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# Northeast Manor School

Northeast Manor School, Newhaven Road, Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3EY

<b>Inspection dates</b>	14/11/2016 to 16/11/2016	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of care and support	Good	2
How well children and young people are protected	Requires improvement	3
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good	2

## Summary of key findings

### The residential provision is good because

- Young people make good progress while attending the school and accessing the residential provision. The increased joint working across school departments results in young people benefiting from the consistency of approach. Young people and their parents are complimentary of the residential provision and the support from staff.
- The leadership and management of the school have significantly improved through the appointment of several senior staff and a wholesale change in the governing body. There is now greater challenge and improved oversight of both school and residential provision.
- Young people say that they feel safe in the school. There have been significant improvements to safeguarding practice since the appointments of a new designated safeguarding lead (DSL). Collaborative working between the DSL and local authority safeguarding team is strong, and systems are in place for swift referral of any concerns.
- Staff within the residential service are confident in their roles and there has been a noticeable shift in culture and approach to boarding. Staff are becoming increasingly involved in setting plans for young people and recognising their role in providing a good service and meeting the national minimum standards (NMS). The team shows greater professionalism as a result.
- Areas noted as requiring improvement during the inspection were remedied immediately when possible. Areas for further development include: formulating a policy on using mobile devices to access the internet; the head of residential care seeking an appropriate qualification for this role; improving the quality of risk assessments; and ensuring that young people's views are recorded after they have been given a sanction.

## **Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools**

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

- 6.3 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.
- 12.6 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.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Implement a policy and procedure regarding the use of mobile data to access the internet via mobile telephones and how young people will be supported while using this.
- Source relevant training for the role of head of the residential provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspection was announced via telephone to the acting head of school on the morning of the first day. On arrival, an initial meeting was held with the acting headteacher. Inspectors held discussions with residential care staff, the business manager, maintenance manager, therapists, the special educational needs coordinator, the student welfare officer and governors. All residential areas were visited during the inspection and the inspectors observed, and when appropriate took part in, activities with residential students in addition to having group and individual discussions with them. Inspectors held telephone discussions with the designated officer and parents. A range of documents and records were also examined during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Jennie Christopher	Lead social care inspector
Helen Humphreys	Social care HMI

# **Full Report**

## **Information about this school**

Northeast Manor is a co-educational, independent day and weekly residential special school for children aged between 10 and 17 years. The school also offers flexible boarding arrangements for individual pupils. The school provides educational and residential provision for potentially able pupils who have a range of specific learning disabilities including dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder, dyscalculia and social and communication difficulties which may include Asperger syndrome and autistic spectrum disorder. The residential accommodation for pupils is provided within four separate boarding houses; three houses accommodate boys and one house provides accommodation for girls. The school is located near to Lewes, East Sussex.

## Inspection Judgements

### The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

**Good**

Young people make good progress while attending the school and accessing the residential provision. They benefit from the wide range of services available on-site which support their physical and emotional needs, such as speech and language therapists, an emotional well-being specialist and occupational therapist. The special educational needs coordinator liaises effectively with residential staff to ensure that young people's needs and communication styles are understood and supported consistently. Joint working across departments in the school still requires further development though.

Parents and young people are equally positive about the residential service and their communication with staff. Young people said, 'I like staying in boarding', 'there is a great atmosphere' and 'I get support to do my homework'.

Leaders and managers are actively tackling weaknesses within the residential provision and plans to improve the service are regularly reviewed. The new head of residential care has a strong understanding of what areas require development, but has had insufficient time in post to implement all the changes required or demonstrate the impact of many of the changes that have already taken place.

The residential staff team is engaged in the drive for improvement in plans for young people. This has already started to take effect and improved target setting.

Young people have some very good relationships and friendships with their peers and all interact well with staff. Positive behaviour and relationships are promoted within the residential provision and young people have the opportunity to air how they are feeling and how other's behaviour may be having an impact on them.

The residential provision is well organised and the views of young people are routinely sought and utilised. Young people say that they have a good range of activities that they can engage in and have the opportunity to choose new activities for the upcoming term. Young people have the opportunity to choose how they accessorise their bedrooms and if they would like to share or not. However, the sharing of bedrooms has not been formally risk assessed.

### The quality of care and support

**Good**

Staff form strong relationships with young people and take time to listen to them and understand their individual needs and personalities. There is some joint working across the school in order to provide consistency, such as individual communication passports and ensuring that occupational therapy equipment is available in both educational and residential time. This joined-up working is an area that leaders recognise requires further strategic development.

Residential staff now have twice-daily handovers and gain information from the school's electronic database regarding young people's day. Information is dispersed and not always easily accessed by staff.

Young people are treated with dignity and respect and there is a high expectation that

young people will respect each other's needs and differences. Staff challenge openly negative comments about other young people thoughtfully, helping young people to learn why this is unacceptable.

The residential area is well maintained and has provision for independent study, time alone and communal space. There are a range of evening activities on offer to provide social interaction, learning and physical exercise. Young people are encouraged to understand healthy lifestyles and what this means for them. The catering team is considering changes to some meals and snacks to provide greater balance to diets. Young people are positive about the food provided, especially the evening meals, saying that they are 'much better'. Medication is safely stored and staff have training in its administration. However, some staff have not kept their first aid training up to date. Young people's health and welfare plans are not up to date.

Young people's individual plans have significantly improved, but require further development to provide clarity on how the young person is to be supported. Staff recognise the need for them to include the goals and targets that young people are working towards and also to include young people's and their parents' views.

#### **How well children and young people are protected**

#### **Requires improvement**

The quality of the risk assessments is weak as the actual hazards are not clearly defined, which leads to poor identification of risk and controls. Work commenced during the inspection to improve the quality of risk assessment. This work is supported by a detailed policy.

Allegations or suspicions of harm are dealt with thoroughly and effectively, which ensures that young people are increasingly safer at the school. Staff are confident in their roles in sharing concerns and policies are in line with statutory guidance.

Young people say that they feel safe in the school and identify people who they can talk to about any concerns including boarding staff, tutors and senior leaders. An appropriate independent listener's contact details are available to children. No young person has contacted her in some time.

Young people have not been reported missing from the school for many years, despite it being an open site. Young people are under regular and appropriate supervision at all times. School policies are in line with local protocols.

Incidents of bullying and other forms of discrimination are rare, but when they do happen they are dealt with effectively. Young people report that any incidents are dealt with swiftly and have confidence in the systems in place.

A whole school behaviour management policy has been introduced this term. Young people understand this and there is evidence that this is leading to improved behaviour for some. Where this is not the case, staff and the special educational needs coordinator are exploring different ways of addressing behaviour. This is in the early stages of development. Staff have developed, in conjunction with young people, behaviour management strategies as part of the passport system. This appears to be effective practice and is gradually being rolled out across the whole school. Young people's views are not recorded after a sanction has been implemented though.

An e-safety policy is available within the school, which provides clear guidance for staff.

It is not young person-friendly and does not specify how to support young people who access the internet via mobile devices, other than the rule being that they are not allowed to. This rule cannot be effectively policed and therefore does not protect young people.

The school employs a 'protective behaviours practitioner' who undertakes a range of work including whole school assemblies and classroom and individual work. This innovative work is proving effective.

Since the last inspection, there have been four incidents of restraint, none of which were during boarding time. The incidents were appropriately handled and recorded. Not all boarding staff have been trained in restraint practice, although this was planned during the inspection. Without training, boarding staff may be unable to respond to all incidents.

Following the appointment of the new designated safeguarding lead (DSL), the school is developing links with the local authority and relevant personnel. The DSL contacts the local authority for advice and discussions and makes referrals to them if necessary.

The newly appointed governing body is proactive in monitoring safeguarding across the school. Training for governors on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty is planned. One governor is very experienced in safeguarding matters and meets regularly with the DSL.

The DSL does not currently receive reflective supervision pertinent to the role. However, arrangements were put in place during the inspection from a suitably experienced person.

Young people are protected from avoidable risk through regular checks of the building and environment, including firefighting equipment. The environment is physically safe. The arrangements for the recruitment and selection of staff are robust and follow current statutory guidance.

### **The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers**

**Good**

The residential provision is well managed by a new head of residential care, who holds varied qualifications with transferable skills for the role. However, she does not hold a qualification specific for the role, or have extensive experience in residential provisions in schools.

The culture within the provision has shifted following the substantial change of leaders and staff. It is well led and accountable to the governing body. There are sufficient staff who have most of their essential training, but some still require further training in areas of young people's specific needs.

Young people are central to the plans for boarding and how it is organised. The head of residential care is monitoring the provision and developing the service. Staff are now involved in this aspect and have a greater understanding of the national minimum standards (NMS) and their own roles in ensuring that these are met.

Feedback is sought from young people and their parents as to how the provision can improve. The management team changed in September, and many of the areas for development are yet to be implemented. The governors regularly visit the service and newly the devised reporting template provides greater scrutiny and relates directly to the

NMS.

Staff benefit from effective and challenging supervision, which now identifies clear targets and deadlines for these to be completed. Poor and ineffective practice is actively challenged. Appraisals are planned for the coming term and all staff say that they hope to make this a useful exercise in identifying their training and development needs.

The residential staff work effectively as a group and communication and joint working with other departments in the school is improving. However, this continues to be an area for development, as does ensuring information is made available for all staff.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114645
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC050107
<b>DfE registration number</b>	845/6028

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Residential special school
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	111
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	Mixed
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	7 to 18
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janet Felkin
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	13/10/2015
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 472915
<b>Email address</b>	office@northeast.co.uk

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