

Pencalenick Residential Special School

Pencalenick School, St. Clement, TRURO, Cornwall, TR1 1TE

Inspection dates	20/10/2014 to 22/10/2014	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Outcomes for residential pupils	Good	2
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 quality of provision and care for boarders is good. Boarding at the school has a positive impact on the quality of pupils lives and opportunities in life. Leaders and managers have taken robust action to address the shortfalls in national minimum standards that were identified at the previous inspection. This has resulted in improvements including the safeguarding of boarders, the schools recruitment processes, boarders accommodation and behaviour management. However, to further improve the boarding provision recommendations have been made in respect of reviewing processes in the recording of sanctions, auditing of medicines, staff training, independent monitoring visits and risk assessments.
- The school has good safeguarding arrangements and gives a high priority to boarders safety. All staff receive training in child protection and counter bullying. Boarders state that they feel safe and parents consider that their child is safe at the school. The school manages behaviour well and has robust systems across the school to monitor and evaluate boarders behavioural support needs.
- The boarding facilities are well organised and run for the benefit of the boarders. Care plans and placement plans reflect the individual needs of boarders and are regularly reviewed. Boarders actively contribute to setting personal targets for achievement. Leaders and managers ensure that boarders views are regularly sought and boarders feel that they are listened to. Boarders state that they enjoy the boarders meetings and that these meetings 'make things change'. Parents, carers and professionals speak very highly of the boarding provision. Parents and carers said 'the care is brilliant' and 'my child is learning and enjoying life through boarding'.
- Boarders thoroughly enjoy their boarding experience and state that they give boarding

ten out of ten. Boarders demonstrate a kind and supportive approach to one another and consider that making friends is a great part of boarding. They feel listened to and state that the staff are like their family.

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 contacted on the morning of the inspection. Inspection activity included visiting all areas of the boarding accommodation, discussions with individual boarders and small groups of boarders, boarding staff and the head of care. In addition, discussions took place with the Principal and senior staff. Other inspection activity included observation of mealtimes and boarders social and leisure activities and boarding routines. Parentview was accessed but there were no results available at the time of the inspection. However, face to face discussions and telephone interviews were conducted with a number of parents, carers and professionals.

Inspection team

David Kidner

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Pencalenick School is an academy for 110 children aged from 11 to 16 years who have complex communication and learning disabilities, including autism. 27 children up to the age of 16 years board at the school from Monday to Thursday. They may stay for up to four nights.

The school is situated within a large country estate with extensive grounds, in close proximity to the city of Truro. The boarding accommodation comprises parts of two floors in the main school building.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- review the home's procedure for medicines coming into and out of the boarding accommodation to further evidence a robust audit trail.
- review the format for the recording and reporting on the effectiveness and consequence of any sanctions imposed.
- review the training plan for boarding staff to include training in alternative methods of communication.
- ensure that the independent visitors reports clearly evidence that all checks have been completed in particular, the record of attendance and risk assessments.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Good

Outcomes for boarders are good.

Boarders commented about boarding at the school that 'I love it here'. They build positive relationships, have mutual respect for one another and enjoy positive relationships with each other. Boarders are relaxed around each other and feel safe and included in the boarding accommodation. They make friends and consider this a very important part of their boarding experience.

Boarders behave well and make progress in learning how to manage their behaviour. One parent stated that their child 'uses the skills that they have learnt at school and now use these in the family home, their behaviour has improved immensely'. Boarders develop good social skills and give consideration to one another. This is demonstrated when boarders are taking part in activities and when meeting as a group of people. They allow others to voice their opinions and views and give consideration to peers who require extra time and support with their communication.

Boarders thoroughly enjoy their boarding and consider that they have learnt new skills such as personal care, making supper, preparing drinks and washing up. Some boarders stated that they have learnt to help each other.

Boarders actively engage in 'house meetings' and make a positive contribution to boarding. They influence the activities that they pursue and have requested items of new furnishings for their bedrooms. Education and boarding staff work closely together to promote positive outcomes for boarders and support educational progress.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted through physical activities and healthy eating. Boarders are confident that if they are feeling unwell they will be well cared for.

Boarders develop their confidence and self-esteem through boarding. This is further enhanced by some boarders obtaining work experience placements. Boarders state that this has helped with their confidence and that they are proud of their achievements.

Quality of residential provision and care

Outstanding

The quality of the boarding provision and care is outstanding.

The school is highly effective in promoting boarders welfare. Boarders state that boarding at the school is 'awesome, we go places, we learn new skills and have a computer'. Boarders gave ten out of ten for their boarding experience. Other boarders stated that 'I make friends and that's why I love boarding'.

The boarding staff place the well-being of individual boarders at the centre of their practice. Placement plans are comprehensive and clearly reflect the individual needs of the boarders and how staff will meet these needs. Placement plans and risk assessments are regularly reviewed to reflect their changing and complex needs. Boarders are set individual targets of personal goals and boarding staff regularly review these with boarders. Boarders also comment upon the progress that they are making and this is recorded. This directly involves boarders in the planning of their goals and aspirations. Excellent photographic evidence demonstrates individual boarders personal and education achievements. The accommodation posts alternative methods of communication to assist boarders who benefit from signs, symbols and photographs to assist in

the boarding routine. Some children use specific alternative methods of communication and boarding staff have a good awareness of alternative methods of communication.

Boarders state that staff are caring if they feel poorly and are very clear on how to alert boarding staff during the night if they feel unwell. Medicines are well managed, safe and secure. The head of care is reviewing the arrangements for the management of medicines coming into and out of the boarding provision in order to demonstrate a clearer audit trail. All staff who administer medicines have received the appropriate training.

Boarders speak highly of the boarding staff. Boarders state 'staff are nice, they help us and they listen to us'. Boarding staff have good relationships with boarders. Boarders state that 'staff are like our family and staff are cheerful'. Parents and carers state that there is excellent communication with the boarding staff.

Boarders are able to make contact with their parents or carers if they so wish. One parent stated 'I can ring whenever I like' and another parent stated 'my child can whenever they want to'.

Parents speak exceptionally well about the care, support and education provided at the school. One parent stated that 'I couldn't be more delighted' and added 'my child has developed their confidence and self esteem and the school has never given my child a sense of them being different or inferior'. Another parent stated 'I cannot speak highly enough of the school, my child partakes in social opportunities in boarding that they are not able to get at home'.

Boarders experience a very sensitive and well co-ordinated induction to boarding. Induction to boarding is co-ordinated to reflect their individual needs. Boarding staff ensure that a multi-disciplinary approach is undertaken and a robust assessment is undertaken in collaboration with all interested stakeholders. One parent stated 'my child has settled in really well and the care is brilliant'. Other professionals state that 'the move to boarding could not have gone better, there was good planning and preparation'.

There is an excellent range of activities and leisure opportunities which boarders thoroughly enjoy. Boarders are aware of what activities are on offer after school and choose from activities including pool, shopping, gym, walks, a drive out and computer games. Boarders said 'we have lots of fun'.

Boarders enjoy a good choice of nourishing foods. The school cook confirmed that all vegetables are freshly prepared and processed food is avoided. The catering team are fully aware of boarders individual food likes, dislikes and of any boarders specific dietary needs. Boarders state that if they didn't like anything on the menu they can ask for an alternative. One parent considers that their child's diet has significantly improved and that they now try different foods. Fresh fruit is offered on a regular basis. The school has been awarded 5 stars in respect of the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

Boarders accommodation is homely, well maintained, clean and hygienic. It is arranged over two floors and is located in the main school building. Boarders speak highly of their bedrooms and are delighted that they can personalise them and bring personal possessions from home. There is good communal space and each accommodation area has a lounge, quiet areas, good bathing, toilet and showering facilities. Each accommodation has kitchen facilities so that boarders can prepare drinks and snacks. This promotes their self help skills and independence skills. To further enhance a separation of the boarding accommodation away from the main school area, the school has taken preliminary action to relocate an office area away from the boarding accommodation.

Residential pupils' safety

Good

The arrangements for the safety of boarders is good.

The use of restraint in the boarding provision is rare. There has been minimal sanctions imposed since the last inspection. However, records used for the recording of sanctions do not always clearly evidence the effectiveness and consequence of the sanction. In addition, some records were not signed and dated.

Boarders are protected by robust procedures for child protection. Leaders and managers have learnt lessons from previous issues relating to the sharing of child protection concerns, with appropriate safeguarding agencies. The child protection policy includes the level of safeguarding training that staff receive across the whole school. The head of care is a designated child protection officer. The local area designated officer confirmed that there has been no referrals since the last inspection. All boarding staff receive training in child protection and safeguarding. They demonstrate a good awareness of child protection procedures and protocols.

Boarders state that they feel safe and are able to identify staff at the school who they would speak to if they had any worries or concerns. In addition, are able to identify external agencies that they can contact if they so wished. Parents state that their child is safe at the school and that they have no concerns for their safety.

The school has robust systems in place to monitor behaviours across the school site. There is excellent sharing of information across the school in respect of individual boarders behaviour whilst at school and in the boarding provision. Where required, robust and effective action is taken to support boarders in managing their behaviour. Individual behaviour support plans are devised, implemented and regularly reviewed. All boarding staff receive training in the schools preferred method of de-escalation and restraint. One parent stated 'my child has learnt boundaries' another parent stated 'they deal with my child's behaviour well and there has been immense improvement'. There were no matters identified at this inspection in respect of the deprivation of liberty.

Boarders are protected by clear policies for countering bullying. Boarders do not report bullying as a concern. and state 'we get on, there's no bullying or swearing or bad stuff'. Parents consider bullying is not an issue at the school.

The arrangements for the recruitment and vetting of staff is robust. A number of senior staff including the head of care and the Principal have undertaken the 'Safer Recruitment in Education' training course.

Leaders and managers ensure that the boarding environment and the school's utilities are regularly checked and serviced and that environmental risk assessments are completed and updated. Fire safety is taken seriously and regular checks and services are completed on the fire fighting equipment and system. Fire drills are regularly undertaken. Boarders are very clear on what to do in an emergency and can demonstrate what to do if the fire alarms were activated.

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

Leadership and management of the boarding provision is good.

The independent monitoring visits to the boarding provision take place on a regular basis. The reports are detailed and evaluate the care and support provided in the boarding provision. However, not all reports clearly record that all the required checks have been undertaken at each visit. However, this does not impact negatively on the safety and welfare of boarders using the

boarding provision.

Although boarding staff have the skills to communicate with boarders with specific communication needs, they have not received specific training in alternative methods of communication. Boarding staff state that this would further enhance their skills in communicating with boarders. However, the head of care evaluates the training needs of individual boarding and this informs the training plan. Staff receive appropriate mandatory training and speak well of the training that is provided.

There is good leadership and management of the boarding provision. Following the previous inspection on 17 September 2013 the school developed an action plan to address the shortfalls that were identified. The school has addressed these shortfalls. This has resulted in improvements in the following areas including; child protection procedures and staff with management responsibilities receiving the appropriate level of training, safer recruitment practices, the recording of any restraints and sanctions and the management of behaviours, boarders accommodation, lone working policies and external monitoring systems.

The school has undertaken robust action to evaluate its boarding provision and is clear of the strengths and weaknesses of its provision. A detailed development plan has been devised and identifies areas of improvement including; creating a programme of skills for independent living, care planning and consultation with parents and carers.

Leaders and managers ensure that boarding staff receive regular support and supervision. Boarding staff state that they feel supported and listened to and they consider that they have good staffing levels to meet the needs of the boarders.

There are good relationships between parents, carers and placing authorities. Parents state that there is excellent communication and consultation with the boarding provision.

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	137478
Social care unique reference number	SC041223
DfE registration number	908/7002

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	Residential Special School
Number of boarders on roll	27
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	11 to 16
Headteacher	Mr Andy Barnett
Date of previous boarding inspection	17/09/2013
Telephone number	01872 520385
Email address	head@pencalenick.org

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