

Lakeside School

Lakeside School, Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO53 2DW

Inspection dates	28/03/2017 to 30/03/2017	
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	Good	2
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good	2

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is outstanding because

- Pupils in residential provision benefit hugely from their placements. This is demonstrated through the positive effect on educational achievement, social interactions, living skills and family relationships.
- An ethos of high, positive regard for pupils that emphasises their capacity to progress is consistently demonstrated in the interactions that staff have with children and young people. This results in pupils increasing their self-confidence and attainments.
- Conduct often dramatically improves in the residential houses and, with help, pupils then replicate this elsewhere, including in education and their own homes. This improves their enjoyment of school and family life.
- Parents report how support from staff and the progress of their children has been beyond their expectations. One said, 'My son has come on marvellously; we can't thank the school enough for their help in turning things around for him.'
- Staff are exceptionally effective in delivering safeguarding messages to pupils, in promoting British values and creating an environment where diversity is respected. These result in children and young people displaying low levels of risk-taking behaviours, high levels of tolerance of difference and pupils saying that there are no incidents of bullying in the residential provision.
- Pupils benefit from the range of recreational facilities available to them and the different activities that they can join in. These include those that stretch their abilities and levels of toleration of such things as being in crowded spaces and learning new

skills.

- Leaders and managers have continued to improve residential facilities with the opening of the independence house this year. They are to launch a further expansion of already excellent services with the introduction of ASDAN awards to give young people accreditation for developing competencies in independence skills.
- The development of pupils' personal and social abilities, together with improved educational attainments, do much to increase their life chances when they leave the school.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools:

- The person identified for children to contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school is easily accessible. Children are also provided with one or more appropriate helpline(s) or outside contact numbers, including the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England, to ring in case of problems or distress. (NMS 2.2)
- The head teacher or governing body carries out, and records in writing, once each year: a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for boarding pupils, in relation to: its Statement of Purpose; its staffing policy; the placement plans for individual children; and an internal assessment of its compliance with these standards. (NMS 20.4)

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that, on a pupil's admission to residential provision, staff acquire up-to-date and relevant parental consents and update risk assessments to include sleeping accommodation.
- Continually review the standard of accommodation for its future and long-term sustainability to ensure that it continues to provide a high standard of facilities, both structurally and internally, with particular regard to bathroom facilities.
- Ensure that the record of sanctions identifies those considered to be 'major', and that children are encouraged to have their views of them recorded. Ensure that gaps in the employment history of job applicants are always identified, addressed with those interviewed and that explanations are recorded.
- Ensure that the lone-working risk assessment is extended to make specific reference to the independent living house, to identify any likely risks to children or staff. Ensure that the school's social worker has regular line management supervision in addition to that provided by peer supervision outside of the school.
- Ensure that most monitoring visits made by the independent visitor are carried out unannounced.

Information about this inspection

The school was given three hours' notice of this inspection. An initial meeting was held with the headteacher, deputy head, head of care and senior manager. Interviews were held with key staff, including the headteacher, the deputy head, the head of care, the senior manager, the residential social worker, governors (including the independent visitor), residential care workers and the independent listener. An evening meal was taken in the independent house, and formal and informal discussions were held with young people. Parents and carers were contacted by phone to obtain their views. Parent View showed no responses either before or during the inspection. Feedback was sought from the designated officer of the local authority both before and during the inspection. In addition, records, key policies and procedures were viewed.

Inspection team

Chris Peel

Lead social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

Lakeside School is a maintained local authority day and residential special school for boys aged between 11 and 16 years who have social, mental and/or emotional health difficulties. Many have associated disabilities, including autistic spectrum disorder and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. The school is funded for 84 pupils, with a maximum of 20 weekly residential pupils boarding up to four nights a week, Monday to Thursday. At the time of inspection, there were 17 residential pupils and a total of 82 pupils on roll. The boarding house, which is split in two, is located on the school campus. The boarding provision was last inspected in March 2016.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Outstanding

Staff provide a safe and supportive environment in which strong, nurturing relationships help pupils to overcome the effects of trauma, negative experiences and meet the challenges of their various learning problems, such as autistic spectrum or attachment disorders. Exceptional progress is often made, especially when compared to that made prior to admission to the school. For example, pupils who had not had any education provision for a year or more now have excellent attendance records, and those whose behaviour threatened to lead to family breakdown now have far better relationships with parents and siblings.

One parent said that her son's schooling had been 'horrendous' and they had 'given up' on it prior to this placement, but he is now sitting in classes and able to talk to teachers who take what he has to say seriously.

Staff and managers do an immense amount of work to improve pupils' experience of school, group living and family life. They strive to help young people believe that they are capable of learning, have admirable qualities and can achieve. They are very successful in doing so.

The relationships that staff form with families are often a crucial factor in attaining improvements. There is an emphasis on accentuating positives and looking for achievable progress. These partnerships are frequently regarded as being unusually positive by parents; one father described staff as 'extra family' and a mother commented on the lift it gave her to read in reports that her son is 'a lovely child' and has 'good manners', because, she said, 'As a parent of a child like mine you don't hear compliments that often.'

Residential and education staff collaborate effectively to help pupils to make excellent academic progress. This includes providing after-school clubs and strong support for reading. As a result, spelling and reading age tests show substantial improvements for many pupils in residential provision.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy being in the boarding houses; they are often attracted by and enjoy the activities they get involved in, but also comment on the positive changes it has helped them achieve. These comments include: catching up on spelling, 'controlling my anger', and learning to iron. One pupil said, 'I'm not as naughty,' and others referred to things they had done in the past but do not do now.

The premises are relatively old, built when expectations of accommodation were different, for example almost all the walls are painted breezeblock, rather than plastered. This means that there is a battle to keep the houses from having an institutional feel, but one that staff are winning through art displays, refurbished eating areas resembling American diners and, mostly, the atmosphere that they create themselves. However, some bathrooms are in need of attention; one had peeling paintwork on pipes and a basin too small to wash in.

Nevertheless, when asked, 'What is it like to live here?' pupils replied with comments such as, 'Amazing', 'It's all really good', or 'I love it'. Without exception, those spoken to value enormously the benefit of their placement and the role that staff have in enriching their lives.

The quality of care and support

Outstanding

Staff use a range of strategies to achieve remarkable progress with pupils, drawing on their own skills and those of other professionals. Staff are proactive and work creatively with the school social worker and external professionals to support pupils and their families. The routines provided, and work of the staff in the boarding provision, complements that carried out with children in their homes. The outcome for one pupil has been increased respect for boundaries in school, in boarding and at home, a huge decrease in concerning behaviour, parents being more confident in managing behaviour, the young person being able to manage his emotions better, more positive family relationships and significant academic progress.

This is not an isolated case; parents describe a range of significant progress they have seen children make that includes managing anxiety better, increasing ability to read facial expressions and improving life skills as well as achievements in school.

Effective induction processes are in place and move at the child's pace, with one child saying he wanted to move in without introductory visits. His family needed more support to make the transition, which staff did with care and professionalism. His mother said, 'They were really helpful and put me at ease, especially the phone calls on the first few nights. He loves it.'

There is a wealth of advice and information given to pupils in such matters as healthy lifestyles, keeping safe and British values. Staff present this in a variety of ways, such as house meetings, individual and group exercises and posters designed by staff and displayed in the main house or put in folders for young people in the independence house.

Behaviour management policies effectively guide staff in dealing with challenging behaviour as well as promoting good conduct and helping pupils to make better choices. The inspector observed that staff consistently emphasise positives, the good behaviour, achievements and progress made. In the main house, staff support this by a reward system based on football that pupils fully engage in. Pupils in the independence house have quickly developed a different attitude in which they see good behaviour as the 'norm' that does not need such direct reinforcing. Nevertheless, staff let young people know when they appreciate their attitude and behaviour, and they arrange special events, such as favourite activities, to acknowledge efforts that the group is making.

Interactions in the houses are often characterised by good humour, which staff use to defuse potentially difficult situations and to encourage pupils to approach tasks with a more positive attitude. Banter between staff and pupils fosters a sense of comradeship in which children and young people believe that adults are on their side and so can tackle challenges together.

Staff seek children's wishes and feelings through key-worker sessions, the house meetings, questionnaires and informal conversations. They often skilfully deliver messages and ideas while pupils are engaged in other activities. Staff arrange these activities to enhance children's skills such as turn taking, handling money and team playing, as well as increasing toleration of waiting or being in a noisy environment.

Managers ensure that staff have the requisite skills and aptitude to work with the range of needs that pupils in the residential provision have. Some staff were able to give examples of how courses they had been on have strengthened their skills, including a greater awareness of body language. One said, 'I think about how I am standing and the gestures I use; I read the boys' body language, especially when they transition from school, to respond to them.'

Parents express great satisfaction with the care given to their children. One complimented staff on the discreet way a potentially embarrassing issue for her son was dealt with, and also how a change in medication dosage was double-checked in a phone call to make sure it was administered correctly, and commented, 'I could not fault them.'

How well children and young people are protected

Good

The school provides a residential provision that is maintained to ensure the safety and security of children who live here. Managers have responded to a previous point of improvement and conduct fire evacuation drills at different times during residential time, although, so far, one has not been done during hours of darkness.

The school has developed a particularly effective approach to anti-bullying, with a pupil given responsibility in each of the houses to champion the cause. Together, they have put together a presentation on the subject, which they gave to pupils and staff in the residential provision. It was successful and is being rolled out to the main school too. Pupils say that there are no incidents of bullying within the residential provision; moreover, an ethos has developed in which they look out for and support each other as 'boarding house brothers'. Taking their lead from staff, pupils expressed not only tolerance but also positive regard for others who have obvious difficulties.

Where necessary, staff may use sanctions and, exceptionally, physical intervention, but these are proportionate and consider the best outcomes for pupils when employed. The head of care, teacher and governors monitor their use. Staff ask pupils for their written views if subject to a restraint, but not when given a sanction. The log of sanctions does not easily distinguish major ones (on which children's views should be sought) and those that are minor.

Records show that no pupil has gone missing from the residential provision since the last inspection. One young person was not where he should have been during the school day, having gone out of bounds with a friend, during the inspection. Once alerted, the headteacher and other senior staff put the missing protocol into action and both boys were found safe. Local authority protocols are available on files.

Staff are well aware of how they should respond to any safeguarding concerns. They

emphasised the need to ensure that senior staff respond effectively to matters referred to them and that staff members had a responsibility to take matters further if they considered the response to be insufficient. This ethos and commitment to best practice makes pupils' welfare a priority.

No pupil in the residential provision is currently subject to a child protection plan. In one instance, up-to-date minutes of multi-agency meetings were not present on a child's file. This means that staff had no current written information about the family situation to help place the child and his behaviour in a wider context. This was particularly important as the child spends half his week in their care.

The social worker is pivotal in the school's safeguarding practice and procedures, providing guidance and training for staff, liaising with other professionals and working with parents and carers to improve family life for them and their children.

The school exercises safer recruitment practices in selecting new staff. However, gaps in employment histories were not well addressed in two of the three records seen; they were either not identified or, if they were, information subsequently obtained was not recorded. There was therefore a potential for a recruit to hide an event in their past that would have identified them as unsuitable for working with children. However, managers were able to gather the missing details from staff during the inspection.

Pupils spoken to during the inspection all said that if they had a concern about residential provision, they would speak to a member of staff and were confident that the matter would be dealt with in confidence. Many said that they would talk directly with the head of care, who young people see as a fair and friendly person, or would go to him if other staff did not deal with their issues. All pupils said that they felt safe.

Children and young people allocated places in the residential provision are already known to staff through attendance of the school as day pupils. Initial risk assessments and consents from parents for such things as emergency medical treatment are carried over from the school, but these do not always contain correct or up to date information. In particular they do not contain necessary risk assessment regarding sleeping arrangements.

The majority of pupils know of the independent person (referred to in the school as the independent listener) and some recalled meeting her. Her title, photo and email address are on noticeboards around the residential provision, but there is no written information about her role, and some pupils do not have the necessary skills to make email contact without help. The independent listener is not, therefore, as accessible as she might be. In addition, the Childline number is on display, and some pupils knew of the organisation, but contact details of the Office of the Children's Commissioner were not available to them.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Good

The school meets the objectives laid out in its statement of purpose. This provides information so that professionals and parents can make appropriate referrals or requests for pupils to have residential placements. Staff work in accordance with the statement.

The governing body monitors the effectiveness of leaders and managers to ensure that the standard of residential provision for pupils is high. It is formally assisted in this task by the visits made by one of its members to the houses six times a year. She makes observations of all the essential aspects of care and presents thorough reports to the board. However, visits are all at pre-arranged times, meaning that governors do not have an informed view of the provision when the visitor is unexpected – as is required.

Not all governors have a working knowledge of the National Minimum Standards, for example, confusing the role of the independent visitor and the independent person. Leaders and managers were unaware of the requirement to produce an annual report that addresses, among other matters, an internal audit of the school's compliance with the Standards. This means that, although there are high expectations of the residential provision, the school does not measure its performance against those laid down by the Department of Education.

Leaders and managers are experienced and skilled in their roles; they consistently and actively promote the well-being of pupils, including boarders. The introduction of the new independence house is the most obvious demonstration of this. The facility has undoubtedly provided increased opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and have a wider range of choices for living accommodation when they move on from the school.

Staff work flexibly across the main and independence houses, with the deputy head of care having particular responsibility for the latter. This ensures continuity of approach and relationships between pupils and staff. Many staff know the children and young people from their time in school prior to their admission to the residential provision. In addition, no agency staff are used, but permanent members of staff in the school are used to cover shifts when needed. Pupils, therefore, have a great deal of confidence in those caring for them. This was not universal, though, and the head of care undertook to follow up misgivings expressed by two young people.

Pupils in the independence house have some say in who works with them in the evening, which increases their choices and develops their sense of self-determination. The small number of young people in the house means that a member of staff may be working on their own, but can call on colleagues and is in frequent contact with them. A risk assessment of this situation has not been undertaken and so does not inform the school's lone-working policy.

All staff have undertaken an induction that prepared them well for the work of the residential provision and have or are in the process of undertaking training, including a Level 3 qualification, to equip them further to meet the needs of pupils.

The residential provision has a child-friendly 'grumbles and gripes' form for pupils to use as a means to raise any issues they may have. Pupils had to request one, but the head of care put copies on display during the inspection. The school's complaints policy does not refer to this form, and so it is not clear how a pupil may take matters forward if they are not satisfied with the outcome.

The school's social worker works with pupils and their parents and frequently liaises with colleagues in other agencies. She has peer supervision to maintain the conditions of her registration but does not have line management supervision within the school. Matters

such as professional development and working relationships are not, therefore, formally addressed or recorded. Senior staff supervise members of the residential team, who report that this meets their needs. All staff receive annual appraisals.

Many policies and procedures are available to parents, professionals and others on the school's website, but most are not current versions. The school maintains appropriate records for pupils and the running of the residential provision. The head of care is keen to gather information that will help identify what is working well and what may not be; for example, even a minor sanction is recorded so that successful techniques can be repeated for individual pupils. This contributes to the successful de-escalation of potentially difficult situations, a low level of major sanctions and the even lower number of restraints required.

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 if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	116603
Social care unique reference number	SC012456
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	17
Gender of boarders	Boys
Age range of boarders	11 to 16
Headteacher	Gareth Evans
Date of previous boarding inspection	01/03/2016
Telephone number	02380 266 633
Email address	gareth.evans@lakeside.hants.sch.uk

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