

Harbour House

The Harbour School, Tipner Lane, PORTSMOUTH, PO2 8RA

Inspection dates	09/02/2016 to 11/02/2016	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good	2
The quality of care and support	Outstanding	1
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

- Young people using the residential provision make outstanding progress during their time at the school. Their social, emotional and educational needs are provided for in a consistent manner. Young people make measurable progress in their independent social and living skills while using the service.
- Young people say they feel safe in the residential area and are confident in approaching staff with any worries or concerns. The residential provision is invaluable as for some it is the only time they feel truly safe and are able to relax and be themselves.
- The quality of care is excellent with young people clearly benefiting socially and educationally from the residential experience. Care staff support individuals to complete homework and extra study to promote the best possible educational outcomes. They further ensure young people are emotionally ready to start the school day.
- Assessment and transitional arrangements for young people accessing the residential provisions prior to placement are meticulous and centred around the young people's needs. They have the opportunity for dinner visits before staying overnight and also have a small budget to personalise their bedroom. Staff are key in supporting the transitions and provide a welcoming atmosphere to ease anxiety and worries. Excellent joint working with the family liaison team further enable smooth transitions.
- The leadership and management of the residential provision are excellent. Young people are cared for by an enthusiastic team, who are eager to continually improve practice. Staff are well supported by senior staff and have access to varied training opportunities. Joint working across the school ensures all young people have access to the best possible care and life experiences.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the national minimum standards for residential special schools

- 2.2 The school identifies at least one person other than a parent, outside the staff, and those responsible for the leadership and governance of the school who children may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school. This person may be known as the 'independent person'. Children are informed who this person is, and how to contact them and they are easily accessible. Children are also provided with one or more appropriate helpline(s) or outside contact numbers, including the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England, to ring in case of problems or distress.
- 20.1 The governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for carrying on the school arrange for one of their number, or a representative who is independent of the management of the school, to visit the school six times, spread evenly, over the course of a school year and complete a written report on the conduct of the school. Where the school has an individual proprietor, that person may carry out such visits personally if they are not also the head teacher (or school equivalent).
- 20.4 The head teacher (or school equivalent), governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for carrying on the school carries out, and records in writing, once each year: a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for boarding pupils, in relation to: its Statement of Purpose; its staffing policy; the placement plans for individual children; and an internal assessment of its compliance with these standards. Where appropriate such a report may be incorporated within a review of the whole school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Document the life skills young people learn while using the residential provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspection was announced, by telephone, to the headteacher of school on the morning of the first day. An initial meeting was held with the head of care. The inspector held discussions with residential care staff, the head of school, a home liaison worker, the site manager, the safeguarding lead, the safeguarding governor and the head of governors and the recruitment lead. The inspector observed, and when appropriate took part in activities with young people in addition to having individual discussions with them. The inspector held telephone discussions with the Local Authority Designated Officer, social worker and parents. A range of documents and records were also examined during the inspection.

Inspection team

Jennie Christopher

Lead social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

The Harbour School is a special school that became fully operational in September 2007. Harbour House is the school's residential facility which can accommodate up to 8 pupils in single rooms. Harbour House aims to provide a safe and stimulating environment that will support young people in their educational, personal and social development. While most of Harbour House residents attend the Harbour School, placements can be referred from any Portsmouth school. The residential facility consists of a self-contained unit attached to the school. Staff and young people at Harbour House can access many of the school's facilities. Harbour House operates on a Monday to Friday basis, with young people returning home each weekend. Young people are cared for by a dedicated team of residential staff. The school is located in a quiet coastal location on the outskirts of Portsmouth.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good

Young people make good academic and personal progress as a result of nurturing and individualised care and support. Both young people and their parents are extremely positive about their experiences of the service, which is an invaluable resource to those who access it. Staff form positive relationships with young people who describe them 'as much better than alright!' adding 'they help me'. Relationships within the group accessing the service are often warm and empathic. They were observed encouraging an individual with a limited diet to try new foods and did not ridicule him when he struggled with this.

Individual progress is recognised through termly reviews of targets and plans. Individual care and support plans identify what success would look like for each young person and note when a target has been reached. Joint working across the school, and links with the family liaison team, ensures plans and approaches are consistent. As a result, young people have made progress in many areas including improved sleep patterns and therefore being ready for learning and a reduction in aggressive incidents. Parents commented they could see the progress their child had made, such as having more patience with their siblings, increased confidence and that they now have friends for the first time.

The safety of young people is an extremely high priority. The residential provision goes beyond what is expected, including thorough investigations and review of practice, even when safeguarding professionals have identified no further action is required. Young people say they feel safe and their demeanour demonstrates they are comfortable with staff and can approach them with any worries or concerns.

Young people enjoy a range of activities both on site and in the community. They say they are happy with what is on offer and always have a choice. Daily and weekly meetings enable young people to share their views on the menu and activities for the coming week, and to comment on their day and how they have managed at school. Young people feel part of the service and planning with one being particularly vocal about his understanding of budgets and using this to work out how lobster should become part of the menu. This is used as a learning opportunity to develop skills in budgeting and sourcing quality but good value food. The excellent work in this area is not recorded though. Young people know the complaints procedure, which is displayed in the residential provision. There have been no complaints since the last inspection, with issues managed at the time through discussion and reasoning.

The service is well run and meets the needs of the young people accessing it to a high standard. Staff are young-person focused and are keen to meet individual need and provide them with their undivided attention. Staff say they are well trained and feel supported through regular supervision and team meetings. As the team is small any concerns are easily raised and remedied. The management within the residential provision is robust. The head of care has an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within the provision. However, there have been no monitoring visits by the governors or independent person since May 2015. Additionally, the senior leaders' evaluation of the residential provision is weak and focuses on the last inspection rather than a full review of the service against the National Minimum Standards. This would have identified that monitoring was insufficient and that young people do not have access to an independent person.

Young people benefit from excellent care and support while accessing the residential provision. Staff have a key understanding of each young person's support requirements and are thoughtful in their approach to meeting their needs. Young people's thoughts and ideas are taken into consideration and acted upon to ensure they enjoy their time and benefit from the service provided. Young people have access to staff at all times during their stay, and know they can also contact their family at any time. Those who are new to the service benefit from an individualised induction, including tea visits and phased overnight stays. Staff pay particular attention to nuances in behaviour at this time, to ensure they are as calm and settled as possible while they are becoming used to their new surroundings. Bedrooms can be personalised, and a small budget is made available for posters, cushions or throws for example. Those who are moving on from the service are prepared as best as possible for their next step. Where a placement unexpectedly ends, staff ensure they have the opportunity to meet the young person to provide a positive ending.

In-house care plans keep young people central to practice and are developed with their ideas and input. Plans are clear and identify what success would be for each young person and document how and when this has been achieved. They are reflective of the individual's education, health and care plan (EHCP) and are regularly reviewed. Young people meet with their key workers regularly to review their progress and their ideas are included in setting the next targets. As a result, young people recognise how much they have progressed, increasing their commitment to developing their skills further.

The residential area is homely, despite its institutional setting. All young people and staff have a pop-art-style photograph of themselves displayed on the wall, and young people said this made them feel like they 'belong'. There are several areas for group and individual activities, such as art and crafts, building blocks, computer games and music. A young person commented how she particularly liked the 'pet's corner' where staff and young people have made a display of photographs of their pets. Each young person has their own bedroom, which they personalise. Young people say their belongings are safe and their demeanour suggests they are conformable and relaxed while using the service.

Young people are treated with dignity and respect at all times. Approaches to behaviour management are clear and each young person knows what is expected of them. Staff seemingly take an 'easy going' approach to incidents of swearing for example. Responses demonstrate to young people it is not acceptable and staff do not inflame this infraction into a larger incident. Those with challenging ideas or views are supported sensitively to consider their beliefs and are guided to understand how those views are not socially acceptable. Observations showed negative connotations regarding sexuality and socio-economic status were responded to with great skill, allowing the individual to think about their comments without belittling them.

Staff form strong links with other professionals within the school and local authority to ensure consistency in approach to care. Staff liaise with education staff at the start and end of the school day to share how an individual's behaviour and well-being has been. They also take the opportunity to confirm homework and any extra study required that evening for upcoming GCSE exams. A particularly beneficial link is with the home liaison worker within the school who supports parents to implement the plans set up in the residential provision, at home. This provides an excellent link for staff, but also benefits young people to continue to thrive and develop their skills learned while accessing the provision. The head of care and staff maintain good links with social workers, when allocated, to ensure they are up to date on current plans for the individual and link with any planned changes or concerns at home. When they feel a professional is not including them in plans, they challenge this through appropriate channels, such as the professional's line manager. While no young people are currently accessing

therapeutic or emotional well-being services, links are maintained to enable quick referral should this be required. Additionally, no young people are currently taking prescribed medication. Robust processes are in place though, should this change.

How well children and young people are protected

Good

Young people say they feel safe in the residential provision and identify staff they would go to if they were worried or concerned. Their actions and relaxed demeanour confirms they are comfortable in the environment and they were observed confidently approaching staff and asking questions. Young people do not identify bullying as a concern, and any incidents of name calling or expressing inappropriate views are challenged sensitively, but robustly. The school does not though provide a person independent of the school for young people to contact should they feel they cannot approach staff with any issues.

Staff are confident in processes to follow should they be concerned for a young person's welfare or well-being. They have an excellent understanding of individual need and vulnerabilities and do all they can to protect young people socially and emotionally while they are in their care. Any safeguarding or child protection concerns are reported promptly to designated staff within the school and to the local authority. All incidents are investigated thoroughly, including when a social worker has suggested no further external action is needed. Staff are keen to provide a safe and nurturing environment and take all opportunities to review their practice.

School governors regularly review safeguarding practice within the school and policies and procedures are updated in line with local and national directives. Staff benefit from regular training refreshers in safeguarding and have also completed courses in identifying exploitation, radicalisation and female genital mutilation. Staff feel this training has been particularly beneficial as the school provides a service for a diverse group, in an area identified as being at particular risk of radicalisation.

Young people rarely are missing from the residential provision. Responses to the one incident since the last inspection were robust, with staff searching for the young person, and promptly informing their parents and police. The young person was supported on return to ensure he was safe, and also to determine why he had been missing and what could be done to prevent this in the future. There is currently no known substance misuse or self-injurious behaviour within the group. Staff know who to contact should this become a concern and they continually monitor young people for any changes in mood.

Young people have access to the internet via the school server, which filters inappropriate content and monitors use. Since the last inspection, young people are now allowed to use their mobile phones and devices with unrestricted connectivity to the internet. In order to do this they have to demonstrate they are safe on line, and complete individual workshops and quizzes with staff to show they know how to be safe on line and while using social media.

There is little use of restraint within the residential provision. There is a focus on redirection and de-escalation. Positive behaviour management plans are clear in how to respond to young people if they are distressed or upset. Young people are provided with the opportunity to explore their emotions in a safe and nurturing environment. Sanctions are fair and proportionate, mostly using time out or loss of activities for a limited period of time. Again young people are encouraged to reflect on their actions and how they can better respond in the future.

Risk assessments are reflective of behaviour and current need and allow young people the opportunity to take age-appropriate risk. Regular maintenance and tests and checks within the environment ensure young people are protected from avoidable hazards. Young people are

further protected from avoidable risk through safe recruitment practice, ensuring all staff undergo a range of checks before being able to work with young people.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Requires improvement

The residential provision is well managed by a committed head of care with support from a confident and enthusiastic small staff team. Staff have extremely high expectations for the young people they care for and are continually seeking to improve the service and the progress and outcomes for young people. They encourage young people with their homework, but also boost their confidence and how they view themselves. They have a good understanding of the aims and ethos of the provision as described in the Statement of Purpose, and understand their role in meeting this. There is a nurturing and caring culture within the service, which is evident throughout all the work they do.

While the staff team is small, it is able to meet the needs of young people to a very high standard. Staff are deployed to ensure young people's experience of accessing the service is beneficial to their educational and emotional progress. Staff feel they are well trained to meet the needs of the young people. They say they are well supported and are confident in approaching the head of care with any ideas they have. They feel listened to and recognise they provide an important service within the school in providing preventive support to young people and their families.

Staff work collaboratively with other teams within the school to ensure positive experiences and consistency in approach for all young people. They also form strong links with social workers to ensure needs are met. Staff, during the inspection, supported a young person while their social worker gave them potentially difficult news and as a result the individual was able to ask questions later in the evening which they had not thought to ask the social worker at the time. While no young people currently access specialist services such as child and adolescent mental health or youth offending teams, staff maintain links with them should young people's needs change in the future.

Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated in line with changes in law, directives and guidance. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's care through regular updates and the residential provisions open access policy, where parents can call at any time. When asked, parents all commented positively about the service and their child's experience and feel they can contact the head of care or staff whenever they need to. They are involved in care and behaviour plans and consulted on changes within the service, such as allowing the use of mobile phones.

Monitoring within the service is not robust. While young people's plans and progress is clearly evaluated and monitored, senior leaders have not evaluated the effectiveness of the service thoroughly and visits by the governors or an independent person have not taken place since May 2015. Leaders recognise this as an issue. The head of care has produced a sound development plan for the service, which is time limited. However a full evaluation of the provision has not taken place, resulting in leaders and manager's failure to identify three unmet NMS.

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	135308
Social care unique reference number	SC012026
DfE registration number	851/7472

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	4
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	5 to19
Headteacher	Krishna Purbhoo
Date of previous boarding inspection	04/02/2015
Telephone number	023 9266 5664
Email address	Krishna.Purbhoo@thsportsmouth.org

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