

The Centre Academy East Anglia

Church Road, Brettenham, Ipswich, Suffolk IP7 7QR

Inspection dates

9–11 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Require improvement
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision	Requires improvement
Quality of care and support in the residential provision	Requires improvement
How well children and young people are protected in the residential provision	Requires improvement
Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers in the residential provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The national minimum standards for residential special schools have not been met.
- Too many of the standards for independent schools which relate to the quality of education provided are not met.
- School leaders and the proprietor have not monitored the school's work effectively. As a result, they do not have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders cannot accurately determine if pupils make enough progress from their individual starting points because no baseline assessments were carried out on arrival.
- Young people are not taught how to take age-appropriate and reasonable risks as part of their growth and development.
- Systems for checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments, the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning have only recently been created. They have not yet given leaders the information they need to improve the provision quickly.
- Potential risks to pupils' safety are not identified, assessed or acted upon quickly enough.
- The sixth form requires improvement. The breadth of course choice in the sixth form is limited. As a result, some learners are not studying courses which ensure they gain the highest level of qualifications of which they are capable.
- Actions to address poor behaviour, and to make pupils aware of the consequences of what they do, are not consistently taken or recorded well enough in the residential provision.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils demonstrate resilience in making sure their opinions are heard and are confident that their worries can be shared.
- The leaders and managers take appropriate action in the event of any bullying incidents.
- The staffing of the residential provision has improved. The residential team is well established. This provides continuity of care for young people.

Compliance with regulatory requirements for residential special schools

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the national minimum standards for residential special schools and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good in order to raise standards for all groups of pupils by:
 - ensuring that teachers take full account of pupils’ prior learning, including in science, when planning work
 - planning work which takes into account pupils’ starting points and which pupils find interesting and challenging
 - ensuring that the basic skills in mathematics, English and science are taught consistently well in all classes
 - consistently implementing the new policy for marking to provide feedback to pupils so they can improve their learning progress.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by:
 - increasing the rigour of monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school and identifying milestones by which progress can be measured
 - developing the new roles and impact of area coordinators, such as the assessment coordinator
 - developing effective links with other schools to learn from good practice in teaching and enabling staff to moderate their teacher-assessed outcomes
 - urgently improving the strategic leadership provided by governance
 - providing training for governors to improve their ability to hold leaders to account
 - ensuring the curriculum fully meets the needs of all pupils and the needs identified in pupils’ statements of special educational needs or education, health and care (EHC) plans.
- Enable young people to take age-appropriate and reasonable risks as part of their growth and development.
- Ensure that sufficient risk assessment is carried out in all areas of the residential provision, with particular attention to fire risk assessment.
- Ensure that all sanctions given are recorded accurately and appropriately.
- The school must meet the following independent school standards.
 - The proprietor must ensure that, where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities [is available] which is appropriate to their needs (paragraph 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2)(g)).
 - The proprietor must ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress (paragraph 2(1), 2(2)(h)).
 - The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school:
 - enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
 - involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
 - shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons
 - demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught
 - utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range
 - demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils’ work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g)).
 - The proprietor must ensure that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school’s own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place (paragraph 4).
 - The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders while they are accommodated at the school and such arrangements have regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools or, where applicable, the national minimum standards for residential special schools or the national minimum standards for accommodation of students under eighteen by further education colleges (paragraph 8, 8(a), 8(b)).

- The proprietor must ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 12).
- The proprietor must ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured (paragraph 25).
- The proprietor must ensure that the lighting in each room or other internal space is suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein (paragraphs 27, 27(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure that toilets and urinals have an adequate supply of cold water and washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water (paragraphs 28(1), 28(1)(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that:
 - where a pupil wholly or partly funded by a local authority (except where funding is solely for free of charge early years provision in accordance with the duty contained in section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006) is registered at the school, an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil is provided to the local authority and, on request, to the Secretary of State
 - where a pupil with an EHC plan wholly or partly funded by a local authority or other body through public funds is registered at the school, such information as may reasonably be required for the purpose of the annual review of the EHC plan is provided to the responsible local authority (paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i)).
- The proprietor must ensure that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints (paragraph 33(j)) and:
 - whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing
 - action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld)
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)).
- The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools.
 - Suitable sleeping accommodation is provided for children. It is well organised and managed with risk assessments undertaken and the findings acted upon to reduce risk for all children. Where children are aged eight years or over, sleeping accommodation for boys is separate from sleeping accommodation for girls (NMS 5.1).
 - Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for children, which are reasonably accessible from the sleeping accommodation. Separate toilet facilities are provided for boys and girls unless each toilet facility is provided in a separate room intended for use by one pupil at a time, the door to which is capable of being secured from inside. Toilet and washing facilities provide appropriate privacy for children (NMS 5.3).
 - Accommodation is appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained, and reasonable adjustments are made to provide adequate accessible accommodation for any children with restricted mobility. The accommodation contains suitable specialist facilities to support children whose disabilities require them (NMS 5.4).
 - The school ensures that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (NMS 6.3).
 - Children develop their emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical skills through the accessible and stimulating environment created by the school. Children are supported to take part in school based and out of school activities (NMS 10.1).
 - A written record is kept of major sanctions and the use of any reasonable force. Records include the information in Appendix 2 (use of reasonable force). The record is made within 24 hours and is legible. Children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records. The school regularly reviews any instances of the use of reasonable force and examines trends or issues to enable staff to reflect and learn in a way that will inform future practice (NMS 12.6).

- The school’s governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision in the school, and takes appropriate action where necessary (NMS 13.1).
- The school’s leadership and management consistently fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met (NMS 13.4).
- The school’s written record of complaints identifies those complaints relating to residential provision, and action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld) (NMS 18.2).
- The headteacher (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 (NMS 20.4.1).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management	is inadequate
Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers in the residential provision	is inadequate
How well children and young people are protected in the residential provision	requires improvement

- The proprietor has not ensured that the statutory independent special schools standards are met consistently.
- The culture of the school, as described in ethos and vision documents, is not reflected in the current provision. While the levels of care and the relationships staff have with pupils, and pupils have with one another, are positive, there is a lack of trust in relationships with leaders. Although staff, pupils and parents can share their worries, they do not feel able to share more formal complaints.
- Senior leaders' and governors' self-evaluation lacks rigour. It does not provide sufficient evidence to support the strengths that have been identified and does not accurately identify the school's weaknesses. As a consequence, their view of the school's performance is overgenerous and actions taken to improve the school lack focus.
- Senior leaders have not, until very recently, checked the quality of some important areas of the school's work. They do not, therefore, have an accurate or detailed view of the school's effectiveness. For example, when analysing outcomes, senior leaders do not take account of the full range of evidence, particularly pupils' work and progress in their books. As a result, the assessment information entered into the school's tracking systems is not accurate.
- Staff and pupils highlighted that, both in school and in the residential provision, the resources they need are not always available or of a high enough quality. Rigid routines and budget restrictions prevent positive changes from being made and limit the capacity to improve the residential provision. While some positive improvements are recognised, existing shortfalls have not been addressed. As a result, there are a number of national minimum standards for residential special schools that remain unmet.
- Senior leaders have recently extended the leadership team to improve how the school's work is managed. Changes are in their early stages and the rigour of monitoring is starting to improve. As yet, these changes have not made a difference to the achievement of pupils.
- Although the curriculum is broad and well balanced, it does not yet meet the needs of all pupils. This is because it does not meet the requirements identified on pupils' statements of special educational need or education, health and care plans. There is therapeutic input but therapists have heavy caseloads. This means that individuals do not always receive their entitlement as set out by the local authority. As a result, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Staff plan well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils say that, through their lessons and assemblies, other cultures are highlighted. The good practice in a key stages 3 and 4 class, offering pupils the opportunity to take part in relevant discussions about values, beliefs and feelings, strengthened pupils' ability to understand the opinions of others and socialise more effectively. The importance of respect is evident, and staff give strong messages about British values and the positive roles pupils will play in British society.
- The head of care provides effective daily management of the residential provision. However, as he is not part of the senior leadership team, effective monitoring and oversight are difficult. The lack of robust residential review means that leaders and the governing body have failed to identify the shortfalls in the residential provision and are not making the necessary improvements.
- The staffing of the residential provision has improved because the residential team is now well established. This provides continuity of care for young people. Parents agree that staffing is improved and communication with residential staff is good. Despite this, a number of parents still say that the school does not always listen to the concerns they raise regarding the quality of resources and curriculum provision. Parents say that the continued promises of new buildings and better resources fail to materialise. As a result, parents' views are variable.
- Procedures for managing staff concerns about young people's well-being have improved following a recent local authority audit. This has resulted in incidents being recorded more appropriately and managed more effectively. However, the school's complaint record does not provide a complete or transparent record of the issues raised. For example, a complaint made by a parent has not been recorded.

- Young people are supported to manage their attendance. There is no evidence to suggest that any go missing from education, and case studies show that those at risk are helped to continue to remain in residence.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have recently worked hard to check the quality of the school’s work with regard to how well pupils are safeguarded. This is an improved area of the school’s work.
 - Governors rely too much on information given to them by leaders, without checking its accuracy. This is limiting the effectiveness of their work. As a result, they have not held leaders fully to account for pupils’ progress at all key stages.
 - Governors do not have a detailed oversight of the performance management of staff, including appointments. For example, recent leadership appointments did not follow a transparent process and governors were not made aware of them.
 - Governors do not spend enough time in school to ensure they understand that pupils’ progress is managed as a priority.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and staff are well aware of the risks associated with neglect, abuse and exploitation. Pupils say that they work with staff they trust and are able to share their worries with them, so they feel safe. Records show that concerns are reported quickly and that appropriate action is taken.
- Senior leaders and the residential manager have taken action to meet all of the recommendations raised by the safeguarding audit. This includes updating the safeguarding policy and implementing a whistle-blowing policy. The designated safeguarding lead has had the required training, and is part of the senior leadership team which has ensured that safeguarding has an appropriately high profile.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching is variable across the school. There is not enough good teaching to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Teachers do not check and challenge pupils’ understanding enough. This means chances to correct misunderstandings, or for pupils to move quickly on to the next step in their learning, are missed. As a result, pupils make less progress than they could.
- Teachers’ assessments of pupils’ abilities are not checked or moderated. As a result, assessment information is unreliable and occasionally inaccurate. Leaders are beginning to develop the assessment information they receive to ensure that they have sufficient information to effectively identify or challenge when it is not accurate.
- Teachers often lack baseline data to measure pupils’ progress so the extent of their achievement is not known. Leaders and teachers have not compared the progress of their pupils to others with similar starting points. As a result, they do not know what high expectation for progress should be or how well pupils are doing.
- Teaching is not adapted well enough during lessons to ensure that all pupils are challenged or best supported in their learning. Where teaching is weakest, the subject knowledge of staff is poor and, as a result, pupils’ misconceptions are sometimes reinforced or skills are improperly taught. For example, pupils are taught mathematics calculations incorrectly.
- Where an individual pupil’s needs are complex, skilful and well-informed staff provide relevant activities to engage them in learning. Levels of care are strong and, as a result, these pupils make good and better progress.
- In the best teaching, pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their skills. They are encouraged to take part in activities which require them to work together to discuss and debate their work. The most effective activities are well matched to pupils’ needs, and resources are used effectively to enable pupils to understand their learning well. The pace of learning is consequently good and everyone is involved throughout the lesson at just the right level.
- The less successful teaching often requires pupils to watch and wait for too long while teachers lead and demonstrate, sometimes carrying out practical experiments alone with no pupil input. As a result, the pace of learning slows and pupils lose interest in what they are expected to learn.
- Good relationships between teachers and pupils underpin many activities in all classes. However, the skills of some staff in using a range of communication strategies do not enable pupils to take part successfully in their learning activities. These skills are not always reinforced during other learning times, such as play or lunch.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils are not confident that leaders will take appropriate action if they raise serious complaints because they believe this results in them being labelled as a troublemaker. Pupils say that if you are a troublemaker 'the school gets rid of you'. However, pupils demonstrate resilience in making sure that their opinions are heard and are confident that worries can be shared with other staff.
- While leaders check that risk assessments relating to the needs of individual pupils, as well as activities and trips, are completed, these do not always take into account the personal development needs of pupils when out of the school, as identified on statements of special educational need or education, health and care plans.
- Extended learning opportunities are available. Pupils are positive about sport, and some pupils are learning to play a musical instrument. Outdoor and adventurous activities, although at an early stage of development, are enhancing many pupils' active involvement.
- Young people say they feel safe. The senior management team takes action in the event of any bullying incidents, and young people confirm that it is through this action that bullying does not escalate.
- Young people have wonderful attitudes. They are consistently polite and thoughtful towards staff and peers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Where the teaching is poor, behaviour is not good because, at times, pupils do not engage in their learning. This is because expectations are not always high enough and pupils' attention drifts.
- Records of behaviour and incidents show that, while they are well recorded, they are not analysed in a way that allows information to be gained, potential issues to be de-escalated and changes in approach to be made swiftly. It is difficult to determine whether pupils' behaviour improves during their time at the school.
- The school has recently permanently excluded three pupils. The lack of detailed analysis of pupils' behaviour shows that leaders and staff do not have a good understanding of complex and challenging behaviour. They do not consistently manage these needs effectively, which has resulted in the recent exclusion of pupils because they could not remain in school or continue their learning successfully.
- Pupils have a high amount of respect for one another and for each other's ideas and needs. In the post-16 provision, there is increased progress where learners are more able to manage themselves and their learning.
- Pupils generally behave well in class and lessons are calm and purposeful. They also behave well at the less structured breaks and lunchtimes. Pupils happily play games and communicate with peers and adults. Pupils say that the lack of resources available to them during lunch and breaktimes means that there is sometimes very little for them to do.
- Most pupils say they enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the recent improvements in their attendance. However, they are less confident in the gains in understanding or skill they make during prep or study time. This reflects what was seen by inspectors and confirms pupils' comments that behaviour is generally not as positive at this time of the day.
- Pupils are taught effectively about risks to their safety, including about risks from the internet and the use of social media. They value, accept and respect their peers and their different views and qualities. As a result, peer friendships are strong.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- The quality of assessment information is poor, and records of pupils' progress over time are incomplete. Leaders cannot confidently demonstrate whether pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Work in pupils' books, information about pupils' achievements and observations of learning show that pupils' progress is not consistently good.
- In 2015, pupils attained a range of GCSE and level 1 qualifications alongside other generally appropriate accreditations at the end of Year 11. Because leaders do not keep accurate enough checks on pupils'

progress, a few pupils gained a level of qualification that was lower than their teachers' assessments. As a result, some pupils start their post-16 education at a lower point than expected.

- The small number of pupils without education, health and care plans or statements of special educational need, and those who are disadvantaged achieve in line with other pupils. Their progress, alongside that of their peers, as seen in books, files and in teachers' records, varies between year groups and across subjects. For example, in Key Stage 2 English work, progress in developing punctuation and sentence structure is well evidenced. However, in mathematics books, pupils tend to repeat their mistakes and do not move on as quickly in their learning.
- Leaders and teachers use individual learning plans which detail the needs of pupils from their statements of special educational need and education, health and care plans. However, not all of the identified needs are met. Sometimes, these plans lack sufficient depth to measure the range of outcomes achieved by pupils, particularly in their personal and social development.
- Work in some files shows that, particularly in the post-16 provision, many pupils make good gains in their learning. However, this is not consistent across the school and too many pupils are not challenged to do their very best.

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- While teaching overall is stronger in the post-16 provision, the leadership of the sixth form requires improvement because leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching results in good progress. This is because the school has not accurately or rigorously monitored the progress of learners over time, taking into account their age and starting point.
- The curriculum provides learners with some good opportunities to improve their basic skills in literacy and numeracy and to gain from working alongside one another. Learners follow a range of externally accredited awards, including GCSEs and the American Diploma. While this is suitable for most learners, there is a lack of course options in post-16 provision. As a result, pathways for further education and training remain relatively narrow, although some learners are well supported to move on to university.
- The school ensures that all learners receive good guidance and support for their transition to the next stage of their education, provision or training. As a result, the school is successful in enabling learners to gain entry to college or university placements when they leave. Some learners choose to take part in post-16 provision at the sister school in London.

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision

require improvement

- Young people develop their resilience by being away from home. Some enjoy their residential school experience compared with previous school experiences. Young people prefer the small and inclusive environment. They say that they feel safe and safeguarding arrangements are effective. Relationships with peers and teaching staff are good, and young people are kind, caring and respectful to one another. They demonstrate empathy and acceptance of one another's difficulties, helping each young person feel comfortable and valued. This helps them build friendships and confidence.
- Staff monitor young people's progress using social tracking records that provide individual targets. The systems to assess school work are not monitored or shared with residential staff and therefore it is difficult to measure academic progress.
- The residential provision is run in an orderly manner, ensuring adequate safety and supervision of young people. The organisation and amount of prep time curtails leisure clubs. Young people say there are few activities and that they spend a considerable amount of time in prep or prep club.
- Young people's views are sought in boarders' meetings and this has influenced some change. However, young people and parents continue to say that the organisation of the day provides very little leisure time. As a result, pupils are less engaged with their prep work.
- The healthcare arrangements work well to ensure that young people are looked after when they are ill. Medication is administered and stored safely. Pupils feel able to share when they feel unwell and are confident they will be well looked after.
- Young people build some independence skills in terms of travel and management of belongings. However, the lack of internet access, general mobile phone ban and restrictions on the use of any social media prevent young people from developing media use that is safe and appropriate. This does not provide

equality of opportunities in line with their peers.

- There are external avenues of support provided to young people, such as an independent listener and external monitoring visitor.

Quality of care and support in the residential provision requires improvement

- The accommodation is of a variable standard. Superficial decor and storage facilities have improved since the last inspection. Despite this, there are areas which are not adequately maintained. These include a patch of exposed plaster, loose lining paper, loose steps to one bedroom and a loose banister rail. The Coach House kitchen appliances are old and worn. The library sofa has large stains. Showers have been decorated but cubicles are very small and changing areas are communal. Young people feel these do not provide enough privacy, as others use the shower room while they are showering. The Coach House shower room is permeated with an unpleasant and overpowering odour.
- The bedrooms are shared and consideration is given to friendship groups and combinations of young people. However, these arrangements are not risk-assessed and, therefore, concerns are not recorded to inform future room allocation.
- Young people do not benefit from a broad range of activities. These are limited, providing little opportunity for social interaction, physical activity or pursuit of special interests. The long school day is followed by prep and young people are resigned to this routine. This air of resignation leads to apathy from young people who have few opportunities for fun, relaxation or exercise.
- Care plans have improved since the last inspection; they are now more comprehensive. Plans hold all information in one file and this is easy to access. These are well organised and provide clear and succinct information about young people's individual needs, guiding staff clearly in their care. As a result, staff are better able to meet the needs of young people while in residence.

School details

Unique reference number	124890
Social care unique reference number	SC024588
Inspection number	10006332
DfE registration number	935/6058

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The inspection of residential provision 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 special school
School status	Independent residential special school
Age range of pupils	4–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	44
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	12
Number of boarders on roll	24
Proprietor	Margaret Murphy
Chair	Sean White
Executive Principal	Dr Duncan Rollo
Headteacher	Kim Salthouse
Annual fees (day pupils)	From £16,000
Annual fees (boarders)	From £25,000
Telephone number	01449 736404
Website	www.centreacademy.net
Email address	admin@centreacademy.net
Date of previous inspection	29–30 May 2012

Information about this school

- Centre Academy East Anglia is a residential special school located in the Suffolk village of Brettenham, between Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds. It can take a maximum of 50 boys and girls, including 29 places for boarders.
- The school's registration allows for a maximum of eight pupils between the ages of four and seven years. Currently, there are two pupils within this age range and neither is in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' special educational needs include dyslexia, dyspraxia, Asperger's syndrome, autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The vast majority of pupils have statements of special educational needs and most of them are funded by their local authorities.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place with one day's notice. A range of lessons were observed, some jointly undertaken with the headteacher or Principal. The social care inspector spent time with children and young people and the staff in the residential facilities.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, headteacher, head of care, the speech and language therapists, the special educational needs coordinator, the newly appointed learning and teaching coordinator, the newly appointed safeguarding manager and the newly appointed assessment coordinator.
- Ten telephone calls were made to parents. The views of parents were gathered from the 18 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey.
- A telephone conversation was held with the Chair of the Governing Body and the lead inspector met with one other member of the governing body.
- Discussions were held with members of the school council and with members of the sixth form. Conversations with children and young people in residence, together with opportunities to talk with pupils during lessons, also enabled inspectors to gather their views. Pupils' work was looked at in lessons and a detailed scrutiny of a sample of work from across the school was undertaken. Case studies provided a picture of the wider provision in place to support pupils.
- The views of staff were gathered from their responses to the staff questionnaire and from discussions throughout the inspection with education and residential staff.
- The inspectors checked compliance with the independent school regulations and the national minimum standards for residential special schools. They looked at a wide range of documentation in both the residential provision and the school. These included information on the progress and achievement of the pupils, planning and assessment, self-evaluation and improvement planning, and a range of policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Mary Rayner, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Deirdra Keating	Social Care Regulatory Inspector
Natalie Burton	Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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