

Loxley Hall

Loxley Hall School, Loxley, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire ST14 8RS

Inspection dates	06/12/2016 to 08/12/2016	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good	2
The quality of care and support	Good	2
How well children and young people are protected	Outstanding	1
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good	2

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- Young people make sustained progress because of their residential experience at the school. Their social skills improve and they develop positive relationships with their peers and the adults caring for them.
- A team of extremely committed and motivated staff focuses on young people's safety and welfare.
- Young people's progress towards adulthood is supported by their residential experiences at school.
- Young people achieve targets and objectives that are supported by staff and parents.
- Safeguarding is outstanding. There is a thorough and comprehensive approach to safeguarding, involving all staff throughout the school site.
- Leadership and management are extremely effective and the residential aspect of school is an integral part of the school life. This includes all staff in school and in residence working together to meet young people's holistic needs.
- Communication between school, residential staff and families is excellent.
- The views gained from young people and their families about young people's residential experience have been uniformly positive.
- There is a shortfall in the condition of some areas of the young people's bedrooms, where improvements are needed in some aspects of bedroom furnishings.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

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

- Accommodation is suitably furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of children accommodated, with appropriate protection and separation between girls and boys, age groups and accommodation for adults. Bedding is clean and suitable, and is sufficiently warm. (NMS 5.5)

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Adjust policies for administration of medication to reflect guidance provided by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. ('Handling of medicines in social care')
- Ensure that staff with responsibility for supervising staff have the necessary training to support their roles.
- Ensure that all aspects of a report following a physical intervention are completed.

Information about this inspection

The residential provision was inspected on the same day that the school received the notification. A range of activities took place during the inspection. These included gaining the views and opinions of young people, and meeting with various staff members, the school's senior managers, a governor, and parents and carers. The residential houses were all inspected. Care files, policies and procedures, menus, staff files and health and safety documents were also reviewed.

Inspection team

Julia Wright

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Loxley Hall School is an academy school, part of Manor Hall Academy Trust. The school offers day and residential places to boys, aged 11 to 16 years, who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties. There are 91 pupils on roll, 35 of whom access the residential provision for overnight stays. The school is situated in a rural setting, a few miles outside the town of Uttoxeter. The main building is a large, two-storey country house, where classrooms, offices, a main kitchen and a dining hall are situated. There are two residential houses on the school site, which can provide overnight stays for up to nine boys at any one time. The residential provision was last inspected in January 2016.

Inspection judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good

Young people stay in the residential houses on the school site for either one or two evenings each week, or for an extended school day, returning home at about 8pm. Young people make excellent progress because of their residential experiences.

Young people develop very positive, nurturing relationships with staff. Staff value each young person's strengths and abilities. They value young people's individual and diverse identities, and staff, young people and their families work together to promote an environment in which each young person can flourish. Young people are all positive about their residential experience. One young person told the inspector, 'It is brilliant here. Everything is brilliant!' Another said, 'I love coming here. It is always fun. Sometimes I miss the activities because of college, but there is always something to do.'

Young people enjoy an excellent range of activities and interests, and there is something available for all. Staff are attuned to young people's individual needs and arrange events accordingly. Some young people prefer to stay in the houses rather than going out, and they are encouraged to participate in craft and baking activities, or to relax and watch television or play console games. The inclusive and stimulating environment means that each young person feels comfortable and has an enjoyable stay.

Young people make exceptional progress in developing their social skills, confidence and identity. The whole school promotes participation and engagement. Young people make friends and are encouraged to join in all aspects of school life. Parents and teachers commented on how residential stays for some young people have had a positive impact on educational progress. Young people's skills and abilities develop because of their residential experience. This helps young people to concentrate more in class, and to manage their behaviour. In addition, young people cooperate with adults and peers, and begin to develop negotiation skills.

Safeguarding arrangements across the whole school are outstanding. School and residential staff work closely together to support each young person. Communication between staff and families is first rate. Any concerns about young people's safety are appropriately managed.

One national minimum standard is not met. This relates to the condition of some of the equipment and bedding in the residential houses. These deficits detract from the otherwise high standards.

The quality of care and support

Good

The school is situated near to a local town, and there are many opportunities to visit sporting, entertainment and creative venues within a manageable distance. In addition, staff arrange an annual residential camping trip involving as many young people as want to attend. Young people have opportunities to enjoy activities that they may not otherwise experience.

Young people receive a thorough induction to residential life that helps them to feel safe and comfortable before taking the step to either extend their day or stay overnight. Young people visit the houses as part of their introduction to school life, promoting the integrated service provided by the school overall.

Considering young people's starting points, they make good progress because of their residential experiences. One parent said, 'He came home beaming after his first night in residence.' Another commented, 'I really cannot fault the place. They have been brilliant. My son has come out of himself. He talks more, and is learning to socialise, and he can even cook some meals now. Staff are brilliant and they are always ringing us and complimenting him and how well he is doing. Fantastic place, brilliant.'

Staff devise menus to reflect young people's choices, and these are generally home-cooked meals. Dining arrangements are friendly, communal events that enable young people to sit with staff and plan evening activities or talk about their days. Staff observe young people's presentation and quickly note whether a young person needs individual support and nurture.

Staff comprehensively promote young people's healthcare arrangements. Close liaison between staff and families means that young people's medication or other healthcare arrangements are understood. This helps to prevent any errors in the administration of medication. However, medication arrangements do not reflect the guidance given by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society relating to the administration of controlled drugs. School nurses have recently started working at the school and are developing their roles in relation to services provided for all young people, and plans are being devised to change the system relating to controlled drugs. A family liaison worker provides integral and essential support to many families, and this includes transporting young people, and their parents when necessary, to medical appointments, ensuring that their needs are met.

Young people's views and opinions are regularly sought and acted on by staff. One young person said, 'Staff ask us what we like and don't like, and they make sure we all have a turn choosing things.' In addition, independent visitors, including a governor, visit the residential houses regularly to monitor young people's progress.

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding

Safeguarding arrangements for young people in the residential provision are outstanding. Communication between school and residential staff is exceptional.

Young people benefit from staying at a school that has an excellent focus on safeguarding and protection, including implementing effective safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. Staff are knowledgeable and prepared if incidents happen. The residential staff approach is underpinned by safeguarding training that reflects national safeguarding priorities, including anti-radicalisation training.

Staff learn from research and implement emotional profiling methods to understand young people's needs, and to identify when each young person needs specific help. Leaders and managers regularly collect and evaluate information about the effectiveness of the school's relationship management policy and speedily identify any concerning patterns and trends. Strategies are devised to address these, to ensure that young people

receive a targeted and highly effective response.

A key strength of the residential provision is how well staff understand the complexities of young people's behaviour. This insight informs effective organisation and daily operation of routines. Physical intervention incidents are infrequent in the residential provision. Strategies to manage risks are necessarily focused on safety, but also promote opportunities to take acceptable risks as part of young people developing life skills and enjoying good-quality day-to-day life. Young people are clear about expectations of their behaviour, and staff fairly and consistently implement rules and boundaries. Young people respond positively to an incentive scheme, run across the school site, and they are motivated and encouraged to earn points towards treats. Young people benefit from an atmosphere in the houses that is calm, welcoming and friendly.

Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff are excellent and promote young people's safety. There is a rigorous approach to all health and safety matters, underpinned by comprehensive policies and procedures. There are ongoing environmental safety checks and regular health and safety audits. Fire drills involve all staff and young people. Detailed risk assessments are completed with the aim of minimising risks to young people on and off site. All these actions ensure that young people's safety receives the highest scrutiny and attention.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers Good

A suitably qualified and experienced head of care manages the residential provision well. A consistent team, many of whom have worked at the school for a number of years, supports him. The head of care is part of the senior leadership team and is supported and supervised by the executive head. All staff, including the head of care and all residential staff, demonstrate their commitment and have high aspirations for each of the young people in their care. Staff work exceptionally well together as a team, and morale within the staff team is excellent. Staff work tirelessly to help young people to make the most of their residential stays, ensuring that they benefit from all activities and opportunities on offer.

The residential provision reflects the statement of purpose. Staff and parents are familiar with the service's aim of helping to improve young people's outcomes overall. The head of care and staff complete case studies of young people who use the service, and these demonstrate the significant difference that the residential service has made to young people's lives. These include young people learning social skills; improving their emotional health, self-esteem and self-confidence; developing self-care and independence skills; and having positive and life-affirming opportunities.

All staff receive supervision and have opportunities to reflect on their relationships with young people. Staff are appraised annually, and individual personal development plans are devised. Staff undertake a wide range of training, including essential skills such as safeguarding, as well as more specific courses such as managing epilepsy and attachment training. Not every member of staff who supervises other staff has received training to undertake this role. Most staff are qualified to diploma level 3 in working with children and young people. If they have not gained the qualification, staff are enrolled on a course and hope to complete it within the specified timescale.

Monitoring of the provision is regularly undertaken. Information is analysed and audited to identify and drive forward improvements for the overall service received by young people. The head of care has clear and effective systems in place that work alongside the independent visitor's reports. One area for improvement is to ensure that all parts of the physical intervention recordings are completed.

Managers have very good insight into the strengths and areas of development for the service. One priority is the recruitment of a new staff member to the residential team. Staff continue to cover any gaps in the staff rota to ensure that young people have a consistent service from familiar staff. External monitoring visits are regular and robust, and provide young people with an additional level of safeguarding. Young people know that they are able to discuss any difficulties with a range of people at the school or externally.

Partnership working with parents, carers and professionals is very good. A parent said, 'Staff ring regularly and always compliment my son, and that is great, as previously, before this school, it was always negatives.'

There were two areas for improvement raised at the last inspection. Reports of physical interventions now consistently include debriefs with young people. The second related to an imbalance in staff genders in the residential staff team. The head of care is aware of this imbalance and has plans in place to address it.

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors 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 result in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact that 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 that children and young people are not protected or that their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or that their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	124509
Social care unique reference number	SC038729
DfE registration number	

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Type of school	Residential special school
Number of boarders on roll	35
Gender of boarders	Boys
Age range of boarders	11 to 16
Headteacher	Mr R. Redgate
Date of previous boarding inspection	26/01/2016
Telephone number	01889 256390
Email address	office@loxleyhall.staffs.sch.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.gov.uk/ofsted. 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.gov.uk/ofsted

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.gov.co.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017

