

Bleasdale School

Bleasdale School, 27 Emesgate Lane, Silverdale, Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 0RG
Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Bleasdale School is a residential special school operated by Lancashire County Council. The school's primary function is to provide children and young people who have profound and multiple learning disabilities with a positive and safe educational experience while boarding at the school.

Up to 19 children and young people reside at the school for up to a maximum of 38 weeks of the year. The residential unit is situated across the road from the day school. There are currently five children accessing the residential provision.

Inspection dates: 19 to 21 November 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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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	outstanding
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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: 6 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Staff provide high-quality individualised care that enables young people to make significant progress from their initial starting points. The residential provision provides young people with an extremely positive learning environment that promotes their growth and development. Parents highly value the quality of support and recognise the progress that their children are making. One parent commented that her daughter has 'come on leaps and bounds'.

Young people build trusting and secure relationships with the adults who care for them. Staff know the young people exceptionally well and work proactively with their parents to promote continuity of care. Equality and diversity are celebrated. Throughout the inspection, all staff were observed to be continually encouraging and praising the young people. Young people's achievements are recognised, and their disabilities are not seen as a barrier to their participation or experiences.

Young people take part in a wide range of activities in their local and wider community, such as Guides, Scouts, youth club and wheelchair curling on ice. There is an interactive sensory room which combines a range of stimuli to help the young people develop and engage their senses. In addition, there is a purpose-built rebound therapy room which can be used for fun or as part of a physiotherapy session. There is now a fully interactive play area which enables both ambulant and wheelchair users to play and have fun.

Young people access the healthcare they need to stay fit and well. Young people have complex health and developmental needs. Staff promote the health and well-being of the young people extremely well. They are very skilled in areas such as epilepsy and gastric PEG-tube feeding. Comprehensive emergency procedures are in place, and are clearly understood by the staff. School nurses oversee the safe administration of medication.

Comprehensive care plans are highly personalised to meet the needs of each young person. Staff work closely with teaching staff, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and physiotherapists to ensure that young people make progress against their individual targets, as well as those set out in their education and health and care plans. One young person is learning to shop and prepare snacks. As a result of the installation of special equipment, a young person is now learning to feed herself independently.

Young people, including those who cannot communicate verbally, are actively supported to participate in their daily routines. Young people use tools such as signs, pictorial systems and electronic aids. They use them to talk about their day in school and to choose what activity they want to do or what food they want to eat. Parents are very positive about their children's experiences. Their comments included: 'They

have brought out his potential'; and, 'They are constantly thinking about his needs. All gold stars from me.'

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

Highly effective safeguarding measures ensure the welfare and safety of the residential pupils. All staff clearly understand their individual responsibilities in regard to keeping young people safe. Young people flourish in a safe environment. Parents spoken to confirmed that their children are safe and secure.

High levels of supervision promote young people's safety and security. Staff understand young people's risks extremely well. Young people are not overly restricted by the risk management measures in place. This means that they are supported to develop their independence according to their individual needs, while being protected from unsafe situations.

Staff manage young people's personal care needs with the utmost sensitivity. This promotes their privacy and dignity. The designated safeguarding lead has a good relationship with external safeguarding agencies, and reports any concerns accordingly. The designated safeguarding officer for the local authority confirmed that there are no concerns about the school or the young people.

Positive behaviour is consistently promoted. Clear structures, routines and boundaries promote young people's sense of security and well-being. A thorough handover of information takes place between school and residential staff. This means that information on young people's changing needs is shared with all staff.

The recruitment, selection and vetting of staff are effective. Entry into the school and the residential provision is only accessible by finger recognition, which provides young people with high levels of security. The governing body provides effective oversight, scrutiny and challenge of the residential provision.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers put the young people first. They are inspirational, confident and ambitious for young people. They continuously seek to refine and improve the service that they offer. This means that the residential provision continues to build on its strengths. For example, the residential provision has recently developed a sensory library where young people have stories read to them before going to bed.

The residential provision is achieving and exceeding its aims and objectives. It is well staffed and resourced. Staff morale is very high and staff turnover is relatively low. Staff are suitably experienced and qualified to deliver high-quality services to young people. Staff are well supported through regular care meetings and group

supervision. This enables staff to be confident, reflect on their practice and identify any further training. For example, they recognised that they would benefit from further training on administering rectal diazepam.

Senior leaders and governors support new initiatives that will provide benefits for all of the young people in the future. For example, the school is currently having an extension built that will provide extra classroom space and improved facilities for pupils. In addition, the school has introduced extra-curricular activities every Friday evening and pupils are able to stay overnight in the residential provision. This enhances the opportunities for, and experiences of, all young people.

The school's governing body monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the residential provision. Governors have worked hard to improve the quality of the oversight of the residential provision in order to maintain the high levels of care provided for young people.

An independent person also regularly visits the residential provision. The independent person meets with staff and observes the young people. She reports on the quality of care, which helps to ensure that high standards of care practice are maintained and there is continuous improvement.

A key strength of the school is the high level of consultation with parents. This takes place in order to improve the school and the residential provision. The school seeks feedback from parents in the form of a questionnaire; this includes translating the questionnaire for parents who speak English as an additional language. Parents' comments included: 'Love this school, my daughter is thriving here'; and, 'The school is great and no need for improvement – just keep doing what you are doing.'

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people 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: SC058077

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Mrs Kairen Dexter

Type of school: Residential special school

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Inspectors

Michelle Bacon, social care inspector (lead)

Pam Nuckley, social care inspector



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