

# Sidestrand Hall School

Cromer Road, Sidestrand, Cromer, Norfolk NR27 0NH

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this residential special school

Sidestrand Hall School is a day and residential special school on the North Norfolk coast. It is maintained by Norfolk County Council. The school caters for children and young people aged between seven and 19 who have complex needs. The large grounds include woodland and gardens. There are 176 pupils on roll. A maximum of 30 children and young people can board for up to four nights from Monday to Friday.

The residential provision comprises of three units and a flat situated in the main school building and Clement Lodge, which provide accommodation for pupils who have autism spectrum disorder. The total number of residential pupils is currently 27.

A welfare-only inspection took place in January 2018.

**Inspection dates:** 25 to 27 September 2018

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>good</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The residential special school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of previous inspection:** 22 January 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

## **Key findings from this inspection**

This residential special school is good because:

- Good, enthusiastic and experienced staff support the children.
- The staff and managers know the children well.
- Safeguarding concerns are responded to promptly and appropriately.
- A strong culture of positive reinforcement exists in the residential provision.
- Feedback from families and professionals is consistently good.
- The children make progress because of the support that they receive.
- The staff advocate for the children effectively.

The residential special school's areas for development are:

- Ensure that all policies and procedures are up to date and reflect relevant statutory guidance.
- Ensure that monitoring arrangements are strong enough to identify and address shortfalls and promote continuous improvement.

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

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

The school does not meet the following national minimum standard(s) for residential special schools:

- 3.6 The school has, and implements effectively, appropriate policies for the care of children who are unwell, and ensures that children's physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are promoted. These include first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, administration of medicines (including controlled drugs) and dealing with medical emergencies. Policies for administration of medication should reflect guidance provided by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (Handling of Medicines in Social Care).
- 11.1 The school ensures that: arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

### **Recommendations**

- Ensure that monitoring arrangements are strong enough to identify shortfalls and support improvement.

## **Inspection judgements**

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

This is a good residential provision. A well-established, enthusiastic and caring staff team supports the children. The children make progress, feel well cared for and enjoy their time in residence.

Although there are some shortfalls, these are primarily procedural. They have not affected the quality of the children's experiences and children are not at risk because of them. However, if unchecked, they have the potential to compromise both the quality and safety of the service.

There are sufficient experienced staff working in the setting. The staff know the children well. They have a good understanding of their needs and past experiences. This knowledge enables the development of good relationships with the children.

There is a strong culture of positive reward and celebration of achievement. The staff's acknowledgement and praise of good behaviour is instantaneous. It is a natural occurrence. The children respond positively to this.

The staff and the management team have good, strong relationships with families. The staff and the management team enable good, well-planned transitions into and out of the school.

The children make progress socially, behaviourally and educationally because of the support that they receive. One child reflected on how his ability to manage his feelings has improved since starting in the residential provision. He said, 'I can cope now.'

The children develop their independence and new skills that they can use outside of the school.

The staff ensure that children influence what happens in the residential provision, for example through discussions about meals and activities. Therefore, children are able to access a wide range of activities that they enjoy. Parents are positive about the new opportunities this gives the children.

The approach to managing health needs is variable. The staff support children well to have access to mental health services. Mental health professionals speak very positively about the quality of the service. However, the approach to managing medication is not compliant with relevant guidance. Not all staff who administer medication have had their competency to do so assessed. In addition, the medication policy does not contain the required information.

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

Leaders and managers promptly respond to any safeguarding concerns that arise. They ensure that appropriate action is taken.

The staff are aware of how to raise safeguarding concerns. They know who the designated safeguarding leads are.

The children reported that they feel safe and families feel that their children are safe. The children's behaviours demonstrate their feelings of being safe. A parent said, about their child, 'He loves boarding. When my son has boarded he is walking into this house full of smiles and is laughing and smiling.'

Leaders and managers have ensured that safe recruitment practice is consistently followed. There is a comprehensive system for renewing and checking staff vetting arrangements.

Internet security is effective. This prevents children from unwittingly placing themselves at risk of harm.

The children generally get along well. This demonstrates good matching of boarders. When there has been conflict, this has been managed well. The children are taught to respect one another.

The staff manage behaviour without recourse to physical interventions or sanctions. The staff consistently use positive reinforcement to support the children.

The children have annually reviewed risk assessments in place. Leaders and managers have identified this as an area for improvement.

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

The residential management team is respected by the staff. Managers have a good knowledge of the children, and routinely work directly with them.

This inspection has identified some shortfalls in managerial oversight. However, there has been no significant impact on the quality of care. The management team has enabled a culture in which good-quality care has flourished.

The staff and managers appropriately challenge other professionals. They strongly advocate on behalf of the child. A professional said, 'If it was not for [member of staff], that child would have had a difficult transition. Thanks to him, he had a successful transition. The school staff were collaborative and professional.'

The management team has addressed the shortfalls that were identified at the last inspection. Fire drills now contain sufficient detail and consultation has taken place with fire safety professionals. Safeguarding concerns have been responded to appropriately. The shortfall regarding sanctions records could not be tested, as no

sanctions have been used.

The staff have access to training opportunities. All staff have undertaken training in relation to safeguarding, including safeguarding disabled children. The staff's training needs are considered in the regular supervisions that they receive.

The staff are proactive in seeking out information to support their understanding of children's and families' diverse needs. For example, some staff have undertaken self-directed learning in respect of different faiths and religious beliefs, and others have requested and attended training in relation to gender and sexuality.

A structured complaint process is in place for parents and children, although there have been no complaints since the last inspection. The children can identify a range of adults with whom they could share their concerns or worries.

Feedback from families and professionals is consistently good. Parents said:

- 'I would just recommend them [the staff] to anyone. I trust them and [my child] trusts them.'
- 'I cannot fault [the staff] in any way shape or form.'
- 'They manage [my child's] needs brilliantly.'

Professionals said:

- 'My working relationship is excellent. The [communication] loop is there.'
- 'I would be happy to send my child there.'

Internal monitoring arrangements have not been sufficient. They have not identified delays in implementing new safeguarding procedures. As a result, the safeguarding policy does not reflect statutory guidance.

A programme of refurbishment continues to roll out across the residential provision. When refurbishment has occurred, it has been carried out to a high standard. During this inspection, issues were found with the building. Managers responded promptly in order to address them. However, routine monitoring had not identified these issues.

## **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:** SC042606

**Headteacher/teacher in charge:** Sarah Young

**Type of school:** Residential special school

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## **Inspectors**

Ashley Hinson, social care inspector (lead)

Mandy Nightingale, Her Majesty's Inspector, social care



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