative is an excellent development that residential pupils aspire to join. They know to do so they need to show continued improvement in behaviour and educational achievement. The 'pathways' programme does not include the token system and focuses on helping young people, prepare for and move into main stream school. Residential pupils on this scheme are rightly proud of this. As a result, all residential pupils develop their skills at a pace that suits them.

Residential pupils and their parents are very complimentary about the improved outcomes the residential experience offers. Residential pupils enjoy their time and say they really like the staff, the activities provided and being with their friends. They enjoy the meals provided and learn the importance of healthy lifestyles and healthy eating. Excellent use of social media helps young people keep in contact with family members. Accommodation is of a high standard and young people are clearly proud of it and how well they keep it. This greatly enhances the residential pupils' feeling of independence and self-worth.

Parents are extremely positive about the support provided and state: 'My son has benefited enormously from his residential time, he has gained a lot of confidence and enjoys meeting friends. This is all thanks to the opportunities provided in residential time and the dedication of the staff team.' Other parents consider the outcomes for their children are exceptional and things they learn in residential house are then used at home which enhances their life experiences all the time. Residential pupils have exceptionally positive experiences and relationships with staff and other pupils. As a result, they benefit greatly from continued development and support ensuring they achieve their full potential.

### Quality of residential provision and care

### Outstanding

The quality of care is outstanding. Care staff are good role models and continually implement clear expectations for behaviour which young people readily accept and mirror. A token economy system is used in school and residential time. Examples of expected behaviour include: making positive choices; listening to the adults; walking to and from rooms and getting on with set tasks such as clearing dinner plates away. Residential pupils are motivated to earn tokens and they exchange them for evening activities throughout the week, the more tokens they earn, or if they are on the 'pathways' programme, the wider choice of evening activity they have.

Parents and visiting professionals are extremely positive about the quality of care and service

provided. Parents state: 'The care is more than outstanding, staff go above and beyond what could be expected.' They also state: 'Staff know the children very well and are very caring,' and, 'A strength of the service is the way they maintain the rules and what my son learns there helps us at home.' Visiting professionals say: 'Staff go beyond the call of duty; children are very well cared for and nurtured. It is a lovely place to be a part of and young people feel valued and cared for. This is evidenced by how quickly their behaviour and educational achievement improves.'

Excellent arrangements are in place to meet medical needs. Joint working with medical professionals ensures the medical needs of residential pupils are assessed and met. As a result, many residential pupils have a significant reduction in the medication taken. Training provided to care staff helps them understand the medical needs of residential pupils and administer medication safely. Because of this support, residential pupils' medical needs are exceptionally well managed enabling them to have a full and active life.

Residential pupils state: 'Although I would like to be at home, I think it is great here, there is a lot to do and the staff are always there for you.' Residential pupils enjoy activities both on site and in the local community such as walks in the forest, football, biking and swimming. Residential pupils respect difference and close friendships are evident with other pupils and staff. Family members state, 'The staff have brought my son on unbelievably. Since starting he has grown into a confident young person ready for the next stage in his life.'

No complaints have been received by the service. Residential pupils and their parents say there is no need to complain as any small issue they may have is taken on board and addressed. Family members are extremely complimentary about the time taken to get to know their children. This enables exceptionally detailed planning which ensures residential pupils have a highly inclusive yet individualised residential experience.

The quality of the residential provision is very good. Although work to upgrade the water system commenced in the summer holidays it is ongoing, however, staff have continued to offer a safe environment for residential pupils to live. Staff are always in the houses when residential pupils are present and there is a process of monitoring visitors ensuring the safety of residential pupils. The décor and furniture throughout the residential areas means residential pupils have a safe, bright and cheerful living environment that meets their needs. Residential pupils personalising their own areas by bringing items from home should they wish.

### **Residential pupils' safety**

### **Outstanding**

The arrangements are outstanding for the protection of residential pupils and keeping them safe. Young people contribute positively to the boarding experience and they are very clear bullying is not tolerated. They have someone to talk with if they are sad and they learn to care and look out for each other. Given their individual starting points this is a significant achievement

Safeguarding across the school is given a high priority and action is taken to protect children and others when needed. Staff are vigilant, know the young people well and discuss any changes in behaviour with carers and others as appropriate. This ensures changing needs and any safeguarding issues are addressed. External professionals are very complimentary with regard to the professionalism and dedication of staff. They consider the focus on the 'whole child', the support for, and joint working with, family members' is excellent and keeps residential pupils safe.

Recruitment procedures are strong and processes are in place to risk assess any issues that may arise. This means that the residential pupils are kept safe as only adults assessed as suitable are

employed or live on site.

There is an excellent awareness of health and safety issues and action is taken immediately to address potential hazards. Residential pupils are confident they can leave the building should there be a fire during the day or at night. Records of fire drills and safety checks on equipment are up to date and well maintained.

Restraints do not routinely take place and when they do, residential pupils say staff keep them safe. Staff are skilled in understanding the impact they have on situations and they are confident in the use of de-escalation. This reduces the need for restraints by diverting residential pupils away from potential dangers. Monitoring of incidents highlights trends and patterns. As a result, strategies are developed between the residential pupils, parents and school to reduce the need for restraint. This helps residential pupils make and sustain friendships and develop as individuals.

The language used in restraint records does not always provide a clear picture of events. Records do not clearly describe how a child was moved from one room to another. For example, on a few occasions, records say that a young person was 'taken' to another room. This did not make it clear if the young person was restrained to the other room or not.

All staff at the school have a good understanding of safeguarding issues. Appropriate consultation and referrals to local protection agencies take place. Local safeguarding professionals feel the staff's safeguarding practice, awareness and the openness of the management team helps to keep young people safe. Residential pupils are kept safe by staff that understand the many facets to safeguarding and follow child protection procedures at the school.

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

Leadership, management and organisation of the residential provision are outstanding. The management team have an excellent understanding of the residential provision. They ensure the residential experience meets highly individualised needs as expressed in the Boarding Statement of Principles. Reflection on practice highlight strengths and areas they wish to develop further which ensures there is a clear vision for the future outlined in a development plan.

The management team is working effectively with different contractors across site. This ensures work to upgrade the boiler and water pipes does not impact negatively on residential pupils. They ensure priority is given to health and safety issues that need to be addressed.

External monitoring by Governors takes place routinely and monitoring reports are made available. These reports are being developed to ensure the visitor is able to provide a clearer picture about the quality of the service. An independent counsellor is available to the residential pupils. However, she is leaving at the end of the year and they are looking to appoint to this post again.

New staff receive appropriate induction then undertake level three training. All other staff are trained to level three or above. Support staff have very clear guidelines with regard to training and are aware of actions to take if they have concerns. Staff have specialist training required to meet the needs of residential pupils which includes emergency first aid, emergency medication administration training. Staff training is monitored with refresher training provided on time. Staff are well trained for the work they have to perform.

Staff consider the supervision and support provided both formally and informally is effective. Staff handover meetings, staff meetings and guidance from external consultants all contribute to staff development and understanding of the needs of residential pupils. As a result, staff feel

supported by peers and management. The staff team consists of different genders, age, race, culture and experiences. Staff are therefore confident in their ability as a team to meet the diverse needs of the pupils they care for.

The school has a, missing from home protocol in place. Although no residential pupils have gone missing from this site, staff are aware of what to do should this occur. Family members are extremely positive on the ability of staff to keep their children safe in the home and when on outings in the community.

Equality and diversity is extremely well managed. Within the school each pupil's history is acknowledged and is not seen as a hindrance to achieving. Arrangements are made to ensure residential pupils have a full active life and they are well prepared for the next stage of their lives. Residential pupils benefit greatly by having a child-focused staff team who seek out and respect their views and who work well with their family members and other professionals.

## What inspection judgements mean

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
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>	115450
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC018021
<b>DfE registration number</b>	881/7022

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>	Maintained
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	40
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	Boys
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	5 to 11
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Sue Wraw
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	19/03/2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 502 6442
<b>Email address</b>	admin@wellspark.essex.sch.uk

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