

The Caldecott School

Station Road, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6PW

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Caldecott Foundation School is a non-maintained special school which provides a service for day and residential pupils between the ages of seven and 16 years of age. It is a school for pupils who experience social, emotional and/or mental health difficulties and who may in addition have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or autistic spectrum condition. The residential provision can accommodate up to 10 pupils. At the time of this inspection, there were three pupils in residence.

The inspector only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 23 to 25 February 2022

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
---	-------------

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: 10 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The high standards that leaders and managers set for this provision mean that the pupils receive high-quality individualised care. This results in a rich residential experience and sustained progress that expands the pupils' opportunities.

The care staff take the utmost care to understand the pupils' needs and vulnerabilities before they move into the residential provision. The care staff manage the move from parental care to residential care with great sensitivity, and at a pace that best suits the individual pupil. This provides positive starts for pupils and facilitates the early development of positive relationships with the care staff.

Partnership working between parents and carers, teaching staff and care staff is of a high standard. Care staff maintain close working relationships with parents and carers and display a detailed knowledge of pupils' families and their circumstances. There is excellent communication and positive relationships between the care staff and teaching staff. This truly joined-up working ensures the continuity of the pupils' care and supports their best possible progress and development.

The pupils display a sense of familiarity and belonging in the residential provision and the relationships between the pupils and care staff are warm and mutually respectful. Pupils say that they like the staff and feel safe and well cared for. Clear but flexible routines and structures add further to pupils' sense of security and belonging. This positive environment reduces the pupils' anxieties and the behaviours associated with these feelings. There has been a substantial reduction in the number and level of disruptive incidents in the residential provision over the past six months. This helps the pupils to be more receptive to learning and increases their opportunities for fun and interesting activities.

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

The care staff are highly vigilant and sensitive to any issues that might undermine the safety and well-being of the pupils. Because the pupils trust and respect the care staff, they talk about times when they have been worried or felt unsafe. Most of these incidents are historical and have occurred outside of the residential setting. All incidents have been reported according to statutory guidance with comprehensive follow-through to a point of conclusion.

The risks and vulnerabilities associated with each pupil are well understood and there are clear plans in place to guide staff in how to manage and reduce these. When a new risk is identified that requires specialised knowledge, leaders are quick to ensure that the care staff undergo the relevant training required to effectively manage the new risk.

The most recent safeguarding incident was reported in July 2021 and there have been no incidents of pupils going missing since the last inspection.

The physical environment is maintained to a high standard and all required health and safety procedures are followed, including those relating to protecting pupils from fire. Environmental risk assessments are in place to guide the care staff in supporting pupils to make safe use of outdoor recreational facilities.

Leaders and managers have instilled a strong safeguarding culture in the residential provision. It is proactive and comprehensive and helps to keep the pupils safe, and protects their well-being both within and outside the residential setting. Some shortfalls were noted, however, in the event of medication being transferred from parents into the setting when the pupils arrive via a taxi service.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers set high standards of practice for the care staff. They expect the pupils to make significant progress in all key areas because of their periods of stay in the residential provision. They are ambitious for what the pupils can achieve, despite the limitations of their schooltime-only periods in residence.

Pupils who are refusing, or disengaged from, their education are nursed back into full-time schooling. Pupils make good progress in taking control of their personal care and learning important life skills. They learn how to control behaviours that undermine their social development and they begin to cultivate vocational interests and aspirations. The high standards of care that they receive from motivated care staff make a significant contribution to these life-expanding achievements.

Leaders and managers lead by example in their approach to the pupils' care and development. This helps to maintain standards and to motivate the care staff to do their best for the pupils. The care staff are well supported through regular supervision and team meetings. Meaningful annual appraisals facilitate their professional development.

Leaders and managers are creative and innovative. The information booklet for new and prospective pupils has been skilfully translated into a pictorial version, and free spaces in the building have been converted into special areas of interest. These include rooms for films, sensory stimulation, art and boardgames. This drive to further develop and improve the residential facilities enriches the pupils' residential experience and helps them to be more receptive to formal learning.

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that when taxi drivers are used by parents as carriers for children's medication, there are controls in place that confirm that the medication sent is the medication received by the school. (NMS 3.6)

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: 1276600

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Karen Norman

Type of school: Residential Special School

Telephone number: 01303 815678

Email address: Nick.Barnett@Caldecottfoundation.co.uk

Inspector:

John Pledger, 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 children looked after, 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 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://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022