

Lindsworth School

Monyhull Hall Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham, West Midlands B30 3QA

Inspection dates	21/11/2016 to 23/11/2016	
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	Good	2
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good	2

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- Residential pupils' school attendance, achievement and behaviour improve as a result of staying at the residential provision.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are extremely positive. For example, police officers' comments include: 'Knife crime is now very minor at the school and we think this is due to the positive relationships pupils have with staff. They can confide in staff. This is the unique make-up of the school.'
- Professionals hold the school in very high regard and say: 'The school can give consistency. When it is chaos outside of school, this is a positive place. What they [pupils] didn't have was a sense of safety and this [school and residence] is a very different place.'
- Learning to live harmoniously with others and enjoying a variety of group and individual activities develop residential pupils' social and emotional skills. They grow in self-esteem, learn new skills and make meaningful friendships.
- Partnership working with the police also makes a significant impact on managing residential pupils' risk-taking behaviours both inside and outside the school. Residential pupils do not go missing and there are no concerns about child sexual exploitation.
- Residential pupils' mental and emotional health is given the highest priority. Their health improves due to the support they receive to engage with adolescent mental health services, drug agencies, anger management courses and the meaningful discussions with care and education staff.
- Residential pupils feel valued as their welfare, individuality, views and ideas are

placed at the centre of the running of the residential service.

- Behaviour management is a clear strength. Residential pupils' full engagement with the rewards system means that they consistently strive to improve and succeed in improving their behaviour and academic achievements.
- Leadership is strong, with excellent connectivity among staff. Managers are creative in driving improvement. New projects such as 'Pathfinders' make ground-breaking differences to the welfare of pupils and their families.
- Quality assurance and monitoring systems are robust and are centred around improving the experiences and outcomes for each pupil. With the exception of inconsistent heating in one pupil's bedroom, all national minimum standards are met.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

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

- 5.4 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

There were no areas identified on this inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of residential and welfare arrangements took place following the appropriate notice period for this type of visit. One inspector carried out the visit and reviewed the policies, documentation, residential provision and organisation over a period of three days. The inspector spoke to key staff and managers, pupils and parents. In addition, observations of residential routines and practices were made at different times of the day and evening.

Inspection team

Elaine Cray

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Lindsworth School is a maintained residential special school catering for boys and girls who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It currently offers education for pupils aged 11 to 16 years. Currently the school accommodates 84 boys and girls, of whom nine are residential pupils. Boarding is predominantly offered four nights a week. The residential provision is situated in a large detached house, spread over two floors and located close to the main school. Residential pupils can also use the school's sporting facilities during residential time. The residential provision was last inspected in November 2015.

Inspection judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good

Residential pupils make good progress across all aspects of their lives as a result of attending the residential service. They thoroughly enjoy their experiences and are extremely proud of the rewards they earn for improvements in education attendance and achievement.

Residential pupils grow and thrive both socially and emotionally in comparison to their individual starting points. This positive development and the feel-good factor when in residence enable pupils to maintain school attendance and feel safe when other aspects of their lives outside school may be challenging.

Residential pupils have positive moving-in experiences and settle well as a result of taster nights and support from other pupils. Staff have good insight into pupils' needs as a result of detailed information sharing with parents. There is a gradual wind-down of visits to the residential provision and there is close liaison with parents to help residential pupils prepare for leaving and spending more time at home.

Pupils liken their residential experience to being part of a large family. They demonstrate good levels of attachment, respect and consideration for their peers and for the staff who care for them. They experience positive friendships, no longer fight or are excluded, and feel more accepted and less bullied as a result of coming to stay at residence.

Parents and carers are extremely positive about their children's residential experiences. They say that the staff do 'a great job' and that children make a 'vast improvement'. Parents enjoy better quality relationships with their children and believe this to be a product of attending the residential school.

Parents are confident that their children are safe at school. Comments such as 'The work they do on bullying reassures me – they are always looking into it' show the robust stance staff take about pupils' concerns about bullying and their sense of safety.

Improving the mental and emotional health of pupils is a key area for the residential service. Connections with parents, education staff and support agencies give staff detailed insight into the backgrounds, needs and challenges faced by pupils. Staff provide a nurturing and very structured residential environment so that pupils who have experienced trauma in their lives experience stability and belonging.

Wrap-around care meets residential pupils' physical and emotional health needs so that they have a good sense of well-being. Residential pupils are healthier and fitter because staff promote healthy eating and regular exercise. The recent introduction of a school nurse to the care team gives pupils easier access to medical and health advice. Plans to include healthy eating sessions within the residence period should extend pupils' awareness about healthy eating.

Residential pupils grow in self-esteem as their behaviour improves. Clear boundaries and plenty of time to talk enable them to be more reflective about their behaviour. They are

calmer, give greater consideration to others and are more able to take time out to help manage their anger. The opportunity to reflect enables residential pupils to understand some of the impact of their behaviour. They develop kinder qualities, look out for each other and are more tolerant of diversity.

Taking pride in and feeling involved in the running of the house give pupils a positive sense of responsibility. Daily meetings enable residential pupils to chat about their day and then plan the day-to-day running of the house. They work together to decide on activities, take turns in the laundry and sort out arrangements for the evening meal. Representations to the school council also give pupils an opportunity to express their views and ideas about the overall running of the school.

Pupils have good opportunity to practise independence skills while in residence. They take responsibility for their chores and enjoy cooking. Residential pupils also grow in confidence as they take more responsibility for their personal hygiene. They do their own laundry and take pride in making sure that their uniforms are clean and that they look smart.

Residential pupils are unanimous that activities are a key positive about staying in residence. They are also pleased that they complete their homework before tea and enjoy free time. These routines help them to develop better literacy and numeracy skills before embarking on trips out, swimming, football, arts, crafts and keeping fit in the gym.

The quality of care and support

Good

The comprehensive care planning framework promotes good quality of care. Care plans give staff an informed support package for each individual pupil across all aspects of their lives. Personal profiles, health care plans, risk assessments and behaviour management and education plans are all set up with the child at the centre of staff practice. Plans are well written and include residential pupils' views and wishes.

Progress and achievement are tracked and monitored with an established assessment and evaluation programme. Effective communication with parents and teachers informs teaching and care planning. Target setting around academic, social and behavioural needs helps to shape direct work with pupils. Residential pupils feel safe and cared for as their needs are met systematically.

Residential pupils' health and medical needs are safeguarded with robust medication procedures. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact their medication has on their behaviour and medical conditions. Staff are well trained and work with parents to ensure that the correct medication procedures are followed.

Partnership working with mental health and drug agencies ensures that pupils receive good support with their mental and emotional health. Professionals appreciate staff members' skills in identifying emotional fragility. This awareness feeds into quick and sensitive intervention to meet pupils' emotional needs and improve family welfare.

Residential pupils live in a homely environment and their accommodation is clean, tidy and comfortable. Living areas are personalised and pupils love lounging and relaxing on large comfy settees and having a computer room and an activities room with table tennis and pool. They enjoy the privacy of single bedrooms with en-suite shower and toilet facilities. Not all pupils' bedrooms are adequately heated. One pupil's bedroom is cold and damp due to inconsistent heating and a ventilation brick. Interim arrangements to warm this room were taken at the time of inspection until more in-depth investigation and full remedial action can be taken.

Residential pupils can and do keep in touch with people who are important to them during their residential stays. Parents' comments include, 'I ring every night and [my child] can call me. He tells me about his day.' Staff are also very aware of those children and young people who need extra support because they are struggling emotionally as a result of living away from home during the week.

Mealtimes are sociable occasions where everyone eats and chats together. Residential pupils are very positive about the meals provided and they enjoy being involved in menu planning with the cook.

How well children and young people are protected

Good

Sound safeguarding procedures are underpinned by embedded child protection procedures, regular staff training and good managerial oversight. Staff, including ancillary staff, are confident about keeping children and young people safe and work in a way that promotes everyone's safety and welfare.

Positive relationship building and partnership working are key strengths in the safeguarding of pupils. For example, as pupils develop strong relationships with staff members, they often disclose concerns about their safety. Staff, managers and leaders are quick to respond to, refer and support timely interventions.

Pupils are more willing to express their concerns and complaints because staff and leaders take pupils' views very seriously. The headteacher and head of care work closely with the local safeguarding officer to ensure that all concerns are investigated and that staff receive appropriate support.

Up-to-date staff knowledge and training contribute to the promotion and monitoring of pupils' safety. For example, recent training equips staff to respond to pupils who may be vulnerable to the risks of radicalisation.

High regard for, and rigorous implementation of, safer recruitment processes protect pupils.

No safeguarding or child protection matters have occurred within the residential setting since the last inspection.

Pupils are safe in the residential setting as a result of good security arrangements and the scrutiny of visitors to the school.

Effective implementation and oversight by the head of care of a range of risk assessments for the building, external grounds and on- and off-site activities help to keep everyone safe. Pupils live in a safe environment with regular health, safety and fire checks.

Safeguarding is good because care and behaviour planning is bespoke and child centred.. Staff are able to manage challenging behaviours because triggers are clearly identified in residential pupils' behaviour management plans. Insights about pupils' anxieties and learning challenges are shared between care and school staff. Pupils feel safe because their needs are understood, and interventions are timely and agreed with pupils.

Firm and practical boundaries are key to setting the foundations to improved behaviour. For example, regular mealtimes and good bath and bedtime routines mean that pupils settle well at bedtime. Their lengthy sleep patterns positively have an impact on behaviours and they wake and look forward to the school day ahead.

Pupils grow in positivity and feel good about themselves because staff consistently reward and positively reinforce the pupils' efforts, in both school and residence. Residential pupils are significantly safer because they engage in positive activities and associations. They are not on the periphery of gangs, substance misuse and other criminal activities while staying in residence.

Staff are trained in behaviour management practices, including safe methods of physical restraint. Their recording is very detailed and shows that physical intervention is only used as a last resort and to keep pupils safe from significant risk and harm. Staff understand the seriousness of having to restrain pupils physically. They place great importance on talking through incidents and this enables pupils to look at alternative ways to express their behaviour.

Statistics clearly show that incidents of physical intervention reduce and rewards for positive behaviour increase for those pupils who are resident. Some residential pupils are top of their school year and rate highly overall in both academic and behavioural achievements.

Detailed and frequent monitoring of behaviour management is embedded in the culture of the school. Managers and staff competently put information into and use an online system in which they can analyse and evaluate incidents and responses to difficult and risky behaviours. Translating information about incidents and rewards into charts and diagrams gives pupils an instant and meaningful view of their behaviour and their efforts to improve.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Good

Children and young people do well across all aspects of their lives because the residential provision is well managed by a suitably qualified and experienced head of care. The head of care is part of the school's senior leadership team and is directly

supervised and supported by the head of school.

External monitoring by governors of the residential setting is regular and contributes to the developments throughout the school. Reports are detailed and place safeguarding at the centre of the monitoring activity. The residential reports show and celebrate the important role that the residential service has in the operation of the school as a whole.

Pupils and parents understand the role of the residential service because the statement of principles and purpose of the residential provision is informative. Good information about the service, taster visits and ongoing communication with staff reassure parents and pupils about the pupils staying away from home.

Leaders and the staff team competently meet the aims in the school's statement of purpose. Well-organised referral and compatibility processes are effective in matching and introducing new pupils to the residential group.

The residential week is organised to promote pupils' needs, safety and well-being. Activity planning, rotas, consultation meetings, liaison with parents, staff development and monitoring are all competently managed by the head of care and the staff team.

Staffing arrangements meet the needs of the residential pupils. They experience a good sense of permanency and security, with long-standing residential care staff and consistent care from teachers and support staff in the evenings. This varied staffing complement means that residential pupils receive quality one-to-one support with homework, emotional well-being and a range of fun activities.

Staff benefit from regular supervision and appreciate well-organised and regularly refreshed training and annual appraisal. Staff have access to a varied range of training and development opportunities which respond to individual needs and the school's overall development and improvement plans.

Professionals say that the staff are: 'Amazing – in tune with the kids, understand their issues, communicate with them,' and 'The young person I am working with at the moment – if they had not been at this school then they would have been lost.'

Pupils thrive in the residential service because leaders and staff place pupils at the centre of the service. Staff make sure that pupils have good information about their rights, including how to complain, advocacy and the role of the independent visitor. Residential pupils are confident that staff will take action if they have concerns and would support them to contact an outside agency should pupils need independent advice.

Managers and leaders have clear insight into the strengths and ongoing areas for development of the residential service. The recommendations from the last inspection are met and fire safety assessments and checks are now robust. New and regularly displayed menus keep residential pupils informed about meal planning.

Leaders and staff are outward looking. They embrace and fully value the positive impact of partnership working. For example, the current Pathfinder Project exemplifies the

ability of leaders, managers and staff to think outside the box. Training enables staff to connect pupils and their families with mental health, benefits, debt, police, housing and health agencies. Proactive partnership working empowers parents so that they can resolve their own issues by gaining knowledge and trust from support agencies. Improvements in family welfare have a direct impact on the outcomes for pupils, both educationally and socially.

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 result 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 that children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or where their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	103632
Social care unique reference number	SC017171
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	9
Gender of boarders	Male
Age range of boarders	11 to 16
Headteacher	Janet Collins
Date of previous boarding inspection	30/11/2015
Telephone number	0121 693 5363
Email address	enquiry@lindsworth.bham.sch.uk

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