

Cicely Haughton

Cicely Haughton Special School, The Manor Hall Academy Trust, Westwood Manor, Wetley Rocks, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST9 0BX

Inspection dates

01/03/2016 to 03/03/2016

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

- Children look forward to and thoroughly enjoy their experience of residential life at the school.
- Children, parents and professionals unanimously praise the care children receive in the residential provision and highlight the difference it makes to their child's learning and progress overall.
- Children have strong and mutually respectful relationships with staff caring for them. Staff have children's safety and welfare at the forefront of their everyday practice.
- Children develop essential personal and social skills assisting their development throughout their time at school. Children achieve targets supported by staff, parents and carers.
- Children's voices are at the centre of residential practice. Children's views and wishes are captured, and the residential service responds and changes to take account of their opinions.
- Safeguarding is outstanding. An ingrained safeguarding ethos throughout school promotes each residential pupil's safety and welfare. Excellent communication between residential and school staff, with children and their parents, and with professionals, means that partnership working strengthens and reinforces safeguarding practice.
- The school and residential provision work exceptionally well together. They offer an integrated and seamless service to children and their families.

- A dedicated, nurturing team of residential staff have the knowledge, and skills to deliver an exceptionally high quality of care to children.
- The cohesion and drive of the senior team is a strength of the school. They have a strong determination to continue to develop the service and raise the standard of care to all children in the residential provision.
- Robust monitoring by managers and independent visitors ensures the residential service continues to provide an excellent service to all children.

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

This welfare only inspection was completed by one social care inspector, following a three hour notice period given to school. A tour of the residential provision was undertaken. Two afternoons and evenings were spent with children and staff in the residential units. Two early evening meals and one breakfast were spent with the children. Several children were spoken to during the inspection. A range of records and other documentation was examined relating to the care provided. Discussions were held with a number of members of staff, Chair of Governors, members of senior staff, parents and carers.

Inspection team

Julia Wright

Lead social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

Cicely Haughton is an Academy school offering day and residential places to girls and boys aged five to 11 years. There are 50 pupils on roll, of whom 31 currently use the school's residential provision. The residential provision was last inspected in May 2014.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Outstanding

Children achieve outstanding outcomes in all areas of their development. They thrive socially, physically, emotionally and academically as a result of their residential experiences at the school. Children form excellent relationships with staff caring for them and they quickly settle and enjoy residential life. Staff recognise and value children's uniqueness and diversity. Children benefit as staff and parents work together to promote valuable and enhancing life experiences for children.

Managers and staff have high ambitions for children in their care. Staff are well trained and strive to provide excellent care for all children. Research based practice includes raising the voice of children in their planning and in the running of the residential provision. It includes targeting and reviewing children's progress and identifying areas where they will benefit from additional support. Staff attended a conference promoting the mental health of children in residential care, leading to a greater understanding of those needs. A commitment to developing the provision through research based practice and meticulous monitoring and evaluation systems, means that children continue to receive an exceptional service.

Children quickly settle into life in the residential units and do not stay overnight until they are ready to do so. Children are warmly welcomed and are sensitively supported to overcome any practical or emotional difficulty meaning they can focus on enjoying their stay and getting the most out of it. Staff work with each child to identify achievable targets to develop skills and abilities, for example, with life and social skills. These are regularly reviewed and children comment, 'I have learnt to make friends quicker'. Another said, 'I have learnt to look after my own things'. Children try new things and achieve in areas previously rejected as too difficult. A parent said, 'He has come out of his shell and come on leaps and bounds. He enjoys seeing his friends, and has learnt a lot about personal care'.

Children make exceptional progress in developing social skills and self-confidence. The whole school is a welcoming and inclusive environment where participation and engagement is encouraged and applauded. Children make friends and look forward to spending time with their friends. Children have responsibilities including helping with communal meals. Children learn from peers and adults about social responsibility, kindness and politeness. Meals are fun, social occasions where children and adults sit and enjoy their meal together.

Children achieve educational and personal outcomes. They are familiar with the residential routine which includes the completion of homework after school. Their educational experiences are maximised as children have the facilities to study effectively and staff help them complete their work prior to evening activities.

Children enjoy healthy lifestyles including a healthy range of meals. The promotion of health and wellbeing is successfully integrated into residential and educational life. For example, a community health project taught children and staff about good dental care,

and children said that they learnt a lot and had great fun doing so. Staff receive training relevant to children's needs, including asthma and epilepsy care. Health plans clearly describe protocols and practice ensuring all children's health needs are confidently and successfully met.

Children's independence skills and transition to secondary school is maximised by forward thinking transition work ensuring children moving to an associated school have a smooth and trouble free transition to the residential provision. Children are prepared for their move and feel confident and primed with relevant information.

The quality of care and support

Outstanding

Children receive exceptional care from staff who understand their individual needs. Where children are new to the residential provision, admission and induction practice is extremely well planned and organised. Consequently, children are well prepared for their initial stays. Visits and extended evening visits mean that children meet and develop relationships with staff caring for them. They become familiar with the residential routines and develop confidence prior to staying overnight. Staff work in close partnership with parents and carers and children have all support necessary to make their stays successful and rewarding. Children say, 'I love coming to residential. I wish I could come every day!' Parents say, 'I know my child is well cared for and safe there. Staff always contact me if there are any difficulties and we sort it out'.

Strong leadership across school provides excellent guidance and support for all staff and means that outstanding practice is shaped and reinforced on a day to day basis. School routines and approach supports each child to develop personally, socially and academically. Children say they learn new skills, 'I can wash my hair and bath myself'. 'I have done cooking and baking'. Others talked about friends. 'I like seeing my friend. We have fun and laugh'. Parents value the social opportunities for their children, 'It is the only time he has a sleep over, he has no friends locally'. Another said, 'His confidence has really grown, he feels like everyone else now. He has friends'.

Staff ensure they have all the information they need to care for each child. Staff work closely and effectively with parents and carers to fully understand children's health needs, including dietary needs, and medication. Staff support children with advice and guidance on healthy eating and children develop an increased understanding about their own health needs and learn how to take responsibility for themselves as they get older. A safe and robust medication system ensures that medication is stored and administered securely, ensuring children's safety.

Children's views, wishes and feelings are at the centre of everyday practice and a great strength of this service. A central ethos of residential life is the involvement of children in their care and in the running of the residential units. Residential forums are held where children tell staff their preferences about menus and activities and raise any other issue they want to. One child said, 'I asked to move beds, and I have!' Where children suggest new meals they would like to try, staff liaise with kitchen staff, and these meals are incorporated into menus available for that child. Activities are tailored to meet children's preferences. Residential practice is flexible and highly responsive to children's wishes. Children grow in self-confidence and self-esteem as they know their views and opinions

are valued.

Children are central in devising their placement plans. Placement plans reflect children's likes and dislikes, their routines and individual targets. They are involved in setting achievable targets in areas to develop during their residential stay. Children review their placement plans with staff support, and tell staff when they think they have met targets or when targets can be changed. As a result, children are fully involved in monitoring their development and progress whilst in residence and recognise their achievements.

The 24 hour curriculum provides strong links between school and residential staff. Meticulous communication and joint working means that children have continuity of care, stability and support as they move from school to residence. Children enjoy a fantastic range of enjoyable, creative and stimulating activities both in school and in the wider community. Children develop self-esteem and confidence as they try new activities. Parents say, 'It is great, as he has the chance to do things he cannot do at home'.

Children stay in very homely, well decorated and personalised accommodation. Large photographs of previous and current children adorn the walls. Children confirmed they decorate their personal space with items from home or favoured toys in residence. The accommodation continues to be upgraded and refreshed periodically ensuring children receive the best quality care.

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding

The arrangements for ensuring children's safety are outstanding. Highly effective senior leadership consistently promotes an environment where the safety and welfare of each and every child is of paramount importance. Approaches to safeguarding children are extremely robust, and highly effective communication between all staff and whole school knowledge and understanding of child protection and safeguarding procedures ensures that effective action is taken where necessary.

Monitoring of incidents, including those referred to other agencies, means that school challenges the actions of others in order to ensure agency duties are fulfilled. Safeguarding records are detailed and thorough and demonstrate the diligence with which staff follow up any concerns. Clear lines of responsibility are in place and all staff are confident in recognising and acting upon concerns.

Discriminatory behaviour is strongly challenged through education and role modelling. Children develop an understanding of how to treat each other with respect learning important citizenship skills.

Clear and robust arrangements are in place to respond to children who may go missing. No children have gone missing since the last inspection. Children are well protected as effective staff ratios, well trained staff and positive relationships with staff means that their safety is vigorously promoted.

The recruitment of residential staff is robust. Staff are subject to appropriate vetting checks prior to starting work at the school. Visitors and contractors are checked and supervised and safeguarding information is available to all visitors advising them about

their conduct during their visit to school. These measures mean that children are protected from those who may harm them.

Behaviour management is exceptional. Staff consistently encourage and reinforce positive behaviour. A cornerstone of excellent practice is the positive and nurturing relationships children enjoy with staff. Staff recognise the triggers where behaviour becomes heightened. Physical interventions are minimised as diversionary tactics and de-escalation techniques are employed which generally avoid an escalation of behaviour. Consequently, children enjoy a calm, welcoming atmosphere where they can relax and enjoy their stay.

Children say they can talk to adults both in residence and in school if they are worried. They make use of the telephone in the residential unit if they feel upset or sad and want to speak to their parents. Parents say they are reassured to hear from their children in these circumstances and talk to staff to make sure their children are settled. One said, 'I talk to staff and we get things sorted. It usually settles down'.

A strong whole school approach is taken to ensure health and safety remains a central aspect of children's safety. Detailed risk assessments minimise risks to children on and off site. Health and safety audits, servicing of equipment and fire drills are undertaken regularly. Repairs are speedily addressed to ensure that the environment remains suitable for children's needs. The accommodation, extensive grounds and activities are all well maintained ensuring the safety of all.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Outstanding

A highly effective and dynamic leadership team lead the provision. Senior managers lead a team who are unyielding in their commitment to providing outstanding outcomes for children and promoting the highest levels of health and safety for all.

Staff morale is excellent. Care staff are led by a highly skilled and effective Head of Care. She upholds very high expectations of all staff ensuring children receive outstanding care whilst staying at school. Care staff are well trained and have opportunities to gain qualifications and attend courses and conferences which reinforce and expand their knowledge and skills. Children's needs are very well met by a consistent team whom they know well.

Staff remain very well supported. They have their performance appraised annually and receive regular supervision enabling them to reflect on their practice and their developmental needs. New staff have considerable peer support meaning they strive to develop excellent skills in working with children and understanding their needs. Managers and colleagues provide support and constructive feedback to reinforce excellent practice so that children receive the best quality care.

Independent visitors and a governor representative visit the children and feedback from children is given to managers and staff enabling children's views and wishes to be acted upon. Children are aware of the visitor role, and highlighted the information available to

them of how to contact a visitor. Consequently, children have access to external professionals if they want to discuss any aspect of their life in residence. Children know how to make a complaint if they are unhappy about any aspect of their care and they said that they tell staff straight away and confirmed that 'staff sort it out'. Parents confirmed that managers and staff are highly responsive to any queries.

Staff teams work across the whole school site collaboratively. Meetings are held at each end of the school day between school and residential staff ensuring important information is shared. Children benefit as all adults are aware of any emerging strengths and difficulties. Residential and school staff examine each other's area of practice and ensure consistency across areas such as behaviour management and record keeping. Records are exceptionally clear, detailed and well presented. The Head of Care oversees all records and this ensures that staff have all the necessary information they need about individual children's needs.

Monitoring of residential care is exemplary and managers have an excellent insight into how children are cared for. Managers and staff consistently examine the way they work and strive to develop the service for the benefit of children. Monitoring from governors is robust and provides effective oversight of the quality of provision offered. The development plan is ambitious and achievable and includes joint training with another school in the academy trust, development of the transition service and life skills audit, and extending opportunities for children to receive excellent care which improves and enhances their social, emotional, physical and mental health.

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	124499
Social care unique reference number	SC038731
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	50
Gender of boarders	Boys and girls
Age range of boarders	4 to11
Headteacher	
Date of previous boarding inspection	14/05/2014
Telephone number	01782 550202
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