

Philpots Manor School

West Hoathly, West Sussex, West Sussex, RH19 4PR

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

Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- Residential pupils make good progress in education, social skills and behaviour management.
- The new head of care, employed since September 2015 has had a significant impact on the safeguarding procedures and practices across the residential provision. This has resulted in residential pupils having improved confidence in staff's ability to listen and manage all concerns and allegations they raise in a timely and effective manner.
- Residential pupils experience an environment that is calm, with staff who have embraced the recent changes, as a result pupils appear much more relaxed.
- Improvements made to the health provision has resulted in a good standard of health care.
- Residential pupils form trusting relationships with staff who have been suitably vetted. They enjoy the time spent with staff.
- The head of care has forged good working relationships with external safeguarding agencies that ensure correct management of concerns or allegations. Residential pupils are cared for by staff who have an improved understanding of safeguarding with clear reporting to the head of care as safeguarding lead.
- Residential pupils enjoy a wide range of activities both on and off site. They experience the wider community through work experience and fund raising activities.
- The shortfalls identified do not have a negative impact on the welfare of pupils. These include; embedding new supervision and appraisal systems, ensuring all water pipes are regularly checked to ensure they are of a safe temperature, updating the school's website so it contains correct details of the head of care and ensuring there is clarity in the role and responsibilities of co-workers. In addition, the school should continue to develop avenues for external scrutiny of the school's operation of residential care.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- ensure the school's website contains the correct details of the head of care.
- ensure all water pipes and radiators are regularly checked to ensure they remain at a safe temperature.
- ensure co-workers have clarity in their roles and responsibilities for lone working.
- embed good standard supervision and appraisal systems.
- continue to develop external oversight of the residential provision.

Information about this inspection

Ofsted carried out this inspection with three hours' notice. Inspection activities included; meetings with key staff including the head of care, a director, the education coordinator, human resource manager, health and safety manager, nurses, house staff and co-workers. Additional contact was made with the assistant local authority designated officer (LADO) for West Sussex and the independent visitor. Inspectors had lunch and supper with residential pupils and spent time listening to their views and opinions of the school. Feedback was obtained from 'Parent View' and discussed with the head of care. Parents were notified of the inspection and offered the opportunity to comment either in writing, by telephone or in person. No parent took this offer up. A wide range of documentation concerning the residential provision was scrutinised.

Inspection team

Liz Driver

Lead social care inspector

Sophie Wood

Social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

Philpots Manor School is an independent residential special school and further training centre that offers weekly boarding during term-time. The school ethos is to provide a holistic approach to education based upon the social and educational principles of Rudolf Steiner. It specialises in provision for children and young people of either sex between the ages of 7 and 19 years of age who have been unable to learn and develop within mainstream education. All pupils demonstrate some degree of emotional, behavioural, communication or learning difficulty. Pupils who board at the school live in small residential care groups in four separate houses within the grounds.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good

Residential pupils make good education, social and emotional progress at the school. Residential pupils experience education and care in line with the ethos of Waldorf Steiner. This provides a holistic approach to care and education provision. As a result, pupils enjoy varied experiences of education and care, in and out of the classroom and in residential time.

The range of activities chosen by the residential pupils is varied and take place both on and off site. This enables pupils to develop their own identity and raise their self-esteem and confidence, for some progress has been substantial. Activities include music, art, cinema trips, football and games evenings. Residential pupils also contribute to organising fund raising events with decisions being made via the school council. One pupil said, 'I love all the activities we do', and another said 'I like having a game of chess with the staff, I usually win'.

In general, parents are happy with the residential provision. Any concerns parents raise are managed by the head of care with lessons learnt taken forward to improve practice and outcomes for pupils. The residential provision offers an inclusive culture regardless of gender, age and background.

The head of care has been influential in making improvements, especially changes required following a previous welfare inspection. There is now a culture of learning from experiences, identifying weaknesses and securing improvement for the residential provision. Leaders and managers understand the pupils' needs and ensure they receive a good residential experience.

The safety of residential pupils is given a high priority. Significant improvements have resulted in robust safeguarding measures being consistently applied. All arrangements relating to safeguarding have improved and are now of a good standard. Staff are aware of the added vulnerabilities due to the pupils' special needs. As a result residential pupils learn how to keep themselves as safe as they can or are supported by an adult who can keep them safe.

The health care arrangements have seen a significant alteration, with two very suitably qualified and experienced nurses reviewing procedures and putting in place new measures to ensure all residential pupils receive a good standard of health care. They are an integral part of the residential staff team, ensuring health needs are met.

The quality of care and support

Good

Residential pupils receive a good quality of care and support. Staff provide a nurturing environment that is calm and relaxed. There has been a significant improvement in the atmosphere of the residential houses with staff feeling very well supported by the head of care and positive about the changes that have taken place. This has in turn had a positive impact on the residential pupils, who respond well to staff and take seriously their guidance whilst enjoying their company.

There is a feel of inclusivity where staff and pupils make decisions together. Transitions are planned and pupils achieve well, with transition to further education placements being made where appropriate. All reviews take place, are well organised and involve the pupils. This ensures pupils can have their say about their future wishes.

Individual targets are set for residential pupils, who place a lot of importance on being successful in meeting and exceeding their targets. Many targets are set by the pupils themselves. These include, not being late, being more patient, hygiene skills, asking appropriate questions and what is inappropriate and appropriate touch. Staff were observed clearly referencing targets in activities and social events, with a good understanding of their purpose.

Routines are promoted supported by good use of pictorial guides if needed. Consistently applied routines allow pupils to confidently undertake daily tasks; for some this may be using a washing machine or helping with meal times.

The residential accommodation is of a good standard. Residential pupils appear comfortable in their surroundings. They can freely personalise their own bedrooms. All pupils have their own bedrooms, with no sharing. Communal rooms are homely and well resourced. Maintenance issues are quickly resolved.

Arrangements for meeting residential pupils health needs are effective. Changes put in place by the head of care and two nurses have resulted in significant improvements. The nurses, who have a wealth of knowledge and experience, provide clear links between the residential, education and external health professionals. Medication practices are safe and closely monitored. Errors are very low in number and robustly managed.

Residential pupils enjoy a healthy and nutritious diet. Menus are discussed weekly and feedback sought from the catering department. The school council also addresses catering. All feedback is taken seriously with changes to menus resulting as required. Alternatives are always available. Meal times are very social events with all residential pupils and staff sitting together to enjoy their meal. Residential pupils are encouraged to keep fit by actively taking part in sport activities such as horse-riding, walking and football.

How well children and young people are protected

Good

There are good systems in place to protect residential pupils and keep them safe.

The head of care has had a significant, positive impact and has led on improvements to safeguarding matters. She provides effective oversight, creating an open and questioning culture. Staff and pupils are confident in her abilities. Positive feedback about her contact with safeguarding agencies was received from the assistant LADO. She ensures all concerns and allegations are robustly managed. She has forged strong relationships and transparent links with external safeguarding agencies. In addition, she has enhanced staff's understanding of safeguarding issues to good effect. Training has been provided which staff say was of a very good standard and an improvement on previous sessions. Training includes child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. Clear and well organised records are kept of referrals and investigations. The school's safeguarding and child protection policy is currently being reviewed by the LADO; this shows the commitment the school has in working with external agencies to safeguard pupils and to drive up standards. All records are well organised and stored securely.

Residential pupils are confident that any concerns they raise will be taken seriously and will result in actions being taken. The head of care has shown by example that she will always listen to pupils and no matter how long ago an incident occurred, will ensure its correct management. As a result pupils have increased trust in staff. Each residential pupil has identified a member of staff they feel they can talk to, in addition to external adults such as the independent visitor and

helplines.

Behaviours such as bullying are low in number. Data analysis is available to identify a range of bullying types; in practice all incidents are quickly and robustly addressed. There is not a culture of bullying at the school. Behaviours can be challenging, however, staff will try to diffuse or de-escalate rather than applying a physical intervention. Physical interventions are very low in number. Those that are carried out are recorded, monitored and reviewed by the head of care. Staff are trained to carry out interventions with two staff members being trainers in their chosen method of physical intervention. He is more active in reviewing records of interventions. There is a clear focus on trying to avoid sanctions where necessary. Records and data analysis show no inappropriate sanctions given. Staff are well informed of sanctions that can and cannot be given.

Risk assessments are clear and offer protection for residential pupils and staff. Risk assessments for activities, the building and grounds are in place and regularly reviewed. Health and safety checks are carried out routinely. Areas that were of concern have been addressed to lessen the risk. During the inspection a hot water pipe and radiator was deemed to be very hot. Regular checks need to take place to ensure all pipes and radiators are of a safe temperature. The arrangements for the management of fire safety is sound. Fire risk assessments have been completed and residential pupils have participated in fire evacuation drills. This ensures they know what action to take if a fire occurred.

All staff are vetted to ensure they are safe to work with pupils. Vetting procedures cover co-workers from European countries who stay for a year only. The systems for recruiting and vetting staff are clear and consistently applied.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Requires improvement

In general the management of the residential provision is good.

The overall positive impact and effectiveness of the head of care is clear to see across many areas, however there are still areas where the planned improvements have yet to be introduced. These have no direct impact on safeguarding or the welfare of the residential pupils. The head of care has been in post since September 2015. She has over 25 years' experience of residential care and is a qualified social worker. Therefore, she is suitably trained and experienced to continue raising standards.

Since her appointment in September 2015, she has focused on addressing the immediate weaknesses highlighted in a previous inspection to ensure the safety of the pupils. She has a clear action plan that she is not only meeting but exceeding in some areas. In addition, she has a clear focus on what needs to be improved and embedded over the next few months. This includes areas such as; improving quality of staff supervision, reviewing and implementing a new appraisal system, reviewing job descriptions and contracts and ensuring there is consistency in understanding by co-workers of lone working arrangements.

The culture of the residential provision is characterised by the aspirations staff have for the pupils. The head of care leads on this and in turn expects high standards of care practice from her staff team. She gives clear leadership messages and provides effective management.

The ethos of the school, based on Waldorf Steiner principles, is demonstrated in practice and effectively communicated to staff. They deliver the aims set out in the schools mission statement. Relevant information can be seen on the school's website, however some policies still refer to the previous head of care. The new head of care needs to be named in all documents, including those on the web site.

Staffing levels are good and meet the individual needs of residential pupils. Supervision is non-intrusive wherever possible, with staff keeping a close eye from a distance. Some pupils require one to one staffing; they are more closely supervised. Each house has a house parent and deputy house parent, providing a stable team of staff. They are supported by co-workers who work at the school for a year. Staff, including co-workers, are given a job description and a range of policies relating to their role. Not all co-workers are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities, particularly lone working arrangements.

Monitoring of the residential provision has improved since the last inspection. However, it requires further external scrutiny. The independent visitor provides a good standard of scrutiny and reports about the residential provision in relation to the national minimum standards for residential special schools. He communicates well with the head of care and has a clear expectation for taking these visits forward over the next two terms. Areas that would benefit from further external scrutiny are the management of safeguarding and complaints.

There is a complaints procedure in place for residential pupils, parents and external professionals. Complaints are recorded and investigated with comprehensive responses given to the complainant. The school learns from complaints and incidents. Leaders and managers make improvements in response to external and internal investigations. Proper investigations are in evidence with good liaison with external agencies. The school is not shy to take robust internal action if needed.

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

Social care unique reference number SC372592

DfE registration number

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 32

Gender of boarders Mixed

Age range of boarders 7 to19

Headteacher

Date of previous boarding inspection 24/03/2015

Telephone number 01342 810268

Email address

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