

# Marchant Holliday School

North Cheriton, Templecombe, Somerset BA8 0AH

## Inspection dates

21–23 March 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders place pupils' well-being and achievement at the heart of this school. They show a firm resolve to further improve this provision.
- Teaching is good. Teachers are highly skilled and passionate in their work. They show a determination to provide the very best education they can.
- Pupils with a history of extremely challenging behaviour and significant mental health issues make substantial progress from low starting points. The creative curriculum and personalised learning programmes for each pupil ensure their needs are met well.
- Staff are alert in all aspects of safeguarding pupils and are vigilant in their approach to their welfare. Handover of supervision at the start and end of the day ensures consistency of approach between the school and pupils' boarding provision.
- Relationships between staff and pupils in the school are strong. As a result, pupils build trust with adults and feel safe.
- The school provides pupils with a range of high-quality therapeutic provision which is making a positive contribution to their well-being and self-esteem.
- The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.
- The behaviour of pupils is good around the school and in lessons. Pupils clearly understand what acceptable behaviour is and respond positively to the requests of staff. However, sanctions are not always understood by staff and pupils or are not consistently applied.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of education and care their children receive.
- Subject leaders are not involved in the school's improvement work sufficiently and this limits their ability to raise standards further in their subjects.
- Leaders' plans for improvement lack precise arrangements for how, when and by whom actions will be checked to ensure they are making a difference to pupils' outcomes.
- Directors and governors are supportive of the school. However, they do not hold leaders to account strongly enough for the quality of education and care they provide.

**Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for residential special schools**

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards'), the national minimum standards for boarding schools/residential special schools and associated requirements.

## Full report

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

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - improvement plans indicate precisely who, when and how leaders and governors will check that actions taken have improved achievement and pupils are making the best possible progress
  - governors hold leaders more robustly to account for the quality of education the school provides
  - subject leaders have increased opportunity to monitor and develop the quality of teaching and learning so they know what does or does not work well.
  
- Ensure that staff, pupils and parents have a clear understanding of the school's sanction system so that:
  - there is clarity and consistency in the way in which the 'token system' is implemented
  - records of sanctions are comprehensive and always incorporate the views of the pupil
  - the effectiveness of sanctions issued is carefully recorded and monitored by leaders.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Effectiveness of leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers in the residential provision</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>How well children and young people are protected in the residential provision</b>	<b>Good</b>

- Leaders have ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards and the minimum standards for residential special schools. Leaders are reflective and are continually thinking of ways to further improve the quality of education they provide. In the words of a parent, 'the school thinks outside the box to help our children'.
- Leaders and staff are deeply committed and highly driven to provide the very best education, care and support for each pupil. They share a firm conviction that their pupils can achieve and succeed both during their time at Marchant Holliday and when they leave. Staff have high aspirations for their pupils, which is reflected in the strong progress pupils make from their often extremely low starting points.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Teachers carefully plan bespoke learning activities which excite and motivate pupils and meet the needs of individuals. Consequently, pupils increasingly enjoy their learning and make good progress. For example, younger pupils were eager to talk about their work on 'Out of Africa', describing the animals they are studying, and were visibly proud of their work. In addition, pupils in Years 7 and 8 were articulate in their explanation following an art lesson. They clearly understood the importance of using the correct brushes in completing a colour wash and being successful in painting horizons, with accurate perspective.
- Leaders regularly check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They provide support and guidance where required. As a result, teaching is good and impacts positively on pupils' outcomes.
- Learning is enhanced by a wide range of additional activities and trips. Swimming, fishing, horticulture and music are among the many activities available to pupils. Trips spark pupils' enthusiasm, bringing their learning to life; for example, visits to Clifton suspension bridge, the beach and museums.
- Excellent relationships between staff, pupils, parents and carers are fundamental to the continuing success of this school. Pupils feel safe and secure. Staff have a deep knowledge of the many challenges pupils face, which enables them to support pupils' development extremely well. Leaders provide detailed and regular reports to parents, and the local authorities which place pupils at the school, about their academic and personal development. This is particularly beneficial as it allows parents to be involved in their child's education, especially if they live some distance away.
- Parents are delighted with the quality of education and care their children receive. A typical comment made by a parent was, 'the school has transformed my son and as a result I can now see a future for him'.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is carefully threaded through the curriculum. The school's aim, 'to offer positive learning experiences within a secure and

caring environment that will enable pupils to develop their full potential for social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth', is at the very core of the school's work. The school works well at developing pupils' understanding of what it means to live in modern Britain. British values are taught explicitly through personal, social, health education and citizenship. Pupils talk with understanding about democracy, respect and equality of opportunity. They understand that although everyone is different, all should be treated equally.

- Pupils go on to carefully planned destinations, including back into mainstream education. Parents welcome the guidance they receive from leaders to ensure that their child moves to an appropriate setting where they can successfully continue their education.
- School leaders use funding effectively to support the high number of disadvantaged pupils. They plan specific activities, and purchase appropriate resources, to support learning. Consequently, there is no difference between the achievement of these pupils and others in the school.
- The Head of Care and residential staff are aware of the strengths and areas of improvement for the residential provision. An independent visitor provides challenge that is welcomed by leaders and managers to contribute to improvement.
- As well as mandatory training, residential staff have the opportunity to attend additional training in topics such as lifesaving. This means the pupils are able to regularly enjoy using the on-site indoor swimming pool. Staff report that they are well supported and trained through formal and informal supervision and regular training.
- The pupils who have complex care needs are very well supported to help them to build positive relationships with each other and the staff. Staffing ratios are high, ensuring that the staff have sufficient time to spend with each pupil so that their needs are met.
- Residential pupils enjoy staying in high-quality accommodation that is very clean, well furnished and maintained. Pupils are able to personalise their rooms with their possessions and most benefit from having en-suite bathrooms. Pupils and parents describe the school as an 'extended family home'. This builds pupils' confidence and feeling of belonging.
- A robust development plan is in place that details how and when further improvements to the site will be made. For example, the swimming pool changing rooms have been upgraded and improved and there are plans to build a dance studio.
- Effective systems are in place for leaders to carefully check the progress and achievement of each pupil, especially in English and mathematics. However, there is further work to be undertaken to check the progress of pupils across a wider range of subjects. Subject leaders do not routinely check the quality of teaching and learning to ensure pupils are making the best progress across the curriculum.
- The school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate. Leaders link school improvement firmly to their evaluation. However, plans for improvement lack precision in identifying how and when actions will be checked to ensure pupils are making the best possible progress.

## **Governance**

- Governors have a wide range of skills and expertise to support leaders in the school. They have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. However, they do not

routinely check that actions identified in the school's improvement plans are making a marked difference to pupils' achievement. Therefore, governors do not hold leaders to account as rigorously as they could for the quality of education and care they provide for pupils.

- Governors closely monitor school finances to ensure the financial stability of the school. For example, they have been instrumental in securing the finance for the recent build to ensure pupils have access to a high-quality learning environment and residential provision.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. A strong culture of safeguarding pervades the school. There is a shared understanding of the need to protect pupils against all possible risks. Staff, irrespective of their role, know the pupils extremely well. They remain vigilant and keep a watchful eye on each individual.
- All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and accurate. Policies and procedures are kept up to date and are resolutely adhered to. For example, staff have regular briefings on the latest guidance provided by the government. All staff are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding, including child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. This high-quality and comprehensive training enables staff to quickly spot concerns and take rapid action with confidence.
- Leaders and governors fully understand how to recruit safely so that all staff are carefully vetted prior to commencing employment. Risk assessments are thorough and regularly monitored by leaders.
- Leaders make effective use of other agencies and professional expertise to ensure that pupils are kept safe. However, there are situations when leaders are frustrated at other professionals' slow response to their concerns for the well-being of individual pupils. Nevertheless, leaders show a dogged determination to ensure pupils are safe.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe. They know that staff in school will help and support them if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils describe incidents of bullying as extremely rare and are confident that when they do occur swift action is taken by staff to resolve the situation.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of the importance of keeping safe appropriate to their age and stage of development. For example, pupils told inspectors, 'the school helps us to be safe especially when using the internet'.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teaching is good. Teachers show drive, dedication and a desire to provide pupils with high-quality learning experiences.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are impressive and instrumental in pupils' development. Staff provide a positive environment for learning which restores pupils' confidence to explore new challenges and their desire to learn.

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They show resilience and fortitude in getting the very best out of pupils. They develop pupils' key skills in reading, writing and mathematics effectively while retaining pupils' interest and motivation. For example, younger pupils' ideas were skilfully woven into a writing activity. They were able to demonstrate their understanding of adjectives and nouns in the task they were completing.
- Teachers and therapists work well together. They set challenging targets for pupils which help them secure next steps in learning, personal development and behaviour. Each pupil understands what is expected of them in their work and their behaviour.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge and enthusiasm lead pupils to quickly engage in their learning. Teachers use information carefully on what pupils can and cannot do to plan activities which precisely meet their needs. This increases pupils' confidence and self-esteem to become successful learners and make good progress.
- The most able pupils are making good progress, including those who are disadvantaged, and are catching up quickly with their peers in mainstream schools. Pupils' work and teachers' assessments confirm that they are on track to meet their targets. Teachers' good subject knowledge and skilful questioning, which probe and deepen pupils' thinking, contribute successfully to these good outcomes.
- Support staff are highly skilled and well deployed. They develop strong relationships with the pupils and provide effective support which contributes to pupils' good progress.
- Teachers and support staff provide ongoing feedback to pupils during lessons. They question pupils effectively to check understanding and deepen their thinking. This is successful in guiding and encouraging pupils to improve their work.
- Teachers carefully monitor pupils' learning and progress. They quickly identify gaps in knowledge and skills. They use this information to good effect to provide pupils with the activities and support they need to tackle and eradicate these gaps. However, while pupils are making substantial progress in reading, writing and mathematics, progress across other subjects is not as rapid or sustained.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say, 'staff at this school are caring, listen and provide us with great ways to calm down'. This helps them to settle when they first arrive at the school and to manage their feelings of anxiety and low self-worth.
- Leaders ensure that risk assessments are firmly in place and adhered to. They are monitored by leaders to check they remain fit for purpose. Individual risk assessments carefully set out the techniques staff need to manage pupils' behaviour. In addition, leaders have ensured that the site is safe and appropriately secure.
- Staff receive high-quality training in physical restraint procedures. Consequently, staff are confident in how best to manage the most challenging pupil behaviour when it occurs. Incidents involving physical restraint are recorded in detail and evidence shows that the number is reducing.

- Pupils' attendance is good. It is rigorously recorded and monitored by leaders. Pupils say they like the school and are keen to attend. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of care and welfare their children receive. Many made positive comments about the school, including, 'we can't fault the school, they have transformed our child and we can now see a future for him', and 'the school is brilliant, they are committed to helping our child and are non-judgemental; the school is a wonderful resource'.
- Residential pupils report that they feel safe at school and in the residences. They can identify a trusted adult with whom they can share their worries and concerns. Parents are extremely positive about the quality of care provided and how much their child benefits from staying in the residential provision.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Many pupils who attend the school have extremely challenging behaviour associated with their complex needs. The training provided by the school, combined with the caring ethos of the school, is supporting staff to manage pupils' behaviour well, using de-escalation techniques and therapy. As a result, the number of fixed-term exclusions is extremely low.
- Teachers plan and deliver lessons that excite and motivate pupils to learn. There is typically a calm and purposeful atmosphere in lessons where teachers expect pupils to work hard and complete activities set to a high standard. For example, in a Year 7 and 8 music lesson, pupils were engrossed in providing an accompaniment to a medley of songs on their guitars. They remained focused with high levels of concentration to ensure they are well prepared for a forthcoming performance. The pride in their achievement was palpable.
- Staff keep careful records of any incidents of poor behaviour. Leaders analyse these records to identify triggers and patterns of behaviour. The therapy and medical teams work closely with teaching staff to reduce pupils' anxieties and enable them to access their learning more effectively. This contributes to the good progress in their academic and personal development.
- Pupils recognise that at times some of them display extremely challenging behaviours. However, they confirm that they feel secure and well cared for. Parents agree and describe how staff have 'surpassed all our expectations'.
- Pupils are supervised well at all times as they move around the school and in lessons. However, staff also place trust in pupils, helping to raise their self-esteem and morale.
- Pupils have the opportunity to take part in raising funds for charity both locally and internationally. Opportunities to become involved in the school, such as being elected on to the school council and actively contributing to the recruitment of staff, support pupils to develop independence and responsibility.
- Behaviour is managed safely and positive behaviour is promoted in the residential provision. The staff understand the pupils they work with and know how to de-escalate heightened behaviour through the use of effective individualised behaviour management strategies.



## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils join the school at various ages and at different times during the year. Most have experienced significant breakdowns in their previous education placements and many have been out of education for prolonged periods of time. This has contributed to pupils starting the school with skills and knowledge which are typically well below average for their age. Their confidence and sense of worth is extremely low.
- To begin with, pupils display extremely challenging behaviour which is exacerbated by the complexity of their social and emotional needs. This can impact adversely on their mental health and well-being. Nevertheless, as pupils settle and receive the support they need from staff and therapists, they quickly begin to make progress and achieve good outcomes.
- A careful look at pupils' work carried out during the inspection confirms that pupils, over time, are provided with a range of opportunities to build their knowledge and skills. They are developing their knowledge of spelling, grammar and punctuation in their work and are able to successfully apply these skills to their writing. In mathematics, pupils learn to calculate number and to apply their mathematical understanding to solve problems. For example, older pupils were able to use their knowledge of decimals to solve some complex problems with confidence.
- The school's records and pupils' work confirm that most pupils make strong progress and in some cases rapid progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. This is the case for all groups of pupils. The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are making good progress, and sometimes outstanding progress, as a result of teachers' high expectations. Carefully planned activities challenge pupils' thinking in English and mathematics. However, progress for pupils in other subjects is not as strong. Leaders are taking action to tackle this to ensure that pupils are making the best possible progress across a range of subjects.
- Most pupils enjoy reading and leave the school as confident readers, able to access a range of texts with accuracy and with increasingly well-developed comprehension skills. This supports them effectively in their learning.
- The good progress pupils make, combined with the high-quality therapy they receive, ensures they are well prepared as they leave the school for the next stage of their education.

## Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision

Good

- The residential staff are enthusiastic, well trained and work effectively together. Routines run smoothly and there is good communication between the school and the residential staff. There is very good morale. Staff provide a warm, caring environment with the addition of humour and nurture. Pupils respond positively and make good progress with their social, emotional and physical well-being.
- The pupils benefit from continuing their learning beyond the school day when staying in the residential provision. These pupils build successfully on their education and social skills after school hours. This is clearly evidenced through information and evidence from both parents and pupils.

- The pupils generally enjoy staying in the residential provision and say this is because they have friends at school and enjoy the activities and routines. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of care provided at the school and how much their child has benefited from staying in the residential provision.

### **Quality of care and support in the residential provision**

**Good**

- Pupils receive bespoke, individualised support and care when staying in the school's residential provision. The school's one-page profile comprehensively details a pupil's strengths, care needs, what they think they are good at and what they need to learn. The staff know and understand each pupil extremely well. Pupils are encouraged to have high aspirations and achieve as much as they can in all areas of their lives.
- Each pupil has a detailed care plan and behaviour management plan that documents their care needs and how staff will meet these needs. Progress is carefully monitored and reviewed. This informs the pupil's next targets, which are clear and achievable.
- The pupils describe how they enjoy the meals provided. They are expected to help clear up and display good table manners, which they do. Mealtimes are relaxed, sociable occasions where the staff eat with the pupils and discuss their day. Overall, the menus indicate that the pupils enjoy a nutritious and varied diet.
- The healthcare needs of the pupils are fully met. The school nurse has implemented effective and robust new systems for managing and administering medication. A healthy lifestyle is promoted through the staff encouraging the pupils to enjoy the extensive school grounds and participate in sporting activities. Pupils are provided with appropriate information with regard to their understanding of health issues such as personal hygiene.

## School details

Unique reference number	123920
Social care unique reference number	SC033089
DfE registration number	933/6089
Inspection number	10008941

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school. The inspection of residential provision 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	Other independent special school
School category	Independent residential special school
Age range of pupils	5 to 12
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Number of part-time pupils	0
Number of boarders on roll	21
Proprietor	Marchant-Holliday School Ltd
Chair	Sean Henderson
Headteacher	Danny Kitts
Annual fees (day pupils)	£46,362
Annual fees (boarders)	£69,090
Telephone number	01963 33234
Website	<a href="http://www.marchant-holliday.co.uk">www.marchant-holliday.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@marchant-holliday.co.uk">office@marchant-holliday.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	26–27 June 2012

## **Information about this school**

- Marchant Holliday School is an independent residential special school located in rural surroundings in Templecombe, Somerset.
- The school was founded in 1952 as a registered charity which provides education and residential provision for boys aged between five and 13 years who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Some also have complex needs.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school does not have any early years provision.
- The school does not receive sports funding.
- All pupils have statements of special educational needs and/or an education, health and care plan and are funded by local authorities.
- The school has residential provision on-site for pupils.
- The school and residential provision last received an integrated inspection in June 2012 and were found to be good.
- The headteacher took up his post in April 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- The education inspector visited classrooms during the inspection to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment with the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, in the residential provision in the evenings, at break and lunchtimes and during lessons. Inspectors spoke with pupils and staff throughout the inspection.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other leaders and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors met with pupils and spoke to parents to seek their views about the school. Inspectors heard pupils read and attended an assembly. In addition, inspectors met with leaders responsible for welfare and with residential staff.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised during the inspection, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and data relating to pupils' attainment and progress. Inspectors also checked the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements, behaviour and attendance information.
- The lead inspector analysed the four responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and text message responses received from parents during the inspection. In addition, 43 responses to the staff questionnaire were considered.

## Inspection team

Jen Southall, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Christina Maddison

Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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