

Maplewell Hall

Maplewell Hall School, Maplewell Road, Woodhouse Eaves, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE12 8QY

Inspection dates

13/09/2016 to 15/09/2016

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

- Young people make exceptional progress academically, socially and emotionally because of the residential experience. Data clearly identifies this positive impact. An independent observer commented: 'The residential provision is a gateway to additional academic support and opportunities. The link between enhanced opportunities to progress well academically and residence is clear.'
- The development of social skills is a real strength of the provision. The transference of these skills across varied settings including school, residential provision, home and community supports young people to develop.
- Student voice, the forum for young people to share their views, is fully embedded. Representatives, including those from the residential provision, report to the board of governors, thereby influencing decision-makers.
- Safeguarding systems are excellent. The new behaviour support programme is worthy of dissemination to other schools. All staff have an excellent awareness of national and regional perspectives relating to safeguarding.
- Motivational and inspirational leaders ensure that the residential provision is at the very heart of the whole school.
- The previous recommendation has been met. There are no failures to meet national minimum standards or recommendations for improvement resulting from this inspection.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

There were no areas identified at this inspection.

Information about this inspection

This welfare-only inspection was announced to the head of care on the morning that the inspection started. The residential provision is housed on the second and third floor of the main school building. During the inspection, the inspector spoke to young people as part of a group and as individuals and spoke to individual members of staff, including the head of care. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers were interviewed as part of the inspection. The inspector took meals with the young people, observed them using the residential provision and at activities, viewed records and spoke to a governor and external professionals. Parents' views were also gathered from Parent View.

Inspection team

Judith Longden

Lead social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

Maplewell Hall School is a local authority maintained residential special school for 183 boys and girls aged 11-19 years. The residential provision operates from Monday to Thursday each week with an average of 16 students residing at the school on any night. The vast majority stay in residence for a maximum of two nights for a half term and on a rotational basis. The residential accommodation is provided in the main school building. The school is situated in Woodhouse Eaves, close to Loughborough. The school caters for students within Leicestershire with moderate learning difficulties and autism. The residential provision was last inspected in October 2015.

Inspection judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Outstanding

Young people make excellent progress academically, socially and in their behaviour as a result of attending the residential provision. Leaders clearly identify the impact of the residential experience and continue to explore creative ways to evidence this progress. Recent analysis identifies that the 51% of students who attend the residential provision are responsible for 89.7% of the rewards for academic achievement, positive attitude, development of social skills and behaviour. One member of staff commented: 'The values taught and reinforced in residential are successfully transferred into the school setting.' In addition, these values are transferred to the home environment, improving relationships with family.

Young people thoroughly enjoy their residential time. For many, who are geographically and socially isolated at home, this provision provides a wealth of opportunities to make new friendships, build on existing relationships and enjoy new experiences. They enjoy activities such as badminton, football, art and model-making. They engage in community-based activities such as scouts and the Duke of Edinburgh's award and utilise community resources such as the leisure centre. Young people have learned to swim because of the activity programme provided in the residential provision. These activities enhance young people's social interaction skills, build confidence and self-esteem, and enable them to have fun. One young person said: 'I like to do all the activities. I am doing the Duke of Edinburgh's award, staff are helping me with the programme.'

Education attainment is excellent. All staff in care and education understand the individual targets for young people and work together to provide opportunities for constant learning. The provision of a set time for homework club in the residential setting means that staff can consolidate the learning from the school day. The residential experience also provides young people with the social skills and confidence needed to fulfil their ambitions. One young person took their mathematics examination early and spent time supporting other students to achieve in the subject. He has since secured an apprenticeship with another school as a learning support assistant and will be undertaking his work experience at this school. His experience of residential has helped build his confidence to undertake this venture. One member of staff commented: 'He would never have done that without residence.'

'Student voice' is a forum for young people to share their views and opinions and voice any concerns. This is now fully embedded into the school structure. Representatives, including those from the residential provision, report directly to the board of governors, thereby influencing the decision-makers. For example, the range of activities provided at lunchtime have increased, resulting in less negative behaviour during this period. Young people have used the forum to discuss how to serve their local community, making links with a number of charities and undertaking fundraising activities. They have also been involved in recruiting new staff. This means that young people's views are heard and taken seriously and they are fully involved in the decision-making of the school.

One young person advised during the inspection that he is to show new families around

the school as part of an open evening. He summed up his feelings about the school stating, 'I am really proud of being here.'

The quality of care and support

Outstanding

Young people have the opportunity to stay in residence for two nights a week for a half term period, at least twice in the academic year. A small number may be offered residence every half term if it is thought to be more beneficial. Older young people also have the opportunity to increase their stays including a week 'stress busting' in preparation for their examinations. The after-school club provides further opportunities for young people to engage with their friends, complete homework and enjoy activities. This variety of options provides choice for young people in determining how and when they would like to stay. In addition, it means that a wider group of young people can benefit from the excellent residential experience.

Careful planning and integration ensure that young people are introduced to residential in a measured way, helping them build confidence to stay overnight. This includes after-school visits, assemblies on the benefits of residential and work with the family. This excellent planning continues throughout their residential experience. Detailed plans and targets for achievement are shared across the whole school team, providing a consistent approach for young people. Regular reports on progress identify where residential staff can offer additional support or opportunities to help young people achieve. For example, one young person wishes to be a chef so staff encourage his involvement at teatime in the preparation and serving of food.

Parental involvement and participation has improved massively. Attendance at functions and events has improved despite the wide geographical dispersal of families. The home-school link worker is highly effective, working closely with parents, providing support and guidance and signposting to other services. For example, they support parents in attending medical appointments with their child, building their confidence, as well as enabling the young person to receive appropriate care.

The intervention team also works closely with parents alongside the home-school link worker, drawing in resources and skills to create a package for the individual, to promote their self-esteem and improve their emotional regulation, confidence and behaviour. These effective links can be of life-changing benefit. One member of staff explained how they had worked closely to support a young person who had previously not attended school for eight months and displayed some violent behaviours at home. Working with parents, working with the interventions team and accessing other services has resulted in the young person attending school 100% and attending the residential provision, with improved behaviour at school and at home. The member of staff said: 'They are a different person, their whole life has changed positively.'

Staff clearly understand individual health needs, and medication practice is robust. Young people are encouraged to understand their own health needs, taking an active role in the preparation of their health plans. Staff access specialist health training as

required and are supported by the school nurse and a range of other medical professionals. The food provided by the school catering team is excellent: nourishing, healthy and home-cooked. Fruit is now provided at every meal, including breakfast. This was a recommendation for improvement at the last inspection. The previous inspection suggested the provision of sugar on the table at meal times might encourage overuse. Rather than simply remove the sugar bowls, staff encourage dialogue with the young people about the dangers of sugar, backed up by a homework project on healthy eating. This means that young people receive information to help them to make appropriate choices.

Staffing of the residential provision has changed, with some staff working in both school and residency. Members of the senior leadership team also regularly staff the residential provision, leading in a particular area such as design or sport. This whole-team approach facilitates excellent communication and an ethos of shared responsibilities and practice. It helps young people to build fantastic relationships with a broad spectrum of adults.

The recent replication of the school's house point system in residential provides healthy competition for young people. They have the opportunity to earn extra house points by competing in challenges such as table laying and bed making. Such activities provide young people with useful domestic skills. One young person said of the house system, 'It gives us a sense of responsibility for each other and encourages teamwork.'

The school site provides a fantastic setting for young people to enjoy themselves and thrive. Extensive garden areas provide ample space and opportunities for young people to take part in outdoor activities. The residential area provides several rooms for socialising, and quieter rooms. Young people personalise their bedrooms with ornaments, photographs and posters. A private space provides young people with the opportunity to make phone calls and contact outside agencies to share any concerns.

A therapeutic social worker said of the school: 'I am impressed with how dedicated staff are in terms of the way in which they talk about young people and how they want them to progress. Young people who have stayed here have had positive outcomes and improved relationships, not only in school but in the community and with family.'

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding

Excellent safeguarding systems ensure that young people are safe when they are away from home. A recent review into the already robust policies and procedures has resulted in one clear, detailed policy signposting staff to the various links and resources for additional information. This 'one stop shop' approach streamlines the array of policies and procedures and provides faster access for staff, ensuring a swift response to any safeguarding concerns.

Staff here have been at the forefront of developing an alternative behaviour support programme in partnership with other special schools and on behalf of the local authority. This programme encourages young people to make the right behaviour choices, teaching and supporting them rather than managing behaviour. Staff successfully de-escalate any incidents, providing young people with the opportunity to discuss incidents and reflect on

their behaviour. One member of staff said: 'This programme does justice to the skills staff have got.' Restorative justice encourages young people to think about how others may be affected. Positive behaviour is encouraged using reward tokens. One member of the senior leadership team said: 'We are working with really nice kids, who we can be patient with and there is no need to hold.' There have been no restraints since the last inspection. Young people recognise the improvement in their behaviour, and one said: 'My behaviour has improved since being residential as it helps me understand more and I am less anxious.'

Staff clearly understand the individual vulnerabilities of each young person. They raise any concerns they may have via the 'cause for concern' process that prompts the timetabling of an appropriate intervention. For example, there may be concern around a young person's use of inappropriate language that results in work around respect and identity. Staff may access the support of other agencies and professionals if required. This results in early intervention and early help for young people. Any safeguarding concerns are dealt with swiftly and referred appropriately. Staff are aware of a range of safeguarding issues, including sexual exploitation, radicalisation, female genital mutilation, honour violence and internet safety. Training, access to resources, and up-to-date information provides staff with the knowledge to keep young people safe and help them learn to keep themselves safe.

Staff create a safe atmosphere, encouraging young people to share any worries, including any concerns around bullying. Visits by external advocates and governors provide additional monitoring and opportunities for young people to talk to independent persons. There have been no allegations against care staff, no complaints, no missing from care episodes and no restraint, indicating that young people feel safe here.

Robust health and safety procedures, such as regular audits, safety inspections and frequent fire drills, ensure that young people are safe. Staff commented that they have worked hard to bring this area up to an excellent standard with a real drive on improving risk assessments. As a result, a number of detailed risk assessments, for individual young people, activities and the building, provide clarity in responding to and managing risk while providing excellent opportunities for young people to enjoy the facilities and activities.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers Outstanding

The headteacher, head of care, senior leadership team and governors are passionate about the residential provision and the role it plays in enhancing and improving the lives of young people. It is viewed as an integral part of the whole school. The provision is extremely well managed by an inspirational and motivational senior team.

The sharing of staff across the site, including senior staff, leads to excellent teamwork and an ethos of shared responsibility for the young people. Robust and effective supervision of all staff, including night staff, explores what is working and what is not, and challenges them where appropriate. Regular staff meetings ensure that they remain up to date with what is happening across the school, any new training and any concerns

about young people. A variety of training opportunities ensure that staff have the required understanding and knowledge in areas such as safeguarding and medication, supporting them in meeting the needs of young people. All residential staff either have the required qualification or are on the relevant course. This means that young people benefit from skilled and experienced staff.

Recent changes to the personnel on the board of governors have not diminished the robust governance. Interim arrangements ensure continued monitoring and oversight by governors and independent persons, such as headteachers from other schools and an independent advocate. This ensures that young people are safe, looked after and making outstanding progress.

Internal monitoring is excellent. Forensic self-evaluation by the headteacher and head of care identifies the strengths of the school and leads to strong strategic planning. Surveys completed by young people and parents also inform the regular monitoring. Such surveys highlight the improvements and progress for young people that results from being resident.

The school benefits from effective links with an extensive range of local and national organisations and community groups, providing resources, information and links to community based activities and opportunities. Support from the local supermarket provides the school with gifts to use as rewards and provides food for the annual end of year celebratory ball. This ensures the best use of resources and sharing of practice. Young people also give back to the local community and support national charities, raising funds through varied activities and events.

The previous shortfall has been addressed. This inspection has found no failures to meet national minimum standards and there are no recommendations for improvement made.

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 exceed 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	120348
Social care unique reference number	SC001836
DfE registration number	855/7002

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	183
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	11 to 19
Headteacher	Jason Brooks
Date of previous boarding inspection	06/10/2015
Telephone number	01509 890237
Email address	office@maplewell.leics.sch.uk

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