

Penn Hall School

Penn Hall School, Vicarage Road, Penn, WOLVERHAMPTON, WV4 5HP

Inspection dates	18/03/2015 20/03/2015	to
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
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 make exceptional progress in all aspects of their lives. They have positive relationships with staff and each other. This supports the development of their social interaction skills and they grow in confidence and self-esteem. The residential provision provides a relaxed and homely environment.
- Residential pupils are safe and feel safe. The staff team have an excellent knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues. This is underpinned by proactive multi-agency working to identify and address potential issues at an early stage. Health and safety and fire safety audits are regularly completed to ensure the continued safety of residential pupils.
- Professionals, parents and residential pupils praise the continued commitment of staff. They say the value and positive impact of the boarding experience on residential pupils is excellent and ensures pupils make significant progress in their development.
- The management arrangements for the residential provision are excellent. Regular monitoring of residential provision ensures that the service meets pupil's complex needs. Effective links between the school, health services, and the residential provision mean that residential pupils receive integrated and comprehensive care.

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 of the residential provision took place following a notice period of three hours. The inspection activities included; observation of practice, discussion with pupils in the residential accommodation and meetings with residential staff, senior managers, the business manager, school nurses, safeguarding officers and site facilities managers. A range of records were examined relating to the care provided and breakfasts and evening meals were observed. Time was spent within the residential provision over a three day period. Feedback gathered from parents and other professional agencies also informed the inspection judgements.

Inspection team

Jo Stephenson

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Penn Hall is a Wolverhampton Local Authority Community Special School for pupils aged 3 to 19 years, whose special educational needs fall predominantly in the category of physical disability and complex medical needs. Some pupils will have an associated learning difficulty related to their physical disability. An increasing number of pupils have communication delays and difficulty. The school is located on the outskirts of Wolverhampton. It can accommodate 85 pupils.

The residential hostel on the school site can accommodate up to six pupils aged between 3 and 19 for overnight stays. All pupils are given the opportunity to take part in the residential experience.

The school was last inspected on 03 February 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the use of electronic monitoring devices, for the purpose of promoting safety and welfare, are recorded in residential pupils' care plans.
- Ensure consultation with residential pupils is detailed in internal care plans.
- Ensure that the correct contact details and address for Ofsted is available for residential pupils.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Outcomes for residential pupils are outstanding. Residency is an option for all pupils accessing the school and they make exceptional progress in developing their social, emotional and communication skills. Residential pupils learn to progress suitable and sustainable attachments with their peers and staff. Relationships encourage respect, tolerance, understanding and trust. Pupils grow in self-confidence and self-esteem because they receive bespoke care that promotes the development of new skills. This supports their transition to adulthood and greater independence.

Residential pupils have a complex range of physical or learning disabilities. Staff ensure that internal residential plans are devised in partnership with school nurse professionals, occupational health therapist, specialist consultants and physiotherapists. Pupils are assured and confident that their individual health needs will be addressed when they are in residence. One parent commented: 'I know my child is safe and well looked after; I can't begin to explain how important that is to me.'

Pupils are extremely happy and content in residence because they have the opportunity to socialise with their friends and peers. They are able to participate in activities that are otherwise inaccessible to them, such as attending football matches. As a result, they develop social interactions skills, emotional resilience and grow in confidence and self-esteem. Parents praise the value the residential experience has on their children. One parent commented: 'This is such a fantastic opportunity and my son has learnt so many new skills.' One pupil said: 'I've been coming to stay for ages and I really like it because I can be with my friends.' Another commented: 'It feels like a home from home here; it's like we are a big happy family.'

Residential pupils are fully involved in the day-to-day running of the provision. Nevertheless, their views are not consistently reflected in residential care plans and this is an area for further improvement. Staff use a range of verbal and non-verbal communication tools to ascertain the views and opinions of all pupils accessing residency. Pupils say they are asked for their thoughts regarding menus, activities and their individual support needs. Feedback regarding pupil's views of residency are a standing agenda item during school council meetings. This creates an environment where all residential pupils are included in the continual development of the service.

Staff work with parents, pupils and external agencies, such as health specialists, to support successful transitions to adulthood. Pupil's time in residency encourages them to learn personal care and independence skills, based on their abilities and capabilities. This allows pupils to make sustainable progress in their development.

Quality of residential provision and care

Outstanding

The quality of care residential pupils receive is outstanding. With support from parents, care staff, teaching staff and health services, pupils are introduced to residency when they commence school. Periods in residency are organised by year group and 'key stage'. This means that pupils benefit from spending quality time with their peer group and friends.

Residential pupils and their families are introduced to the provision prior to admission and receive relevant and appropriate information. Pupils experience a smooth introduction to residency, including regular 'tea visits'. This reduces the potential for pupils to experience feelings of anxiety and apprehension. Communication between residential staff, health specialist and parents is excellent. Partnership working is supported by bespoke health plans that identify pupil's physical and emotional needs; and procedures to ensure these are met. This means that residential pupils

experience an integrated approach to meeting their needs and promoting their safety when in residence.

Staff ensure that pupils have individual residential care plans in place. These specify individual support and welfare needs. When applicable, these reflect the statutory care plans in place for looked after children or children in need. On occasion, staff use electronic monitoring devices to promote pupils safety and meet their health needs. To improve further, residential managers must ensure that this is recorded in residential plans and regularly reviewed. The consistent application of clear boundaries and expectations for pupils supports their development. Behaviour in residency is exemplary. Pupils experience communal living and learn patience and acceptance of others.

Residential pupils benefit from a varied range of in-house and community activities. These enhance their social skills and emotional development. In residence, pupils spend time with staff and their peers, play computer games and participate in arts and crafts sessions. They enjoy excursions in the local and wider community and develop positive interaction skills. Residential pupils praise the support they receive for staff. One pupil said, 'I can talk to staff and they listen to me.' Parents and professionals are extremely positive about the value of the residential provision. Feedback includes, 'This is such an incredible provision. It really is life enhancing.'

Mealtimes in the residential provision are particularly sociable occasions. Pupils discuss their day and decide on evening activities. Staff ensure all pupils are able to express their preferences and participate in conversations. For some young people this means using a range of non-verbal communication tools. Residential pupils enjoy freshly cooked meals in residence. Food provided is varied and nutritious. One pupil said: 'I like the food we have and sometimes we get to have a take-away.'

The home is well decorated and maintained. Pupils are encouraged to personalise their own space and are involved in decisions about the fixtures and fittings in communal areas. The grounds are extremely spacious and well-equipped and pupils say they enjoy spending time outside.

Residential pupils' safety

Outstanding

The safety of residential pupils is outstanding. Residential staff understand their responsibilities with regards to ensuring that pupils are safe and their welfare is continually promoted. The head teacher and residential manager ensure that safeguarding training is regularly refreshed. Robust recording and reporting systems manage any child protection concerns. Designated officers work in partnership with the local authority and make detailed referrals when they identify concerns. This ensures that concerns are taken seriously and addressed in a timely manner to promote pupils continued safety. Residential pupils do not identify bullying to be an issue in the provision. One pupil said: 'Bullying doesn't happen because we are spending time with our friends and we get on well together.'

Pupils treat each other with respect and understand the behaviour expected of them. They enjoy each other's company have excellent relationship with staff. This creates a 'family' atmosphere in the home. Incidents of challenging behaviour that warrant the use of physical restraint are extremely rare and there have been no instances in the past two years. Residential pupils have risk assessments in place that identify their specific vulnerabilities, disabilities and needs. These ensure that staff deliver consistent care and support. The ethos of the residential provision is that pupils want to stay and this is confirmed by the pupils. One pupil said: 'I like being here. I'd stay for longer if I could.'

Residential pupils have access to two independent visitors who visit the provision on a regular basis and understand that they can raise any concerns they have with these individuals. They are also encouraged to go to any staff they chose should they wish to make a complaint. The school's complaints policy is promoted in the residential home and pupils confirm they understand how to make a complaint. However, the school has not displayed the correct contact details for Ofsted, so pupils may not be able to contact the regulator should they wish to. There have been no complaints regarding the residential provision since the last inspection. Furthermore, parents say they feel that their children are 'safe and secure' when residing in the school.

Staff recruitment procedures are extremely robust and effective and ensure that all necessary vetting checks are completed. The head teacher and school business manager are trained in safer recruitment. Adults who live on site are subject to checks and have agreements in place, setting out the school's expectations of them. All visitors to the school are required to sign in and their identification is checked. These systems continually promote the safety of residential pupils and protect them from harm.

The residential home and grounds are safely maintained and appropriately monitored. A facilities team complete regular checks of the environment to ensure that any defects or potential hazards are quickly identified and addressed. This includes regular safety checks on specialist equipment such as hoists and 'rise and fall' baths. Regular fire drills and practice evacuations ensure that all residential pupils and staff know how to safely evacuate in the event of fire. This means pupils are protected from the risk of fire.

Leadership and management of the residential provision Outstanding

The leadership and management of the residential provision are outstanding. There are clear aims and objectives for residential provision. The headteacher states the purpose of this service is: 'to create a warm, caring and trusting environment to enable children to learn, grow and prepare for life after school.' This ethos is converted into practice throughout the residential provision.

A dedicated and passionate residential manager and the committed staff team ensure that the residential provision provides an excellent resource for pupils and their families. The service provides pupils with access to experiences and opportunities that may otherwise be closed to them because of their complex disabilities. The effectiveness of the service is regularly reviewed to ensure that minimum standards and pupils needs are consistently met. As a result, the strengths of the provision and any areas for development are effectively evaluated.

Residential staff receive regular and effective supervision and an annual professional performance review. This supports them in their role. Staff development is further supported by a detailed and bespoke training programme and reflects the individual needs of pupils, including the administration of emergency medication. This further supports and promotes pupils safety and welfare. Staffing numbers are sufficient to meet the needs of the pupils in residence. There are clear routines in place and excellent links between the school, health professionals and residential provision. Staff maintain detailed records relating to the progress residential pupils make and these are shared with parents, teachers and other professionals. As a result, the progress that pupils make is recognised and celebrated.

The residential provision has a comprehensive range of policies in place that are embedded into practice. Communication and partnership working with parents, the local authority and other professionals is a key strength of the residential provision. Parents receive regular updates regarding the progress their children make. They praise the commitment of staff and the value of the residential provision. One parent said: 'My child likes to be with his friends and that's just not

possible at home so the opportunities here are really fantastic.'

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	104417
Social care unique reference number	SC043187
DfE registration number	336/7012

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	Maintained Residential Special School
Number of boarders on roll	6
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	3 to 19
Headteacher	Mr David Parry
Date of previous boarding inspection	03/02/2014
Telephone number	01902 558 355
Email address	admin@pennhall.co.uk

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