

# Ingfield Manor School

Ingfield Manor Drive, Five Oaks, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9AX

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this residential special school

Ingfield Manor is a day and residential, non-maintained special school for children between the ages of three and 19 years. Ingfield Manor provides an educational service to children who have neurological motor impairments such as cerebral palsy and associated impairments. Many of the children have additional complex medical conditions. Support is delivered through conductive education and the school has a long association with the Peto Institute. Most students board on a 'flexi' basis and have short stays at the school. Others, who board on a weekly basis, return home at weekends. The school is currently part of the charity Scope. However, it is in the process of changing ownership.

**Inspection dates:** 27 to 29 November 2017

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The residential special school provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the school contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

**Date of previous inspection:** 11 January 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

## Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school is outstanding because:

- Strong leadership and managers ensure that residential pupils receive a consistently high standard of care which meets their individual needs. Leaders and managers are aspirational for the pupils, and this sets the culture and ethos in the residential facility.
- The school provides outstanding specialist care, delivered by a highly competent and skilled staff team that enables children to make excellent progress and gain experiences they may not otherwise access.
- The school's trans-disciplinary staffing structure is integral to the effective delivery of the students' learning, development, well-being and progress.
- Positive and effective relationships with families enhance successful outcomes for the residential students.
- The school has recently won a national 'Shine a Light' award for its work in supporting assistive and augmentative communication.
- The school follows stringent safeguarding policies and practices that are overseen by a team of trained and competent designated safeguarding advisers.
- All residential students, without exception, are very happy and thoroughly enjoy their time at the school.
- The school has established impressive links with the local community, local schools, a local garden centre and work experience providers.
- Residential students receive excellent healthcare from the nursing and therapy team, ensuring that their complex medical needs are closely monitored and met to a high standard.

## **What does the residential special school need to do to improve?**

### **Recommendations**

- Improve the recording of fire evacuation drills in the residential time.
- Have a clearer recording system for monitoring of areas highlighted in Appendix 3 of national minimum standard 13.
- Take steps to achieve a more balanced gender mix among the staff team.

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

This school is full of happy and smiling students and staff. It is a highly positive environment where students thrive. Staff are passionate and enjoy the time they spend with the students. Despite many students only staying for one or two nights a month, and others staying more frequently, all students make considerable progress in areas such as their education, gaining social skills and accessing activities they may not otherwise be able to enjoy.

The school offers care which is unique. Residential students benefit from care that they receive from a wide range of highly trained, experienced and skilled staff. This trans-disciplinary working results in students receiving targeted support from the same staff both during the school day and into residential time. As a result, excellent progress is made across all aspects of their lives. Parents are very positive about the school. One said, 'This is a truly unique school and should be acknowledged as such.' Areas praised by parents include their child's happiness, staff relationships, staff practice, communication between the school and parents and the range of activities provided. In addition, parents were very positive about the progress their children make. Over the three days of this inspection, the inspector observed exemplary care, nurture and practice at all times.

Residential students' progress is supported by detailed and highly individualised care plans. The plans provide support strategies specific to each student's needs, some of which are highly complex. This includes guidance on specific therapies, intimate care needs, feeding regimes, mobility and communication systems. All residential students are supported to be able to raise their views, wishes and opinions. Through verbal and non-verbal communication methods, all students are able to communicate. The school empowers residential students to speak openly about how they feel and staff take all opinions seriously. This assists in helping students to become more independent and to gain confidence.

Residential students have easy access to, and are cared for by, a team of qualified and skilled nurses and therapists. The nurses ensure that all students' medical and health needs, some of which are complex, are met. Detailed healthcare plans are rigorously monitored, reviewed and amended. As and when individual health circumstances change, care plans are immediately updated. Care plans contain specialist input from nurses, doctors, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists. Many clinics are held on site as a result of the excellent relationships the lead nurse has formed with specialist medical consultants. Medication administration is very well organised and safely delivered. There are systems in place if an error occurs, although instances are very low in number.

Residential students participate in and thoroughly enjoy a range of evening activities that are aimed at providing opportunities for them to relax and enjoy their leisure

time, while at the same time promoting their independence and social skills. The school is well equipped to offer activities including a swimming pool and woodland which is fully adapted for wheelchair access. Staff promote residential students' individual interests, ensuring that they participate in activities of their own choice in addition to group activities. During this inspection, and after school, the inspector accompanied students on an outdoor ice skating rink activity. Students had great fun and were seen to be enjoying the company of staff who were observed to be extremely aware of the risks while ensuring that students had a great experience. The activity was highly organised, very well managed and appropriately risk assessed.

Residential students' accommodation is spacious, comfortable and suited to their needs. Staff encourage personalisation across all aspects of the school and residential life and their bedrooms reflect residential students' personalities. Ongoing maintenance work takes place with plans to update areas such as curtains and communal areas. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that residential students' specific dietary needs and methods of receiving nutrition are met.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

Safeguarding practice is very strong. The principal, head of care and senior staff make up the safeguarding team in the school. They are the designated safeguarding advisers and are appropriately trained and experienced. As a team, they meet regularly to review all reported safeguarding concerns, and to monitor what action has been taken to protect identified students from coming to harm. Recording systems effectively track and monitor the progression and impact of potential concerns. In addition, all safeguarding matters are reported to the organisation's centralised safeguarding team, which provides specialist advice and guidance on action that needs to be taken. This team also provides safeguarding training to all staff, and undertakes quality assurance visits to monitor the quality of safeguarding and child protection practice. These robust procedures ensure that high standards are maintained and that residential students are kept safe. Residential students said they feel safe at the school and confidently said that they would tell an adult if they did not.

The staff have a clear understanding of the increased risks students face and how disability can make them increasingly vulnerable to discrimination, exploitation and abuse. Areas such as internet and social media risks are addressed and students are supervised to ensure their safety. In addition, students are given advice on safe use in school and residential time. The staff receive very regular training on safeguarding and child protection that includes child sexual exploitation, e-safety and radicalisation. Sensitive issues are managed through excellent communication, consistency and strong management direction.

Residential students learn to develop communication skills, so they are better able to express their feelings, thoughts and opinions. Staff undertake training to support

residential students with their specific form of communication. Through thoughtful, sensitive and consistent support from staff who understand their complex and specific needs, residential students develop a sense of safety, protection and trust, enabling them to respond to the support that staff offer. Physical intervention is not used. Staff know and understand each student very well and successfully implement personalised support strategies.

Recruitment procedures are robust, ensuring that only adults who have been checked as being suitable to work with children are employed. Senior staff have undertaken training in safe recruitment practices and a trained member of staff is part of the interview panel.

Health and safety matters are routinely addressed. External inspections by the fire and rescue service and the environmental health agency have resulted in recommendations made. The school has responded to these, with actions now complete. All students and staff experience fire evacuation drills. Recording, particularly in residential time, needs to be clearer so that records show which students were able to participate and those not, including the reasons why. All residential students have their own personal emergency evacuation plan that informs staff and the fire service of their individualised evacuation procedure.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The school has a new principal who commenced in September 2017. She has transitioned into her role smoothly with no disruption to the residential provision. The head of care remains the same since the last inspection. Together, and with other senior leaders, they form a highly effective and ambitious leadership team that is aspirational for both the students and staff. They have the experience and skills to identify areas for improvement and implement action required.

The head of care has been in post since September 2016. She is a highly qualified and experienced occupational therapist and her specialist knowledge and expertise ensures that residential students benefit from a truly trans-disciplinary approach in the residential provision. She is an exceptional role model.

Staffing is stable and consistent. The quality of the staff team is high. The trans-disciplinary approach ensures that residential students receive a holistic care package at all times. The staff work across the school day and continue to support residential students in the evenings. Therapists add to the provision by providing innovative practices and individual programmes in the residential time and by offering expert support to both the staff and students outside of the school day.

Staff training is well organised, seen as a priority and delivered by qualified experts. The training programme allows staff to effectively support residential students. There is an embedded system for staff to undertake a level 3 diploma in residential childcare. The induction and personal development programme ensure that staff understand their role, have clear objectives and receive training to support students

as they progress. Although staffing numbers are excellent, there is an unbalanced gender mix; staff are mainly female. Recruitment procedures allow for a good mix. However, this has not proven successful.

Monitoring of the residential provision is strong and effective. Monitoring of areas highlighted in the national minimum standards for residential special schools does take place; however, a clearer recording system would allow for easier identification as to which senior leader monitors each area. Leaders and managers know the school's strengths and areas for development. Regular monitoring visits by an independent visitor and governor result in recommendations for improvement when necessary. Quality assurance visits from external managers and annual parents and carers surveys contribute to the ongoing evaluation of the service.

The points of improvement made at the last inspection are to be met once the school changes provider in the very near future. This relates to the updating of the school's website and statement of purpose.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the school knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the national minimum standards.

## **Residential special school details**

**Social care unique reference number:** SC014584

**Headteacher/teacher in charge:** Mrs Tracey White

**Type of school:** Residential special school

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## **Inspector**

Liz Driver, social care inspector (lead)





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