

St Anne's Community Special School

St Anne's Special School, St Helens Drive, Welton, Brough, HU15 1NR

Inspection dates	12/01/2016 to 14/01/2016	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good	2
The quality of care and support	Good	2
How well children and young people are protected	Good	2
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good	2

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- Children and young people make excellent progress as a result of the care they receive in the residence. They become more confident, they develop independence and gain emotional well-being from socialising with their friends. Children and young people enjoy their time in the residence and achieve well.
- The head of care organises the residence with energy and passion. They have a very 'hands-on' approach and they ensure a high quality of care for children and young people.
- The school is effective in keeping children safe. Young people feel secure and settled because the staff provide care that is well-structured and consistent. Staff turnover levels are minimal and the staff know the children and their needs very well.
- The staff benefit from training in a wide variety of subjects. Training is delivered in a variety of formats which are stimulating and effective. The staff are qualified for their role and are knowledgeable, skilled and experienced.
- The headteacher and head of care have made important changes to the organisation of the residence since the previous inspection. These have consolidated the quality of care provided.
- Although the national minimum standards are met, some improvements can be made in relation to risk assessments, publicising information and the recording of restraints.

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Publicise more information about the Office of the Children's Commissioner, the independent visitor and the advocate.
- Consolidate the improvements being made to children and young people's risk assessments. This is in relation to estimating and recording the likelihood and impact of risks and the strategies to be taken to reduce them.
- Avoid relying solely on technical jargon to describe in records how staff restrained any child or young person.

Information about this inspection

Ofsted gave the school one hour's notice of the inspection of its residential provision. Inspection evidence came from discussions with residential pupils, parents and carers; analysis of written surveys received from 17 residential pupils, 9 parents and 17 residential staff; discussions with residential staff, the head of care and headteacher; analysis of the school's policies, records and residential pupils' case files; a tour of the residential premises and observations of the residential routines.

Inspection team

Steve Pearson

Lead social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

This is a local authority maintained residential special school. The school has 130 children on roll, aged from 3 to 19 years, who have a range of severe and complex needs. The school has a residential facility known as The Residence. This is currently used by 46 pupils at some point during the year. Up to 14 pupils stay at The Residence each night. The stays tend to be short breaks of one or two nights each week, on a regular basis. Some pupils also stay at weekends and during school holidays. The school is situated in its own grounds in the village of Welton near the town of Brough. Ofsted last inspected the residential provision in February 2015.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people.

Good

Young people get on well with each other and with the staff who care for them. The head of care organises the care effectively to ensure consistency and continuity. This helps young people feel settled and secure. A parent summarised the social benefits of the residence by saying, 'My child really looks forward to staying in the residence because they like to be with their friends. They wouldn't get the same opportunities to mix with friends if they were at home.'

Young people make excellent progress. The primary aim of the residence is to promote young people's confidence and independence. The head of care and staff are effective in meeting this aim. Several parents said, 'My child is much more independent since staying in the residence.' Since the previous inspection the head of care has developed a comprehensive and well-organised independence programme. This started two months before the inspection and is helping young people gain knowledge and skills that will be helpful in their adult lives after leaving school. It provides a structure of targets for all relevant skills that will be helpful in adulthood.

Parents explained that their children had developed skills in self-care, personal hygiene, and domestic tasks such as washing the dishes, getting dressed and undressed. A parent said, 'My child is much more confident as a result of their time in the residence.' Another parent said, 'My child sleeps better now. This was one of their targets in residence.'

Young people behave well. They are considerate to each other, they are settled and amenable to direction by the staff. The staff set clear boundaries of behaviour but enable young people to have fun and express their personalities. The design of the building enables the head of care to allocate children appropriately. For example, children who are younger and more introverted can be allocated to one part of the accommodation while older or more extrovert young people may be located in another part.

Young people enjoy their time in the residence. One parent said, 'My child gets very excited about going to stay in residence. They can't wait to pack their bags in anticipation of their overnight stay.'

The head of care and staff ensure young people are offered opportunities to contribute to the running of the residence, the school and to become involved in the wider community. An independent advocate visits the young people in residence every four to six weeks. They hold a meeting with them to discuss the care provided and whether they have any concerns or suggestions for improvement. Sometimes these meetings are held in the local public house which enables the young people to experience community life outside the school.

The leadership and management of the residence is effective in promoting positive outcomes for children. The head of care organises the care effectively and continuously strives to improve the care provision. The staff are knowledgeable, experienced and

skilled. Staffing levels are good and these help to ensure children's needs are met.

The staff team are also effective in meeting children's physical health and emotional needs. Health plans are recorded in detail in case files and staff receive training in meeting special health needs such as particular feeding techniques which require expertise.

The quality of care and support.

Good

Each young person's care needs are recorded in detailed care plans. A link worker with responsibility for around 10 young people keeps the care plans updated according to developments and the outcomes of review meetings. The staff are effective in meeting children's needs. A parent summed this up saying, 'The head of care and staff know my child so well. I am kept fully-informed about how they are doing. Not only do they know them well but they are very good at helping them develop and become more independent.'

The residential premises are clean, well-designed and homely. Around 10 to 15 young people stay each night. The accommodation is designed so that the building becomes three self-contained areas. This gives young people a greater sense of identity and homeliness. It enables the staff to have high quality one-to-one relationships as necessary and provides for effective supervision of the children. Young people have helped to choose the décor and the colours of walls. The staff also encourage them to personalise their bedrooms. This enable young people to feel significant because they are given a real sense of involvement and control.

The staff are effective in promoting children's physical and emotional health. Clear care plans explain how such needs must be met. Each child's key worker updates these as necessary. The school has a range of professionals who provide expert advice. For example, the health team comprises a nurse, an occupational therapist, and a speech and language therapist. They provide training in specialised care practices and monitor how these practices are delivered on a regular basis. For example, at the time of the inspection the school nurse was monitoring and advising staff in the delivery of specialist feeding techniques. Written policies and procedures are in place covering the necessary health-related issues such as specialist feeding techniques, use of oxygen, and administration of medication and infection control arrangements. The staff make effective use of applications on electronic tablets to help young people communicate how they feel; they enable them to take part in yoga which helps them to reflect and feel calm; and they enable children to express their emotions by association with symbols of facial expressions.

Young people receive food which is varied and nutritional. One young person said, 'I like it in residence and the best thing about it is the food.' Young people have a say in what is on the menu. The on-site kitchen provides meals seven days a week and this includes provision of a roast every Sunday lunchtime. On their most recent visit, the environmental health department awarded a top score of five stars for food hygiene.

Young people enjoy taking part in a wide range of stimulating leisure activities. One

young person said, 'I like the things we do here. I'm making a hat tonight and am going to take it home tomorrow.' The residence is personalised with many examples of artwork that children have produced. They are encouraged to be responsible and think of others. For example, the residence has a tortoise which the young people help to care for. The head of care and staff have been creative in enabling young people to take part in activities that they might not ordinarily experience. For example, all children in residence were able to take part in an overnight camp on the school premises during the summer holidays. This followed a period of successful fund-raising. Young people gained an enormous amount of fun and the experience was available to all those who use the residence, regardless of the challenges they faced due to disability. One parent summed this up saying, 'We would never have been able to offer my child this experience. We were not sure how it would go but they loved it.'

Young people have a say in how the residence is run. For example, an independent advocate visits every month and holds a house meeting. Children give their views and suggestions and the head of care and staff try to implement these where possible. Young people also help to choose the décor, menus, activities and they are represented on the residence council. Young people therefore gain self-esteem by having a real say in how the residence is run. Other opportunities to have a say or to seek support are through an independent visitor who visits at least once every half term. The existence of these individuals and the Office of the Children's Commissioner is not being promoted sufficiently. There is a lack of information about them on the website and they are not mentioned on the children's noticeboard or in their handbook about the residence. They are therefore not being fully supported to know how to raise any issues with external and independent sources of support.

Effective arrangements are in place to enable young people to contact their family and friends. They have the use of a cordless telephone and parents and carers can ring at any time.

How well children and young people are protected.

Good

The head of care and the team of staff are effective in ensuring children are safe.

They receive regular training in child protection and this includes coverage of the issues in the government's statutory guidance. All staff receive child protection training when they first become employed by the school and then on an ongoing basis. They understand their duty to report allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse and how to respond to young people who may disclose such matters. Recent training in safeguarding has been very effective in helping the staff to assimilate the relevant information and the importance of protecting welfare.

Since the previous inspection the headteacher and head of care have created a more robust risk assessment system. This is not fully developed as the degree of likelihood and seriousness and strategies to reduce risk are still being finalised. A potential template of assessment has been devised and looks promising. This should be developed further to demonstrate that all reasonably foreseeable hazards have been considered and planned for.

Young people behave well. They feel safe and secure as a result of relationships with staff who know them well and who provide clear boundaries and a high level of continuity. The staff very rarely need to physically intervene to restrain children. Since the previous inspection 11 months ago there have only been five occasions when restraint has been necessary. The staff receive annual training in these matters and are aware of the strictly-defined reasons why restraint can be used. The recording of restraints does not provide for sufficient accountability because the staff rely on the use of technical jargon to describe the holds used. For example, on occasions when restraint have been used, the staff wrote that they had used holds such as a 'half shield', a 't-wrap', a 'single elbow hold' or a 'cradle'. No explanation was recorded as to what these terms mean. There is therefore insufficient accountability for their usage should any external agency need to evaluate them in the future.

Children do not go missing from the residence. This is because they do not want to go as they feel settled and secure. In addition staffing levels are good and provide effective levels of supervision.

The premises of the residence are safe. Professional technicians regularly service the electrical equipment, gas appliances, lifting equipment and the systems for preventing, detecting and extinguishing fires. This helps to protect the safety of young people and adults in the building. Appropriate arrangements are also in place to ensure that staff recruited to work with young people are suitable and safe. These arrangements reflect the government's statutory guidance.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers. Good

The head of care leads, manages and organises the residence effectively. A member of staff summed this up saying, 'The head of care organises the residence well. It runs smoothly and we're a well-organised team and provide good consistent care.' Since the previous inspection, the residence has gained more autonomy. For example, the head of care now has an independent say in the use of the budget; the residence has its own caretaker and the local authority has devolved more autonomy for catering arrangements to the head of care. Consequently decisions that benefit young people are made and implemented more quickly.

A link worker system is in operation. This ensures each child has a named member of staff who coordinates and oversees their care and makes sure their needs are being met. They keep their care plans up-to-date and help to prepare their reports for annual review meetings. This system is effective in helping to ensure each individual young person's needs are known and addressed in ongoing day-to-day care practice.

The head of care helps to oversee children's progress by having a hands-on approach. They liaise with each child's link worker and maintain effective communication with parents and carers. One parent summed this up saying, 'We can ring up the head of care at any time and discuss our child's care. It is very reassuring.'

The primary aim of the residence is to promote children's confidence and to enable them

to develop life skills and be more independent. This will help them to be best-equipped to make a success of adulthood.

The head of care and headteacher review policies and procedures on an ongoing basis to ensure they comply with government guidance and national minimum standards. Effective monitoring of the quality of care ensures children are safe. Aside from the minor shortfall in the recording of restraints, the quality of documentation is good. The records are up-to-date and provide clarity about children's needs and how these should be met. Other documentation relating to recording of routine matters such as staff rotas, training records, supervision and equipment testing is also clear and up-to-date.

The staff feel supported and are well-motivated. This was summed up by one member of staff who said, 'We get regular supervision from a senior members of staff, we receive training in a wide variety of subjects and we have staff meetings every day. I feel we are well-supported.' In addition, young people receive care that is consistent because there are no staff vacancies and absence levels are minimal.

In accordance with the national minimum standards, an independent visitor calls at the residence every half term. They meet children and staff and assess the quality of care being provided. They cover all the necessary issues and write a report with recommendations where necessary. The headteacher also completes an assessment every term and she evaluates the issues defined in the national minimum standards. The headteacher is working towards creating a clear Statement of Purpose as defined in the standards.

The headteacher and head of care have addressed the two national minimum standards which Ofsted identified as being unmet at the previous inspection. They have also responded to the three points for improvement made at the time. Consequently care quality has improved because a robust complaints system is in place which reflects government guidance; the capacity for ongoing improvement is better due to effective monitoring; safety is better due to developments in risk assessments procedures; and care plans are more informative because they make clear who wrote them and when.

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework*.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	118145
Social care unique reference number	SC056736
DfE registration number	811/7018

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	46
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	3 to 19
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Davis
Date of previous boarding inspection	24/02/2015
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