

Wilds Lodge School

Wilds Lodge School, Stamford Road, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 8QQ

Inspection dates

17/03/2015 to 19/03/2015

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

1

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

1

Quality of residential provision and care

Outstanding

1

Residential pupils' safety

Outstanding

1

Leadership and management of the residential provision

Outstanding

1

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is outstanding because

- Residential students continue to flourish at this school, making significant progress with regards to their education, emotional wellbeing and independence skills. Residential students enjoy their residential experience, particularly making new friends.
- The safety of residential students is at the heart of this school. This is a safe school. Staff know the residential students very well, the risks they are exposed to and how to manage and reduce those risks. However, written risk assessments can be improved. There is currently no impact on residential students but by improving written risks assessments, consistent management approaches will be ensured.
- There is excellent coordination of support across residential, education and therapeutic teams at this school. Residential students make significant progress because pastoral support is strong. The residential service has continued to develop effective assessment, care planning and review systems which ensure residential students experience tailored, individual care that meets their needs. However, written placement plans for residential students often use standardised wording and do not reflect the wealth of knowledge the residential team have about individual students.
- The views and experiences of residential students are at the heart of all residential practice. The voice of residential students is highly valued in the school and students make mature contributions to the delivery of their care and the residential provision.
- The school has a strong, highly qualified and experienced senior leadership team who have effective monitoring systems in place which contribute to their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Recommendations to improve the school from the previous inspection have been robustly addressed and effectively implemented. This is a school that continually strives to improve the service offered to students.

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 inspection was announced on the morning of the start of the inspection. The inspector visited the residential accommodation, spoke to residential students and staff, including key staff with responsibility for the residential provision. The inspector also observed practice in the residential provision and scrutinised school policies and records. The inspector was unable to gather information from Parent View as not enough had been completed to be viewed.

Inspection team

Joanne Vyas	Lead social care inspector
Cathey Moriarty	Social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Wilds Lodge School is an independent residential and day school for boys aged between seven and 18 years with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. It currently provides boarding for 65 boys.

The school is surrounded on all sides by farmland. The accommodation is divided into three areas within the main house and an additional two residential areas which also includes a sports centre and additional outside sports area. The boys are divided into groups according to their age and vulnerability.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure records such as risk assessments and placement plans are individualised to promote further understanding of the day-to-day needs and risks associated with the residential students.
- Ensure written risk assessments include strategies to respond to and manage known risks, for individual residential students.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Outcomes for residential students at this school are outstanding. Residential students say they enjoy residential life at this school. A residential student said he would rate his house as 9 out of 10 as 'there is always room for improvement'. Residential students benefit from strong relationships with staff which means they are happy and relaxed.

Residential students make significant progress with regards to their emotional wellbeing, educational achievement, self-esteem, confidence and independence skills. A parent who responded to a recent school survey said, 'My son has grown from a timid insecure little boy to a young man who can confidently express opinions and has developed a true level of self-esteem.'

Residential students make significant progress with regards to their health and wellbeing. A large proportion of residential students benefit from the in-house therapy team who are highly qualified and experienced. Furthermore, they have access to a qualified nurse throughout the week to give them help and guidance on diet, smoking cessation and other personal health issues.

Residential students are proud of their school and their achievements while residing at the school. A residential student said, 'I love it here. If I could choose anywhere in the world, I would choose here. I used to not want to go into lessons but I will now go in as there is always good support while I'm in there.' Another residential student simply said, 'It's an amazing school.'

Residential students say they have great opportunities to build friendships at this school. They experience good social lives through active leisure pursuits. They go out into the local community and develop their skills through activities such as army cadets and swimming, work experience and in charitable fundraising events. A residential student proudly told the inspectors that he raised £115 for Comic Relief.

The school values the voice of residential students. Their views and feelings are a focus at all house meetings, within personal support meetings, at the school council and their reviews. Residential students feel confident raising concerns or issues with staff and always get a response. Relationships with other students are generally good and they get support from trusted adults when personalities clash or they are unhappy. Residential students learn to appreciate other children's difference and perspective, as well as the impact their own behaviour can have on others. Reciprocal respect and affection are clear in the very positive relationships between residential students and staff.

Older residential students are able to reflect on their progression through the school to the post-16 provision, as they demonstrate growing maturity and confidence. The post-16 provision is based in a town, a short distance from the main school sites, where they learn skills to help them move on to the next stage in their lives in a much more independent environment. They go to college with excellent support from staff, learn how to negotiate public transport and manage a budget.

Quality of residential provision and care

Outstanding

The quality of residential provision and care is outstanding. Staff have consistently high aspirations for students. Residential students benefit from experienced and caring staff who are knowledgeable and highly skilled in delivering individual support. Residential students have strong relationships with staff. A residential student said, 'We have a nice relationship with the staff. It's like one massive family. It feels like a home.'

Induction for residential students into residence is meticulously planned around the individuals' needs and taken at their pace. For example, students may spend time in the accommodation as part of their education, gradually being exposed to other residential students, the routines of the house and meal times. They will, when they are ready, stay overnight which can then be built up to staying the full week. Other students may feel ready to stay overnight straight away without a gradual induction. Some residential students said they feel homesick but staff help with this a lot. For example, they can call home every evening if that's what helps.

Parents feel they can trust staff to look after their children. A parent who responded to a recent school survey said, 'I can honestly say I couldn't trust another school any more than I do Wilds Lodge. I have full faith in staff to acknowledge and act appropriately to any situation that may arise.' This means parents are more likely to support the school with the work they carry out with residential students, therefore enabling students to progress.

Excellent care planning systems reflect the creative thinking in caring for boys with autism, Aspergers syndrome, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder and associated learning and behavioural difficulties. Plans are firmly rooted in educational objectives, and the work of residential staff supports achievements in school. Residential students are active participants in care planning so their targets reflect their individuality and take account of their unique abilities and vulnerabilities. Information is up to date, written in plain English, regularly reviewed and updated. Residential pupils' progress is charted through care plan trackers which help to inform policy and practice. However, written placement plans for residential students often use standardised wording and do not reflect the wealth of knowledge the residential team have about individual students.

Staff provide a cohesive package of education therapy and care for residential students. Residential students benefit from a high quality of provision which ensures the personal, social, emotional wellbeing and academic development of the child is central to all practice. There are effective links between residential, therapy and academic staff ensuring students are provided with a seamless holistic package. Staff also work in partnership with external agencies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residential students.

Medication is managed safely ensuring residential students are given medication as has been prescribed. The management of controlled medication is also good.

The quality of catering for residential students is excellent. Residential students are offered a range of meals that are well presented, whilst being underpinned by healthy eating principles. Residential students are encouraged to try new foods to expand on the range of food they will eat. Meals are also prepared to match dietary requirements. Residential students enjoy meal times as they are an important social experience.

Staff work in partnership with families and carers to ensure better outcomes for residential students. A parent who responded to a recent school survey said, 'My son has made excellent progress at Wilds Lodge and I feel the communication regarding his behaviour and progress within the house group is outstanding.' Staff also visit families in their own home or carry out therapeutic family work within the school to promote consistency, good parenting skills and emotional wellbeing.

The residential accommodation is spread over three sites with five separate units. The accommodation is finished to a high specification and is very comfortable and homely. It is very clean, beautifully decorated and furnished and well maintained. The residential students have lots of communal space. Most bedrooms and bathrooms are shared but residential students report that they have enough privacy and generally get on well with the people they are sharing with. Careful consideration is given to who shares with whom to ensure students remain safe. If

students have any grumbles about who they are sharing with, these are listened to, considered by staff and changes made, where necessary. The grounds are extensive and well managed. Two sites have a variety of farm animals within the grounds which are well cared for and enjoyed by the residential students.

Residential pupils' safety

Outstanding

Residential students safety is at the heart of this school and therefore outstanding. The leadership team and staff ensure that residential students are safe in the school. The health and safety systems within the school are robust. Fire safety is effectively maintained. Residential students know how to evacuate the building when the fire alarm sounds.

The leadership team have robust recruitment systems in place that ensure sound safer recruitment practice. There is also embedded practice across all school sites to check and sign visitors in and out. This ensures unsuitable adults do not have access to vulnerable students.

House meetings enable students to start and end their school day in a calm manner. During these meetings students have time and space to reflect on their achievements or difficulties in a positive and constructive manner. As a result residential students feel safe and nurtured, grow in confidence and self-esteem and are generally well behaved. Residential students report that bullying rarely occurs. If there are incidents of bullying, students have a range of staff they can report this to and it is quickly addressed. Staff role model calm, nurturing behaviour to minimise the potential for bullying behaviour.

All staff know the students well, this is demonstrated in the record keeping, the range of forums for information sharing and in the response and management of any changing needs and risks as they emerge. Residential students are aware of this, they experience the close working relationship between therapeutic staff, care staff and teaching staff and feel safe and nurtured. They are able to share with staff their difficulties and worries. The personal support sessions demonstrate young people expressing their views, wishes and feelings. This has a positive impact on their emotional welfare and residential students flourish and make substantial progress in relationships in school and at home. For example a team leader said a student who was experiencing significant difficulties with contact with family, increased in confidence and resilience and was able to benefit from improved relationships with family.

Care staff have daily effective information sharing with teaching staff and weekly information sharing and consultation with therapeutic staff. There are problem solving, creative meetings between the leadership team which ensures early identification and intervention where students are experiencing difficulties or where there are concerns. There are written risk assessments to inform the care of students and to keep them safe. These tend to be standardised and known risks are not always clearly identified.

Students benefit from consistent care and clear boundaries. Residential students have a range of complex needs, however, effective and consistent behaviour management of students means that there are a relatively low number of physical restraints. Exemplary child - centred practice is demonstrated when there are restraints, as they are brief, appropriate and keep students safe. Staff and managers debrief following an incident and evaluate records so that any emerging trends and patterns are identified and acted upon.

There have been no incidents of students reported as missing. Care staff know, from training and evidence-based practice, the potential for students to go missing and they are aware of the risks associated with students who go missing.

Care staff demonstrate appropriate responses to child protection concerns. They are acutely

aware of the need to ensure good transfer of information between home and school. They respond appropriately and in a timely way to any concerns students may bring to them.

Leadership and management of the residential provision Outstanding

The leadership and management of the residential provision is outstanding. The residential provision is an integral part of the school which has clear aims that are translated into practice. Staff are passionate and committed to providing a high quality service for the benefit of residential students ensuring their health, wellbeing and educational achievement.

At the previous inspection, the school was asked to make minor improvements to the way concerns are recorded. There is now an effective recording system in place for any concerns raised by staff about residential students. The new system provides a quick and easy way to access all concerns to ensure they are acted on appropriately and swiftly.

Residential students report that they can talk to staff if they are unhappy about anything. They know who the independent listener is and how to contact him. Residential students are given plenty of opportunities to make complaints through their personal support meetings, house meetings and informally with staff. Parent's grumbles are recorded within their child's file and the action taken to address the situation. These are addressed swiftly and effectively. No formal complaints have been made since the last inspection.

Staff are highly qualified, caring, professional and extremely competent. They attend a wide range of training courses throughout the year including mandatory and more specialist training covering topics such as Aspergers syndrome. They feel well supported by each other and the senior leadership team. This means that they are provided with opportunities to reflect and improve practice ensuring a high standard of care is provided to residential students.

The senior leadership team has a strong commitment to improving practice and ensuring the quality of the service provided. They have a clear vision for the future of the residential provision. There is insightful and challenging self-evaluation. Daily practice is clearly underpinned by robust monitoring and evaluation. The school prides itself on continually striving to drive up standards to provide a high quality service for residential students.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	134938
Social care unique reference number	SC069231
DfE registration number	857/6005

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	Independent Residential Special School
Number of boarders on roll	65
Gender of boarders	Boys
Age range of boarders	7 to 18
Headteacher	Mr Robin Lee
Date of previous boarding inspection	20/03/2014
Telephone number	01780 757254
Email address	office@wildslodgeschool.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

