

Lindsworth School

Monyhull Hall Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham, West Midlands B30 3QA

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Lindsworth School is a maintained residential special school catering for boys and girls who have social and/or emotional difficulties. It currently offers education for pupils aged nine to 16 years old. Currently, the school accommodates 129 boys and girls, eight of whom are residential pupils. Boarding is predominantly offered four nights a week. The residential provision is situated in a large, detached house, spread over two floors and located close to the main school. Residential pupils can use the school's sporting facilities during residential time.

The residential provision was last inspected in October 2019.

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.

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

Inspection dates: 15 to 17 March 2022

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: 1 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good-quality, individualised care from a dedicated team of staff who are all child-centred. Staff know the children well and have an excellent understanding of the children's individual vulnerabilities and strengths. This has led to the staff team developing strong relationships with the children and their families.

Children make good progress, especially in their education, emotional health, and social and independence skills. Staff know the children well. A parent reported: 'Staff know my son very well and have worked with him on in his independence and social skills.'

Healthcare needs of children are addressed well. Health plans set out children's medical needs and clear guidance for staff to follow. The school nurse provides health support to children and advice to staff. Her weekly visits provide regular consultation, and children can also drop in to talk to the nurse about their concerns. Medication is stored safely and administered by trained staff.

Stability in the residential provision enables children to maintain attendance and achievement at school when they may experience difficulties and pressures in their own families. Staff provide children with support for their education, by encouraging school attendance and supporting the completion of homework and promoting wider learning.

Children enjoy their time staying overnight in the residential provision and quickly develop supportive and caring relationships with the residential staff. They are encouraged to join in activities that staff propose, and those that the children suggest. As a result, many develop improved social skills and gain confidence in mixing with adults and their peers, both in the school and out in the community. Children also learn other skills that they will need as adults. Input around independence skills is well delivered and positively received by children.

A wide range of activities are offered, both on the school site and in the local community. The school is well resourced, with a computer area and large games room. Children can access the school gym and the outdoor football area for exercise and as part of a healthy lifestyle. Children told the inspector: 'It's good to be able to see your mates outside of school.'

Children are meaningfully involved in decisions about the operation of the residential provision. They also contribute significantly to decisions about the way they are cared for by staff and the activities they participate in

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

Effective safeguarding measures promote the welfare of children. Staff are trained and confident in their safeguarding role. Safeguarding records are held electronically, and contain the necessary information. Concerns are responded to effectively and swiftly. The head of care works in partnership with local safeguarding boards to support child protection. This promotes a consistent approach in the way that the school works to protect children.

Residential staff monitor children's welfare and have excellent knowledge of individual needs. This means that they are well positioned to identify any changes in children's behaviour that could indicate potential concerns.

Children's behaviour within residence is good. Staff have very positive relationships with the children, and this is supported by the clear rules and boundaries that are consistently applied. An electronic recording system assists staff to keep track of children's behaviour and records their educational achievement and commitment to their work throughout the school day. This system promotes rewards for positive behaviour and highlights problematic areas that are then responded to in the residential provision.

The site is physically safe and secure. Staff ensure that visitors are closely monitored, signed in and chaperoned. They also practise the home's fire evacuation procedure and test the system on a regular basis. Children also participate in fire evacuation so that they know what to do in the event of an emergency.

Safer recruitment processes are followed effectively. Thorough records detail all necessary information on new and existing staff. This ensures that children are cared for by adults who have been appropriately vetted.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Children make progress across all aspects of their lives because the residential provision is well managed by a suitably qualified and experienced head of care.

The head of care is a valued member of the school's senior leadership team. This demonstrates the importance that the school attaches to its residential provision. The head of care leads a committed team whose members all want the very best for each of the children and make great efforts to break down the boundaries that children face, whether this is in their emotional health or social relationships. The senior leadership team strives to improve the experience of children in the residential setting.

An integrated staff team works across both the school and the residential facility. This brings a wealth of experience and diversity to the team. Staff receive the training and knowledge that they need to meet the needs of the children. Effective supervision ensures that the staff receive good support in their roles. Relationships between the

staff are positive. They are supportive of one another and work closely as a team. This provides the children with consistency and stability.

There is monitoring oversight of the residential provision. An independent person regularly visits the provision to audit and monitor day-to-day practices. She also spends time in the provision with the children, and regularly consults them to ascertain their views. All quality assurance information is routinely considered in governors' meetings, and prompt action is taken to address any shortfalls.

The leadership response to the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic has been positive. Support was offered to children who were unable to attend school during lockdowns. Children and families were supported by means of home visits, escorts to school, food parcels and signposting to organisations who could offer further support.

Staff work in partnership with parents and external professionals. This means that children receive a well-organised package of care and education. Parents are very positive about the care their children receive. They say that the residential provision provides huge benefits for their 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: SC017171

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Mrs Kathryn Beale

Type of school: Residential special school

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Inspector

Dave Carrigan, Social Care Inspector

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