

Loxley Hall

Loxley Hall School, Loxley, UTTOXETER, Staffordshire, ST14 8RS

Inspection dates

26/01/2016 to 28/01/2016

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Outstanding **1**

The quality of care and support

Outstanding 1

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding 1

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Outstanding 1

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is outstanding because

- The overall effectiveness of the residential provision is outstanding. Young people make sustained progress and grow in confidence and independence as a result of staying for residential periods at the school.
- Staff are highly committed, motivated and skilled in meeting the needs of young people in their care.
- Young people experience an exceptionally good quality of life during their residential stays. They enjoy a fantastic range of activities and events whilst staying at the school.
- Staff ensure that all young people are fully involved in the daily life of the school irrespective of their strengths and vulnerabilities.
- The residential environment is extremely warm, welcoming and homely and offers young people an inclusive and rewarding experience and one where they extend their skills and abilities and have fun.
- The views of young people, their families and professionals are uniformly excellent.
- Young people's health and safety is of paramount importance. This includes ensuring they experience a safe, positive and supportive environment. Thorough and rigorous scrutiny of all aspects of the internal and external environments means that risks are assessed and minimised.
- The commitment of leaders, managers and governors at the school means that young people experience the best quality care. Leaders and managers have very high aspirations for all young people and this ethos emanates through the school.
- Communication between all staff across the school and with young people's

families, and professionals is excellent.

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 staff in day to day contact with children includes staff of both genders wherever possible.
- Ensure debriefs with children following a physical intervention are consistently recorded.

Information about this inspection

The residential provision was inspected following notification to the school on the first day. A range of activities took place. These included young people's views and opinions, meetings with various staff members, discussions with the school's senior management team, the chair of governors and parents and carers. Care files, policies, menus, policies and procedures, staffing files and health and safety documents were reviewed.

Inspection team

Julia Wright

Lead social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

Loxley Hall is an Academy school, part of Manor Hall Academy Trust. The school offers day and residential places to boys with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties aged 11 to 16 years. There are 92 pupils on roll, 33 of whom access the residential provision for overnight stays. The school is situated in a rural setting, a few miles outside the town of Uttoxeter. The main building is a large, two storey country house where classrooms, offices, a main kitchen and a dining hall are situated. There are two residential houses on the school site which can provide overnight stays for up to ten boys at any one time. The residential provision was last inspected in December 2014.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Outstanding

Outcomes for young people are outstanding. The excellent quality of care and the overall experience of staying in the residential provision has an extremely significant and positive impact on young people's lives.

Residential staff have very high aspirations for young people in their care. Research based practice means that staff collectively analyse and track young people's progress, targeting areas where they would benefit from additional support. Staff practice is further enhanced through analysis of national studies into the lives of young people living in residential schools. For example, strengthening the voices of young people in the residential provision. This research based approach, and rigorous review of internal practice, makes an outstanding difference to the lives of young people staying at the school.

Excellent liaison with families means that strategies and support can continue to be implemented at home. A parent commented, 'Staff have helped him grow up. If they try things at residential, we try it at home, it keeps up the momentum'. A young person commented, 'I learn to think about how I react to things'.

Young people have a thorough induction to the residential provision ensuring the safety and welfare of all. One focus of residential life is on developing friendships with peers and this was commented upon very positively by young people's families, 'Residential addresses my son's isolation, it has made such a difference'.

The enjoyment and achievement of young people is a key strength of residential life. They make significant progress in developing social and life skills, self-confidence, and behaviour regulation. They enjoy a relaxed, calm environment within the houses. They learn to self-regulate their behaviour, and develop social skills with the support of staff and peers, thus developing an understanding of citizenship and their place in wider society. Young people enjoy regular activities on site and in the local community enhancing their quality of life.

Young people lead safe and healthy lives. They develop an excellent understanding of health and safety issues because the school integrates health and well-being into the residential and school environments. The inclusive, whole school, 24 hour approach results in a seamless service which underpins each young people's progress overall. Residential staff work in partnership with parents and carers who retain primary responsibility for their child's health.

Young people's independence is maximised. Staff tailor support and guidance depending upon individual's needs and abilities. Young people are encouraged to become more independent and to develop their skills according to their own needs, abilities and potential.

Young people receive exceptionally high quality care from staff. One said, 'Residential is awesome. There is nothing I would change about it. Everything is perfect'. Another said, 'I love coming here. We have a brilliant time'.

Young people are carefully prepared for staying in the residential houses to ensure that they are comfortable and able to gain the most from their stays. Staff are vigilant for any sign of distress and ensure that young people receive support and attention at all times making their stays as successful as they can be. Young people know that they can contact external professionals or their families if they need help and this reinforces their sense of safety and well-being.

Staff know each of the young people extremely well meaning that they recognise behavioural or emotional changes which indicate the need for additional support. Staff work immensely effectively together so that young people flourish in their care. Professionals remarked very favourably about the difference the residential experience makes, 'Young people gain a sense of belonging with the opportunity to develop social skills and expand their experiences in a safe way'.

Taking into account their starting points, young people make remarkable progress as a result of their residential experience. Parents say, 'It is absolutely fantastic. It has made an enormous difference. It is the first time he has made friends, he loves going there'. Another said, 'He has really built up his confidence. He has made friends and developed life skills. There was a time he would not join in with things but now he does.' Families welcome the contact they have with residential staff, 'They contact me every time to let me know how it has gone. They always tell me good things too, as well as if there have been difficulties. I appreciate that'.

Placement plans reflect the voice and contribution of each young person. They are individually tailored to meet individual needs and staff work closely with young people to record their views, likes and dislikes ensuring their involvement in planning their care. Plans include all essential information necessary to meet their global needs. Plans are rigorously audited so that any changes are incorporated and plans updated ensuring young people are fully supported effectively.

Meticulous attention is paid to the safe storage and administration of medication meaning that young people's health is managed in accordance with health professionals instructions. A clear, centralised system means that medication is concisely administered in accordance with medical directions. This is a top priority for all staff and ensures the well-being of young people.

Young people are treated with the utmost dignity and respect and they are confident in sharing their views, wishes and opinions. Young people complete a wish list if they have suggestions and ideas about how their service can be improved. Their self-esteem is enhanced as they know that that staff listen to them and value their contributions in the running of the home. The accommodation is maintained to an exceptionally high standard and young people make maximum use of all the facilities. Mealtimes are social,

lively occasions where young people receive nourishing, home cooked food which they thoroughly enjoy.

Young people choose from a fantastic and varied range of activities which enhance their residential experience and contribute to their emotional, physical and social development. These include ice skating, swimming, cinema and bike riding. Young people say, 'there is always something to do, I am never bored'. Where young people suggest activities, staff involve them in making enquiries. For example, young people telephoned an organisation to gain more information, enhancing their social skills and general understanding about safety for all.

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding

The safety of young people is outstanding. The safety and welfare of young people is at the heart of whole school practice. Young people say that they feel safe and that one of the main reasons for this is that they know and trust staff.

Young people are protected and helped to keep themselves safe from all forms of discrimination including bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism, extremism, including radicalisation, and other forms of discrimination. A whole school approach of education and training for young people and staff means that young people are informed and their knowledge enhanced about these issues. They learn about the impact these forms of discrimination have on others and the importance of seeking help from adults. All staff are watchful to possible safeguarding issues and take swift and appropriate action to safeguard young people. This is underpinned by policies and procedures which are accessible and regularly revised and reviewed ensuring all staff are alert to any potential risks and dangers.

Excellent practice in safeguarding and child protection makes the school stand out from others and is worthy of wider dissemination. Whole school safeguarding training, team discussions, supervision, and exceptional communication across school and with other professionals and families results in an ethos of safeguarding which is firmly embedded in practice. All members of staff and governors are trained in safeguarding at a level reflecting their role and responsibilities within school. Training and guidance on safer recruitment practice means that only suitably vetted people work with young people. Young people are also protected as staff understand the dangers presented by social media and social technology. They are highly vigilant and ensure young people's safety at all times.

Young people know how to make a complaint if necessary. Their very positive relationships with residential staff highlights that they are comfortable and feel secure in their accommodation. Young people say that they would speak to staff, their family or other professionals if they have any worries or concerns and this knowledge of who to contact reinforces young people's safety and well-being. Staff have a proactive and thorough approach to preventing bullying and are highly vigilant in monitoring any changes in presentation or behaviour. Young people complete an anti-bullying questionnaire regularly to improve their understanding of the many forms bullying takes.

This educative process highlights the support and action that will be taken if an incident is observed or reported.

Comprehensive risk assessments are in place which effectively protect young people in the school and community. These address individual young people's needs and vulnerabilities as well as environmental risks or those associated with specific activities. Risk assessments are examined both internally and externally resulting in an exceptional level of scrutiny which promotes young people's safety at all times.

There have not been any instances of young people going missing from the care of the school or having unauthorised absences since the last inspection. Residential staff are fully familiar with the necessary policies and procedures if this situation arose reinforcing young people's safety.

Residential staff are highly skilled and trained in deploying techniques such as de-escalation and redirection to assist young people to modify their behaviour. By utilising these skills, physical intervention is always a last resort. Physical intervention logs are completed thoroughly, although the debriefing with the young person is not always recorded after the event.

Young people understand the boundaries in place within the whole school and this helps them to modify their behaviour. Residential staff utilise various incentives to help young people demonstrate positive behaviour. For example, many young people look forward to an end of school summer camping trip, and they are all aware that this is dependent on positive behaviour, which provides a very positive incentive for them all.

Efficient and rigorous systems are in place to ensure young people's well-being through regular checks of all risks within the residential provision. This includes routine checks and servicing on areas such as gas, electric and fire safety. Young people regularly participate in fire drills and evacuations ensuring they are familiar with the process in place to protect them.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Outstanding

The management and organisation of the residential provision is outstanding. The leadership team have a depth of knowledge and understanding of young people's needs which makes a significant difference to young people's lives. This includes understanding how care and support within the residential service contributes to changes in young people's ability to manage their behaviour and relationships. Increasing emotional and social maturity enhances young people's abilities and interaction in the whole school environment.

Residential staff are highly motivated and their morale excellent. All staff are offered training and qualifications to strengthen their understanding of pupils needs. Most residential staff have attained a National Vocational Qualification level three, and new staff will undertake this. The deployment of staff is child-centred and means that the needs of each young person is met.

Leaders and managers ensure that all residential staff are clear about their role and responsibilities. All residential staff receive regular supervision assisting them to reflect on their practice, their professional developmental needs and of each young person in their care. The commitment, enthusiasm and motivation of the residential team filters through the whole school. Some residential staff also have roles within school and this overlap brings significant benefits to young people in relation to continuity and consistency in care and learning. The majority of residential staff are male. The senior team has made great efforts to address this imbalance and continues to do so.

Residential staff are led by a highly skilled and effective head of care who leads the residential care team by example. The residential team provide an exceedingly effective, life enhancing service for young people because they work closely with each other as a team and equally effectively across the whole school. These highly effective systems are ingrained in the school day, for example, handover meetings take place with school staff at the end of the school day, and the following day when young people return to the classroom. This allows all staff to have a comprehensive understanding of young people's progress.

Commitment to improvement, rigorous internal and external quality assurance processes means that the leadership team and staff are highly effective in ensuring that the residential provision continues to realise their vision of enhancing the lives of young people. Self-evaluation of the quality of care is a significant strength of the school.

Independent visitors and governors make regular visits to the residential provision. Visits are undertaken at various times and are both announced and unannounced and allow visitors and governors to make a comprehensive assessment of the quality of care in the residential provision. Reports are read by the leadership team and illustrate that visitors speak to young people and staff. Any suggestions to improve the service are swiftly addressed ensuring the residential provision remains an excellent one for young people.

The commitment and motivation of leaders and staff ensures that this service does not stand still, but continues to evolve and develop for the benefit of young people. Developments include improved care plans reflecting young people's input, and using tools to capture young people's progress and underlines the very significant difference the residential experience makes to young people at the school.

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	124509
Social care unique reference number	SC038729
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	33
Gender of boarders	Boys
Age range of boarders	11 to16
Headteacher	Richard Redgate
Date of previous boarding inspection	02/12/2014
Telephone number	01889 256390
Email address	office@loxleyhall.staffs.sch.uk

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