

Cicely Haughton

Cicely Haughton School, Westwood Manor, Wetley Rocks, Stoke-on-Trent,
Staffordshire ST9 0BX

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Cicely Haughton is part of Manor Hall Academy. It offers day and residential places to girls and boys aged five to 11 years. There are 50 pupils on roll, of which 30 pupils attend the school's residential provision. The residential provision was last inspected in January 2017.

Inspection dates: 5 to 7 February 2018

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: 17 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school is outstanding because:

- Children make fantastic progress in many areas of their development as a result of their residential stays.
- Residential staff and school staff work collaboratively to maintain fair and consistent boundaries for children.
- Staff are highly motivated, caring and nurturing.
- Planning for residential care is meticulous and tailored to each individual child.
- Staff undertake an excellent range of training and development. Research-based practice is evident in staff's day-to-day practice.
- Internal and external monitoring and review highlight the difference the residential service makes to children's lives.
- Safeguarding children is of paramount importance. Safeguarding issues are thoroughly dealt with.
- The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

The residential special school's areas for development are:

- The school's safeguarding development plan does not include timescales to help managers to identify when action should be completed.
- Incident reports do not always include children's views.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children make fantastic progress in many areas of their development because of their experiences in residential provision. Children stay at the residential provision for one or two nights a week or an extended day, and in some cases children do a mixture of both. Children are unanimous in their praise of their residential experiences. One child told the inspector, 'I love it! Ressie is brilliant. I am learning to get better with my feelings. I have loads to do and can play with my best friends.' Another child said, 'It is the best! I look forward to coming and have such fun.' Parents are equally positive. One parent told the inspector, 'He loves going and it has made such a difference to him. They are amazing. Everything is catered for. I would not change a thing, it is a brilliant facility.'

Excellent pre-admission planning underpins the success of children's residential placements. Children are introduced to the residential setting at their pace. They are regularly consulted about how they feel if they stay away from home. Managers and staff are flexible and child-focused. If a child is struggling, arrangements are quickly adapted to ensure the child's comfort and well-being.

Monitoring is highly effective and ensures that progress is regularly assessed. This information helps staff to identify targets for children to work towards, including communication, behaviour and self-care skills. These processes mean that children continue to develop and progress. Children's experience in the residential setting contributes to their overall progress in their learning. For example, the whole school approach towards behaviour management and an ethos of 'respecting each other' mean that children learn to be tolerant of others and to use their listening skills.

Staff forge exceptionally strong relationships with parents and carers. One parent told the inspector, 'Staff are superb. They go the extra mile and are always at the end of the phone. What is so fantastic is how school and residence work together, each complements the other. The routines set in residence help him in school.'

Staff are meticulous about gathering all the necessary information about children's health needs. There is a clear, comprehensive and safe system for managing children's medication. When children have additional health needs, for example asthma, all staff are fully aware of the associated care plan for the child.

Children take part in a vast range of exciting and stimulating activities. Children try new things, and their self-confidence and self-esteem blossom. Activities include sports, torch-light walks and baking, as well as relaxing activities such as arts and crafts.

Staff work together extremely well to prepare for children's moves to a new school. They are currently working with a local university research team to improve the

transition process. Children know that their residential stays will reduce in preparation for a move. When they are going to another school offering a residential service, visits are arranged to minimise children's anxieties, and to prepare them for the change.

The views of children are central to the operation of residential provision. For example, children can talk to an independent visitor, a governor, a head of care from another school and a visiting commissioner. Children know that they can approach all staff if they are worried or concerned about anything.

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

There have been a small number of safeguarding incidents since the last inspection, and these have all been dealt with in a comprehensive and appropriate way. Risks posed to children are well understood, and children's risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated when new information becomes known. Safeguarding practice is rigorously monitored through self-evaluation and external monitoring. This inspection found that managers had not identified specific dates when targets would be met in the recently revised safeguarding development plan. As a result, it is not always clear which targets managers are prioritising.

Since the last inspection, there has been one incident when children were absent from residential provision without permission. Staff managed the situation well, and children returned safely. A parent told the inspector, 'Staff were brilliant and made sure he stayed calm. They spoke to him afterwards, and I think that this helped him understand why adults were so worried, and that he should not do it again.'

All staff work well with other agencies and escalate any concerns they may have about a child to ensure their safety and well-being. Children are supervised by staff, and there have not been any instances of children being radicalised, or exploited. All staff have received training in these areas and are knowledgeable about what to do if an instance arose.

Behaviour management practice is exceptional. Children enjoy a calm and harmonious atmosphere. Staff are skilled in recognising when children become heightened in their behaviour, and gently de-escalate situations. Since the last inspection, there have been a very small number of physical interventions. Although staff seek children's views about these incidents, the staff do not always record these views.

The school's health and safety representative undertakes comprehensive reviews of all aspects of the school's site. The site manager ensures that risk assessments are always updated in response to incidents. Following a recent event, a thorough review was undertaken of site safety, including identifying a 'safe area' for staff and children if needed. Regular maintenance checks are undertaken, including fire alarm tests. This ensures that children continue to enjoy a comfortable and safe environment at

school.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Managers have an ambitious vision and high expectations for children in their care. The head of care is a highly respected professional who leads by example. She holds an aspirational view of the life chances of the children. She leads a highly motivated staff team which shares the ethos of the school. Excellent team working and morale propel and sustain improvement for children using the service.

The operation of residential provision is consistent with the aims in the statement of purpose. A fundamental principle of the school ethos is the daily promotion of tolerance, equality and diversity. Inspectors observed that children attending residential service are all encouraged to respect each other and accept differences. If children struggle to get along together, the service flexibility means that a child can be moved from one 'house' to another, where they may be more comfortable.

Leaders and managers have a clear focus on promoting the needs of each individual child. They carefully collate children's progress and work collaboratively with the child, parents, teaching staff and others, which means that children continue to make strides forward. Rigorous monitoring and external quality assurance provide a detailed analysis of the residential provision. Managers have a clear understanding of the areas of strength and areas of development of the school. New staff have recently started in the residential service, and the head of care and staff team are working hard with them to introduce them to their roles and responsibilities, with the aim of minimising any impact of the change on the children.

Staff say that they are extremely well supported by managers and have a thorough induction. Managers have recently introduced a peer mentoring scheme whereby new staff have additional support from an experienced practitioner. Good-quality supervision and appraisals are undertaken in line with organisational requirements. Staff undertake a wide range of training to ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to undertake their role. As a result they are clear about their roles and responsibilities and the expectation that they will achieve and perform at a high standard. Most staff have gained their level 3 diploma in caring for children and young people, and others will undertake this when their probation period has ended.

Staff continually demonstrate their commitment to the child-focused nature of the service and this is embedded in practice. Strong cohesive leadership provides excellent direction and guidance, including the use of research that helps staff shape their day-to-day practice. A current focus across the whole school is on improving children's emotional well-being and mental health.

Communication between school and care staff is excellent. Meetings at both ends of the day ensure that all staff are fully apprised of any information relating to the children, their presentation and their behaviour within school and in the residential service. The excellent communication continues with other agencies, parents and

carers. A family member told the inspector, 'I am so pleased with staff, and they are like friends rather than staff. Brilliant communication, they always keep me in the loop.'

Children enjoy a residential provision that is warm, comfortable and extremely well equipped with toys, games and resources. One child said, 'Staff always put the teddies at the bottom of my bed ready for me. It helps me sleep.'

An education inspection was taking place at the time of this inspection.

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: SC038731

Head teacher/teacher in charge: Paul Spreadbury

Type of school: Residential special school

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Inspectors

Julia Wright, social care inspector (lead)

Karen Wareing, Her Majesty's Inspector, social care.



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