

# Woodeaton Manor School

Woodeaton Manor School, Woodeaton, Oxford OX3 9TS

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this residential special school

Woodeaton Manor is a special day/residential school for 84 day pupils aged seven to 18 years who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The vast majority of the children are on the autistic spectrum. There are 10 residential placements, which are available for four days a week during term time only. Children usually attend once a week. The aims of the residential experience are to extend a child's social network, to develop their independence and to enable them to try new experiences

**Inspection dates:** 26 to 28 February 2019

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>outstanding</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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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:** 20 March 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

## Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school is outstanding because:

- Changes to senior leadership roles of the school have been managed very well.
- The students consistently receive well-planned and highly individualised care, delivered in a calm and nurturing environment.
- Safeguarding the students is expertly managed by a team of highly experienced and proactive senior managers.
- The students are protected, and the school environment is maintained by extremely well organised health and safety systems delivered by highly committed and skilled members of staff.
- The students thoroughly enjoy the residential experience. The staff develop strong, caring and professional relationships with the students.
- Children's social, emotional and educational progress is supported extremely well. The staff team sensitively and professionally supports the children and their families. Students make excellent progress across all areas of their lives.
- Senior leaders and managers provide good role models for the staff team and have developed and maintained an open and inclusive ethos.
- The staff commitment to the students is commendable. This can be seen by the positive response of the students.

The residential special school's areas for development are:

- Continue to embed the improved systems for staff supervisions.
- Continue with reviewing staff structure and staff development.

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

- Ensure that the independent person consistently visits at least six times a year and completes a written report on the conduct of the school.
- Develop a more organised system to monitor the areas identified in Annex 3 of the national minimum standards: issues to be monitored by the school.

## Inspection judgements

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

The residential students receive well-planned and highly individualised care and support provided in a calm and positive residential environment. The residential staff and students are expertly supported by senior managers and a psychologist who assists in identifying and supporting students' needs. Overall, the residential students benefit from a nurturing and well-rounded residential experience that they said that they thoroughly enjoy.

The students stay in the residential provision for one night or more; most stay for one night a week. They enjoy a range of social and recreational opportunities, irrespective of any disability that they may have. During their stay, residential students experience activities they may not otherwise have the opportunity to do, socialise with friends and learn life skills such as shopping for and cooking meals. The vast majority of the residential students make exceptional progress, taking their starting points into account. This is due to the staff's expertise, understanding and nurturing practices that the students respond positively to.

The residential staff carefully consider the friendships that the students have already made, when planning residential stays. The staff closely monitor the make-up of the groups and make changes if this will benefit individual students. As a result of the careful planning and assessment of compatibility, there are extremely low levels of incidents such as challenging behaviours, missing incidents or physical interventions. Records show that there have been no physical interventions or missing incidents in the residential provision since the last inspection.

The residential students are unanimous in their view that they thoroughly enjoy the residential provision. They are happy and relaxed and appreciate the support provided by the staff, who they describe as 'kind', 'fun', 'understanding' and 'friendly'. They said that they feel safe and have fun participating in the many activities on offer. Other feedback from the residential students includes views such as 'I have changed a lot since I have been here', and 'I really enjoy staying overnight. The staff are great.'

A strength of the residential provision is the strong relationships that the staff build with the students. The residential students are able to build trusted and secure relationships with the staff, who know them well, listen to them, spend time with them, protect them and promote their welfare. These relationships support the students to progress in all areas of their development. The students are encouraged and supported to try new things, manage their anxieties, develop social skills and build and maintain friendships.

The staff value the views of the residential students, who stated that they can talk to

any member of staff if they are worried. Managers and staff are responsive and act on residential students' views, demonstrating to them that they are listened to and that their views are important.

The residential students are treated with dignity and respect. They receive care and help that are sensitive to their identity. This assists the students to develop a positive self-view and increases their ability to form and sustain positive relationships and to build emotional resilience. Difference is embraced and celebrated.

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

The residential students said that they feel very safe at this setting. They said that they can easily identify a trusted adult who they can talk to about any concerns.

Extremely effective safeguarding measures protect residential students. All the staff take their responsibility for ensuring the safety of the residential students very seriously. The staff are vigilant and recognise the residential students' specific vulnerabilities. Any concerns are promptly reported to the experienced team of designated safeguarding leads, who take appropriate action. The headteacher is part of an established network of local schools, which work together to develop a coordinated response to any emerging concerns.

Systems for reporting and recording concerns are embedded into practice. Highly successful partnership working with the external safeguarding agencies and families promotes the welfare of students. This includes the school being an active participant and leader in local safeguarding and research projects that take place. The safeguarding leads are robust in challenging external safeguarding agencies when they consider that appropriate action is not being taken to protect the students.

Educating the residential students to raise their awareness of how to keep themselves safe is a priority for all staff. Through the curriculum and many one-to-one discussions, the residential students are learning about the risks they face and how to protect themselves. The staff are highly conscious of the vulnerability of the students when they are integrating into the local and wider community. The staff are well trained in all current safeguarding issues.

Relationships between the staff and the residential students are extremely positive and are at the heart of successful behaviour management strategies. Structure, routines and clear boundaries help the residential students to develop a sense of safety, protection and trust. The staff model appropriate social interactions, supporting residential students to make friends, maintain friendships and learn to successfully spend time with others.

The staff know and understand each residential student very well. They implement

personalised strategies to help residential students self-regulate their emotions and manage their difficulties. Incidents are rare, and physical intervention has not been used since the last inspection. The staff understand the residential students' behaviour and are skilled in defusing and de-escalating potentially difficult situations in an extremely calm manner. Residential students respond to the support provided by the staff, and behaviour is excellent.

Protection is further enhanced by highly organised and robust health and safety measures and comprehensive recruitment procedures.

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

Since the last inspection, there have been changes to the leadership in the school. The school has a new headteacher, and the residential provision has a new manager.

The residential provision closed for a few months in 2018 while awaiting new management. Since the new head of residential took up post in early 2019, the provision is once again open and flourishing. The headteacher and the head of residential continue to ensure that the previous outstanding practices and care that the residential experience has provided continues, and both express a commitment to further development.

The head of the residential provision is suitably experienced and qualified to fulfil his role. He has taken time to review the residential provision and reflect on current practices and has an action plan in place to develop the provision further. He has identified priorities and is working closely with the headteacher to address this. Areas identified and already implemented need time to fully embed. These include more detailed and regular staff supervisions and the continued review of staff development and structure.

The senior leadership team monitors all aspects of the school's operation well. Managers quickly identify and act to address any issues of concern. In addition to internal oversight, the monitoring of the residential provision takes place through independent visits. However, the independent person does not visit six times a year, as recommended. Most areas for internal monitoring, as identified in the national minimum standards, do occur but are not all well organised or recorded.

The staff team provides individualised support for residential students to help them develop individual skills. High expectations are supported through good role-modelling by the senior staff. The senior leadership team has developed very effective links with a range of external bodies and has a real presence in the everyday life of students who attend the school. Highly sensitive and caring practices delivered by all staff were observed throughout 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:** SC013056

**Headteacher/teacher in charge:** Simon Bishop

**Type of school:** Residential special school

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## **Inspector**

Liz Driver, social care inspector



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