

Elemore Hall School

Littletown, Durham DH6 1QD

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

This is a maintained residential special school for up to 86 boys and girls aged 11 to 16 years. All pupils have an education, health and care plan to meet their complex needs.

The school is located a few miles outside the centre of Durham. It is a converted large country house in its own grounds. The school has a residential facility for up to 25 residential pupils, split between two units. Twenty-one children currently attend the residential provision.

The school offers a residential provision for boys, who can stay for up to four nights a week, excluding weekends and school holidays. The last education inspection was on 25 and 26 April 2019.

Inspection dates: 20 to 22 November 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
---	------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The residential special school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of previous inspection: 4 December 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children enjoy their experience in the residential units. One child described his residential experience as fun and said he wished he could stay all week. The children's social skills improve because of their stay. The children make new friendships as they learn how to spend their social time positively with their peers. The children have excellent relationships with the members of the staff team, who know them very well.

The activities that the children undertake enhance their life experience. The children's favourite activities include sports clubs, climbing, army cadets, bush craft, horse care and geocaching. The delivery of the 24-hour curriculum reinforces the children's learning. The children work towards qualifications for some evening activities, such as climbing and horse riding. The qualifications celebrate the children's achievements and provide them with valuable skills for later life.

The children make good progress with their education. The children like their school and they benefit from the support they receive across both the school and the residential setting. The children learn the skills they need to access opportunities when they leave, and many go on to succeed in further education.

The staff encourage the children to make healthy lifestyle choices. The staff work closely with the school nurse and a designated member of staff to educate the children about a range of health topics, including smoking, vaping, personal hygiene, identity, gender and sexuality. The children also benefit from other services in school, such as support from the educational psychologist.

There are safe procedures in place for the storage and administration of medication. The improved system for auditing, storage, transportation and administration of medication is providing additional safeguards for children who have medication during their stay.

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

Physical intervention is used as a last resort. If it is necessary, it is used at a low level for the shortest time possible to reduce the risk of harm to the children and the staff. Clear boundaries motivate the children to maintain positive behaviour. The children are proud of their efforts and they achieve house points and rewards for positive behaviour.

The staff undertake a range of courses which help them to recognise and reduce the risks to the children. Courses they undertake include safeguarding, county lines and child sexual exploitation. The children also complete learning which helps them to recognise risk and helps them to make safe lifestyle choices. The learning they undertake provides them with an understanding about issues such as safe use of

social media and the risks of substance and alcohol misuse.

The children do not go missing from the residential service. The staff know what to do if the children were to go missing. The staff are aware of the children's individual risks. The staff update the children's risk assessments after significant events, to make sure they manage risks consistently.

The staff take effective action to manage safeguarding incidents. However, the records of such incidents do not demonstrate the full range of actions taken to protect children. This means that the leadership team does not have a comprehensive overview of the experiences of the children involved.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The headteacher is passionate about continually improving the quality of care and the experiences of the children. He leads the team by example, supported by two heads of care.

Monitoring systems to track children's social progress are effective. The children, their families and the staff work together to set the children's individual targets through termly meetings. The leaders ensure that the views of children and their families on their progress are key in their future planning.

The staff training development plan meets the needs of the children and helps the staff to be aware of the issues the children may face. However, the plan does not demonstrate or evaluate the impact of the staff training. This potentially hinders future progress in developing the quality of care.

Individual staff supervision and appraisal takes place. The appraisal system allows staff to track their own progress. The staff's individual development plans do not include how staff will achieve their goals. When staff reach their targets the impact of their achievements is not reviewed, and future goals are not identified, potentially hindering ongoing development.

The governing body has strengthened its oversight of the whole school. The appointment of new members has brought greater challenge to the leadership team to support improvement.

The leaders are strong advocates for the children. They work with other professionals, such as the local authority designated officer, educational psychologist and the school nurse, to make sure the children have access to the support they need.

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:

- 19.4 The learning and development programme is evaluated for effectiveness at least annually and is updated if necessary.
This specifically relates to the learning and development plan for residential staff and to the staff's individual learning and development plans.

Recommendations

- Ensure that the recording safeguarding of issues details fully the action taken to safeguard children. Ensure that the audit trail provides an assessment of the experiences of children.

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: SC040508

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Mr Richard Royle

Type of school: Residential special school

Telephone number: 0191 372 0275

Email address: elemore@durhamlearning.net

Inspectors

Jamie Richardson, social care inspector



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019