

# Philpots Manor School

West Hoathly, West Sussex RH19 4PR

<b>Inspection dates</b>	01/02/2017 to 03/02/2017	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of care and support	Requires improvement	3
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

- The management of safeguarding matters is organised, robust and effective in safeguarding residential pupils. The head of care continues to have a significant impact on the safeguarding procedures and practices across the residential provision.
- The head of care has good working relationships with external safeguarding agencies that ensure correct management of concerns or allegations. Residential pupils are cared for by staff who have an improved understanding of safeguarding and who report clearly and appropriately to the head of care as safeguarding lead.
- Residential pupils experience a calm environment. The staff continue to embrace the changes being made in relation to the staff team, and the record keeping and behaviour management practices. As a result, pupils appear relaxed and are making good progress in their educational, emotional and social lives.
- The management of health and safety and fire safety has improved and is now of a very good standard. Vigorous auditing and oversight assist the school in identifying areas for development.
- Recruitment procedures now exceed the recommendations of the national minimum standards for residential special schools. Overall, there is improvement in the estate and finance management of the school.

- Feedback from parents and social workers is very positive. They are happy with the care provided, the communication with the school, and the day-to-day feedback they receive about the residential pupils. In particular, they identify the head of care as a professional who listens and takes decisive action.

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

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

- The school produces a written placement plan, agreed as far as is practicable with the child, the child's parents/carers and any placing authority for the child. The placement plan identifies the needs of that child that the school should meet and specifies how the school will care for the child and promote their welfare on a day-to-day basis. Where feasible, children in the school are aware of the content of their placement plans and confirm that the school is providing care for them that is consistent with the plans. NMS 21.1  
This relates specifically to ensuring that placement plans are consistent in their recording and that the use of language does not cause misinterpretation. Placement plans should provide more detailed information regarding individual risk and behaviour management strategies.

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

The school needs to:

- further develop the systems in place so that residential pupils can contribute their views to the running of the school, for example by re-introducing the school council;
- ensure that there is consistency in completing a written record of all de-briefs following incidents or restraints;
- seek suitable supervision for the head of care, which may be external to the school; and
- develop additional ways of enabling pupils to be involved consistently and centrally in the planning of their care.

## Information about this inspection

Ofsted carried out this inspection with three hours' notice. Inspection activities included: meetings with key staff, including the head of care, a director, the education co-ordinator, the human resource and health and safety manager, the health manager, house staff and co-workers. Additional contact was made with the assistant designated officer for West Sussex. Inspectors had lunch with residential pupils and spent time listening to their views and opinions. No feedback was obtained from 'Parent View' because of insufficient numbers. Parents were notified of the inspection and offered the opportunity to comment in writing, by telephone, or in person. The inspectors spoke with two social workers and two parents by telephone. A wide range of documentation relating to the residential provision was scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Liz Driver	Lead social care inspector
Helen Humphreys	Social care HMI.

# **Full report**

## **Information about this school**

Philpot's Manor School is an independent residential special school and further training centre that offers weekly boarding during term-time. The school ethos is to provide a holistic approach to education, based on the social and educational principles of Rudolf Steiner. It specialises in provision for children and young people irrespective of gender between the ages of 7 and 19 who have been unable to learn and develop within mainstream education. All pupils demonstrate some degree of emotional, behavioural, communication or learning difficulty. Pupils who board at the school live in small residential care groups in four separate houses within the grounds.

## Inspection judgements

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

**Good**

Residential pupils make good educational, social and emotional progress at the school.

The safety of residential pupils is given a high priority. Continued improvements, since the last inspection, have resulted in suitable safeguarding measures being consistently applied. All arrangements relating to safeguarding are now of a good standard. Staff are aware of the added vulnerabilities from pupils' special needs. As a result, residential pupils learn how to keep themselves as safe as they can or are supported by an adult who can help to keep them safe.

The head of care continues to be influential in making improvements. She has developed a culture of learning from experience, identifying weaknesses and securing improvement for the residential provision. Leaders and managers understand the pupils' needs and ensure that they receive a good residential experience. The management team is striving to develop systems so that the residential pupils can contribute further to the running of the school and can be involved consistently and centrally in the planning of their care.

The residential provision is well organised with sufficient numbers of staff to allow the staff time to listen to the pupils. Pupils enjoy the residential experience and participate in a wide range of activities outside the school day, both on and off site. This enables pupils to develop their identities and raises their self-esteem and confidence. For some, progress has been substantial. Activities include music, art, cinema trips, football and games evenings.

Residential pupils benefit from good healthcare arrangements that continue to improve. For example, the development and implementation of extremely detailed individual healthcare plans enable the staff to have an improved understanding of each pupil's health needs. Residential pupils benefit from the safe administration of medication. A qualified nurse continues to strengthen practices through her oversight and review. In addition, the nurse has forged excellent links with external health professionals, ensuring that prompt referrals and appointments are made.

The residential accommodation is of varying standard. The senior leadership team is aware of this and is planning for future investment and the development of the individual units. Pupils say that they are happy with the accommodation provided.

### The quality of care and support

**Requires improvement**

Generally the service provides a good quality of care. However, care and placement plan records lack consistency in recording. The language used in the plans may cause misinterpretation. The lack of detailed information regarding individual risk and behaviour management strategies means that staff are not fully informed of all pupils' needs. In practice, the staff team is very aware of individual risks and care needs. The head of care and the staff are working to ensure that all residential pupils have detailed and up-to-date plans in place.

The staff provide a calm and nurturing environment that pupils enjoy. The staff feel very well supported by the head of care. They continue to be pro-active in embracing the changes that have and continue to be made. As a result, the residential pupils react positively and respond well to staff and take their guidance, while enjoying their company. The residential pupils feel supported.

Staff and pupils make many decisions together, although this could be extended, for example by the re-introduction of the school council. This would enable the residential pupils to have an increased voice in the running of the school. Thorough planning by the staff helps pupils move on to further education with minimal disruption. All reviews take place as required, are well organised and involve the pupils. This ensures that pupils can have their say.

Individual targets are set for residential pupils, and the pupils place importance on being successful in meeting or exceeding their targets. Many targets are set by the pupils themselves. These include: not being late, being more patient, improving hygiene skills, asking appropriate questions and learning what inappropriate and appropriate touch is. Staff were observed clearly referencing targets in planning activities and social events, demonstrating a good understanding of their purpose. A new recording format has been introduced to monitor the progress made by pupils.

Arrangements for meeting residential pupils' health needs are effective. Changes put in place by the head of care and the nurse have resulted in significant improvements. The nurse, who has a wealth of knowledge and experience, provides clear links between the residential and education settings and external health professionals. Medication practices have improved. They are safe and closely monitored. There are few errors and when they do occur they are robustly managed. Increased links with numerous health-related professionals enables children to access professionals on site and off and receive good quality healthcare.

Residential pupils are provided with a healthy and nutritious diet. Menus are discussed weekly and feedback is sought by the catering department. All feedback is taken seriously, with changes made to menus as required. Alternative meals are always available. Meal times are very social events with all residential pupils and staff sitting together. Residential pupils are encouraged to keep fit by actively taking part in sport activities, such as horse-riding, walking and football.

Residential pupils appear comfortable in their surroundings. All pupils have their own bedrooms which they can personalise. Communal rooms are homely and well resourced. Maintenance issues are quickly resolved.

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

**Good**

There are good systems in place to protect residential pupils and keep them safe. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has strengthened safeguarding practices over the last year. She continues to implement clear and robust practices across all aspects of safeguarding in the school. The DSL is also the head of care and is experienced and

knowledgeable in her role. She provides very good oversight and has created an open and questioning culture. As a result, some long-term embedded practices have ceased and residential pupils are better safeguarded. The staff and pupils are confident in the head of care's abilities. Positive feedback was received from the designated officer about the DSL's contact with safeguarding agencies and the impact she has made at the school. All concerns and allegations are robustly managed. She has forged strong relationships and transparent links with external safeguarding agencies. Clear and well organised records are kept of referrals and investigations. All records are well organised and stored securely.

Residential pupils are confident that concerns they raise will be taken seriously. Residential pupils reported that they feel safe at the school and they all have a 'named person' that they can talk to. The head of care has shown by example that she will always listen to pupils and that, no matter how long ago an incident occurred, she will ensure it is correctly managed. As a result, pupils have increased trust in staff. Information is appropriately placed around the school informing children whom they can speak to, including the Office of the Children's Commissioner and ChildLine.

There is not a culture of bullying at the school and few incidents are recorded. All incidents are quickly and strongly addressed. When faced with challenging behaviour, the staff will try to defuse or de-escalate situations. The use of physical intervention is continually decreasing and is currently very low. When physical interventions are used, they are documented, but there is inconsistency in the recording of de-briefs. The introduction of a system called 'behaviour watch' enables improved and timelier oversight by the head of care and other senior staff. There is a clear focus on trying to avoid sanctions when possible. Records and data analysis show no inappropriate sanctions were given.

There is a clear and robust policy for dealing with any pupil who may go missing. Staff take all missing incidents seriously and appropriate action is taken.

All staff are vetted to ensure that they are safe to work with pupils. Vetting procedures cover co-workers from European countries who stay for a year only. The systems for recruiting and vetting staff are clear and consistently applied. Training for staff includes awareness of child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism.

Arrangements for health and safety and fire prevention are good. The newly appointed estates manager has undertaken audits and this has led to a range of improvements. For example, food hygiene, fire prevention, checks for legionella disease, maintenance, security and laundry systems are of better quality. The recommendations from the previous fire officer's visits have been addressed. A newly drafted fire risk assessment is being reviewed by the local fire officer. Residential pupils have participated in fire evacuation drills. This ensures that they know what action to take if a fire occurred.

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

**Good**

The overall management of the service is good. Leaders and managers know the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and have worked hard over the last year to ensure that the residential provision has developed. The impact of the head of care is

clear to see across the whole school. Changes to senior staff are assisting the school to progress and develop. Clear action and development plans are adhered to.

The head of care has 26 years' experience of residential care and is a qualified social worker. She is suitably trained and experienced and able to continue raising standards. Areas that she identifies as requiring improving are actioned with successful outcomes. Having initially focused on safeguarding, she is now implementing changes to other areas, such as record keeping. She does not receive any supervision other than day-to-day informal supervision with the provider and other senior leaders.

The culture of the residential provision is characterised by the aspirations staff have for the pupils. The head of care leads on this and in turn expects high standards of care practice from the staff team. She gives clear messages and provides effective management. Staff receive regular supervision and close monitoring. Systems in place enable the head of care to identify whether a member of staff requires additional support and allow her to take appropriate action.

Staffing levels are good and meet the individual needs of residential pupils. Supervision is non-intrusive wherever possible, with staff keeping a close eye from a distance. Some pupils require one-to-one staffing. Each house has a house parent and deputy house parent, providing a stable team of staff. They are supported by co-workers who work at the school for a year. Staff, including co-workers, are given a job description and know the range of policies relating to their role.

There is a complaints procedure in place for residential pupils, parents and professionals. Complaints are recorded and investigated with comprehensive responses given to the complainant. The school learns from complaints and incidents. Leaders and managers make improvements in response to external and internal investigations.

The monitoring of the provision is undertaken by an external professional with many years' experience of residential special schools. He visits six times a year and provides a very good oversight of the quality of care provided. His reports provide the head of care with a useful tool for improvement.



## 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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC372592
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC372592
<b>DfE registration number</b>	

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>	14
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	Mixed
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	7 to19
<b>Headteacher</b>	Linda Churnside
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	24/03/2015
<b>Telephone number</b>	01342 810268
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