

# Royal School for the Deaf Derby

Royal School for the Deaf, 180 Ashbourne Road, Derby, DE22 3BH

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this residential special school

The Royal School for the Deaf Derby is a non-maintained residential special school. There are 114 pupils on roll, whose ages range from three to 20. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan for hearing impairment, and some have complex special needs. The residential service operates on weekdays only, as all children and young people go home at weekends. There are 81 pupils who stay at the school during the week, on a full-time or part-time basis. The residential accommodation is provided across three residential facilities that are purpose-built blocks. The school is a signing and speaking community, where the languages and cultures of both deaf and hearing people are valued. The school is situated in the city of Derby.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

### Inspection dates: 29 June to 1 July 2021

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<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	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:** 7 October 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

## **Inspection judgements**

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

Children receive highly individualised care and support from experienced and qualified staff. Children make exceptional progress.

Children's special educational needs are not regarded as a barrier to success. The school has high aspirations and ambitions for children. Children share these ambitions and thrive in this environment. Strong relationships between education and residential teams promote success. This promotes progress, as it meets the holistic needs of all children.

Children enjoy rich experiences. They enjoy a wide range of stimulating opportunities. Staff provide children with challenges and encourage them to take risks, within a nurturing environment. This means that children develop their self-confidence and skills, which leads to positive self-esteem.

Children love coming to the residential provision. They describe it as the 'best'. They have strong and trusting relationships with the staff team. Parents say the staff 'love and care for them like they were their own children'.

Staff forge excellent relationships with parents and carers. These relationships are central to ensuring that children have successful residential stays. One parent said: 'Staff go above and beyond for all children; they are our lifeline.' Effective communication provides reassurance that children are being well cared for.

The views of children are central to care provision. Children contribute to their care plans. This means that children understand their goals and progress, which gives them a sense of pride and ambition to succeed.

Children enjoy a whole-school approach to independence. Children are prepared to enter the world of higher education, training or employment. This means that they have the knowledge and skills needed to prosper when they leave the school.

The identity needs of children are central to care practice. Staff promote individual identity needs. Children are proud to be part of the deaf community.

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

Children's safety and welfare are priorities to this provision. Parents and professionals state that safeguarding practice is excellent. There have been no safeguarding incidents since the last inspection.

Managers and staff have an excellent understanding of the vulnerabilities of the children. They advocate on behalf of children, and challenge responses that they feel are not in children's best interests.

The lead designated safeguarding officer has particularly effective safeguarding practice. He is a qualified social worker and experienced residential practitioner. He is tenacious in ensuring that deaf children are safe and that their welfare is promoted. The school has several trained designated safeguarding staff. This provides safeguarding expertise over the 24-hour curriculum.

A comprehensive programme of training equips staff with the knowledge to keep children safe. Training is targeted to meet the individual needs of children. This means that each child is safe because staff recognise risks and how to manage potential harm.

From the point of each child's admission, their needs, risks and vulnerabilities are well understood. Risk-assessment processes are clear, and risks are regularly reviewed. Over time, risks reduce for children. This means that children are better equipped to manage increased levels of independence.

The school's COVID-19 monitoring tool is good. This analyses the impact of COVID-19 on children's well-being. This means that staff can put plans in place to minimise harm. The care children have received during the COVID-19 pandemic has been exceptional. Parents, carers and social workers confirm this with very positive feedback.

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

Leadership arrangements are exceptional. The senior leadership team has a clear focus to drive continual improvement in this valuable residential provision.

The highly experienced residential lead ensures that there are consistent standards of outstanding care. Managers and staff are aspirational for the children to reach their individual potential.

Managers promote the professional development of all staff. This enables the skilled and knowledgeable team to provide high-calibre, bespoke care to children with a diverse range of complex needs.

Electronic systems to book and record training allow all staff to take an active role in their own development, as well as providing leaders with a clear overview.

Rigorous supervision enables managers to support staff, identify training needs and monitor the quality of care provided to children.

The staff team is cohesive. Staff are passionate about their roles and have a shared commitment to ensuring the highest standards of care and support.

Effective partnership work promotes children's progression. A social worker said: 'The working together is brilliant. I cannot fault them.' Parents and carers are unanimous in their praise for this residential provision.

Meticulous internal quality assurance provides detailed analysis of the impact of care provision and the progression of children. This ensures that all children are supported to achieve the best outcomes.

Governance and external monitoring remain strong. Governors are experienced professionals within education, social care and business. Their oversight ensures a high degree of independent scrutiny, which in turn ensures compliance and drives progression.

## **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:** SC002015

**Headteacher/teacher in charge:** Helen Shepherd

**Type of school:** Residential Special School

**Telephone number:** 01332 362512

**Email address:** headteacher@rsdd.org.uk

## **Inspectors**

Amanda Ellis, Social Care Inspector (lead)

Catherine Honey, Social Care Inspector

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