

Treloar School

London Road, Holybourne, Alton, Hampshire GU34 4GL

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Treloar School is a non-maintained residential special school for children with physical disabilities. Residential students are accommodated in a purpose-built house. The school site is accessible to all students. There is a health centre which is staffed for 24 hours a day by nurses or health care assistants. Additional support on site is provided by professionals, including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, dieticians, music and play therapists and counselling psychotherapists. Rehabilitation engineers, assistive technologies, caterers and a transport department are also on site.

At the time of inspection, 17 children boarded at the 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.

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

Inspection dates: 8 to 10 March 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 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The staff provide children with excellent care and support that is extremely well developed and well implemented. Children are closely involved in all possible decisions about their care. A parent said that 'this is an organisation which finds solutions to problems that are aimed at improving children's lives'.

Staff help children to develop goals and to articulate their aspirations. The very effective partnership work between care staff, teaching staff and parents results in consistently high quality experiences for children. Children's care plans are informed by in-depth assessments from the multidisciplinary team. This ensures that staff have a thorough understanding of children's needs before they are admitted to the residential provision and throughout their stay.

The members of the staff team are resourceful and imaginative. They have a can-do attitude to helping children to achieve to their full potential and to thrive. The organisation makes inspiring use of cutting-edge technology to support children's wide-ranging needs. Some children's use of technology assists them to express themselves in new ways. This support is increasing children's autonomy, independence and ability to engage and influence their lives in ways that were not possible before. For example, for one child, staff continually reviewed her ability to operate her response controls to her electric wheelchair due to a degenerative health condition. They adapted the controls to ensure that she could remain independently mobile. Staff help children to reach their full potential and this helps children to make friends, participate more in activities and to develop goals and aspirations that were previously thought to be out of their reach.

Children in residential benefit from the exceptional resources available in the school for them to learn and play. Fun is clearly embedded into the well-organised and diverse activities programme. This caters to children's individual needs and helps them to develop interests and experience new things. Children experience a seamless transition between residential provision and education. Staff in both settings communicate effectively and work to the same plans in relation to caring for and supporting children with regard to their health and well-being.

Staff pay close attention to children's dietary needs to ensure that they get healthy, balanced meals that they enjoy eating. For example, for children who need to have food pureed food due to swallowing difficulties, staff use innovative techniques to make this food appear solid and resemble the food that they are eating. This helps normalise their experience of eating and this is outstanding practice which helps all children feel included and valued.

Generally, the environment meets children's needs well. However, there are a lot of signs containing information for staff on the boarding house walls and this detracts from the homely environment which the staff aim to achieve.

Parents feel that the staff in the school work closely with them to ensure that their children's needs are met. They feel that the residential provision is helping to build their children's confidence and helping them to be more independent. For instance, a parent happily said that since her child has been at the school, she can see that 'his cheeky personality is back'.

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

Leaders and managers in the school ensure that safeguarding practice is continually kept up to date and that staff are aware of the range of vulnerabilities that they need to be aware of when caring for children. The information provided covers an extensive range of issues that the multidisciplinary team might need to know. For example, the physiotherapy team has had training about when therapeutic touch might become restraint. The school governors receive regular safeguarding training and recently attended a presentation to better understand the risks relating to peer-on-peer abuse in a school and care setting. This has resulted in a well-informed team whose members understand safeguarding practice well and who use this knowledge effectively.

Staff consistently follow detailed risk assessments which are informed by specialist staff who understand complex health needs. The assessments carefully consider child's comfort and emotional well-being and staff are attuned to the need to care for children in a safe, thoughtful and sensitive way. Any incidents that affect children's well-being are noticed and recorded and acted on to ensure that children are well cared for and safe.

Residential students' online activity is closely monitored. Each child is provided with support and learning about online safety, taking account of their level of understanding and exposure to risk. E-safety is also taught to residential students, care staff and parents to reduce the risks posed by social media when at school or at home.

Children have a range of trusted adults that they can confide in if they have any concerns. Complaints are taken seriously, and prompt action is taken in response to children or families if they raise concerns.

The staff develop nurturing relationships with children which help them to manage their feelings effectively, understand what is happening in their lives and express their emotions better. The use of social stories is a particular strength of the support provided to children by staff. They use this visual method of explaining to children to ensure that they understand and are involved in decisions about how care is provided for them. As a consequence, serious concerns about children's behaviour are rare. One child said that she had found it difficult to say how she felt before but now could do this more easily, which made her feel happier.

Physical interventions are seldom needed. Where physical interventions are necessary, staff are suitably trained, and use approved low-level interventions. Managers evaluate each physical intervention, but their evaluations are not recorded. This is a missed opportunity to learn from incidents to ensure good practice.

Safeguarding incidents are well managed and generally well recorded. However, it is not always clear from records how incidents are followed up from beginning to end. Managers review all incidents to identify any actions that they may take to further strengthen practice and enhance the safety and well-being of children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

This school's exceptional leadership can be seen in every aspect of the school's residential operation. An exemplary drive for developing excellence is embedded in every area of practice of the school. This includes, for example:

- contributing to the wider sector and influencing national developments for children's safety and well-being and promoting equality
- developing links to assist more disadvantaged children to obtain placements at the school
- contributing to international and national research papers which support better understanding of children's needs
- creating a clear set of values and developing a culture that is informed by understanding how children experience care and education in the setting.

There are clear lines of management accountability across the school site. Leaders and managers are readily accessible and check in regularly with children and staff, especially when there are difficulties. Staff are enthusiastic about working in the residential setting and report that they feel well supported by managers. This all results in a highly motivated, well-trained team whose members feel valued and who are rightly proud of their achievements for children.

Managers ensure that staff receive the training that they need to help children to flourish. The safeguarding culture in the school and residential provision keeps children's best interests at the heart of all care practice. There is a shared desire to help children be the best that they can be. The high standards of care help each and every child to enjoy their time in the residential service and they benefit in ways that are profound and far-reaching.

Residential pupils are taught to respect difference and to celebrate diversity. It is a particular strength of this school staff advocate strongly within the professional network for the rights of children with SEND. The support that the school provides to children to maximise their independence and reduce barriers to communication and the work undertaken by staff to promote their mobility is exemplary. This embodies the spirit of The Equalities act (2010) in that they make all reasonable adjustments to enable children to benefit from the support, care and education provided in the school.

For many children, this will have a profound and lasting effect of increasing their ability to participate in society and improve their life chances.

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

Points of improvement

- The registered person should reduce the use of written information on the walls of the residential provision.
- The registered person should create a chronology for each safeguarding concern that is opened. The chronology should also demonstrate that all actions have been completed and the conclusion to the concern.
- The registered person should ensure that records of managers' evaluations of incident records are kept.

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: SC012024

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Martin Ingram

Type of school: Residential special school

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Inspectors

Ruth Coler, Social Care Inspector (lead)

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