

# Education and residential inspection summary for St Vincent's School - A Specialist School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs

Yew Tree Lane, West Derby, Liverpool, Merseyside L12 9HN

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Inspection dates: 31 January to 2 February 2023

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's education overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

The judgement for the experiences and progress of children in the residential provision is: requires improvement.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

- Pupils very much enjoy coming to St Vincent's School. They like being with their friends and they enjoy the warm relationships that they have with teachers and leaders. Pupils feel safe in the school. They told inspectors that if anything is worrying them, they can tell an adult and they know that they will get the help that they need. Staff care for pupils well.
- Leaders and other members of staff expect pupils always to do their best in their work. Pupils respond positively to these high expectations. They work hard and typically achieve well, successfully overcoming the barriers that their needs present with the strong support that staff provide.
- Staff at the school have equally high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand how they should behave in class and around the school. Most pupils show strong self-control and good manners. Occasionally, some pupils' needs can result in lapses in their behaviour. However, staff respond calmly and skilfully to manage these rare occurrences. There are few incidents of bullying, but, when they happen, leaders deal with them promptly and effectively.

- Pupils have access to a broad range of experiences beyond their formal learning. For example, they take part in activities related to climate issues, including cultivating and distributing their own wildflower seeds. They have links with schools in other countries, such as Ethiopia.

The inspectors made **one recommendation** to help the school improve, covering the quality of the curriculum.

## What is it like to stay at this school?

- Children who stay in the residential unit enjoy good relationships with staff and other children. Staff have incredibly detailed knowledge of the needs of children and their likes and dislikes, as well as their individual needs and personalities.
- The number of evenings that children spend in residence each week varies, depending on their needs. Other children stay for 'extended' stays into the evening. This enables them to spend time socialising with their peers as well as enjoying activities that they may not otherwise be able to access.
- Children enjoy a wide range of activities such as swimming, arts and crafts, meals out and socialising with each other. Staff also take time to arrange individual activities for children, in line with their individual interests. One child enjoyed a trip to the airport to practise making airport announcements, which he thoroughly enjoyed. The other children also enjoyed listening to his tales of this day out.
- Children said that they enjoy their time in residential group and that staff help them and keep them safe. Parents also spoke positively about their child's experiences in the residential group and of the difference it makes to their child. One parent said that her child loves going to school and looks forward to going. Another parent said, 'We don't worry about anything.'
- Children who stay in the residential group make good progress, for example, children's independence skills have improved, as have their social skills. One child who attended residence progressed to university to study sports. Although children make good progress, it is difficult to see the input of staff in achieving this progress or to see the progress that children are making termly or annually.
- Staff ensure that children have good bedtime routines, to ensure they are ready for school the next day. Staff also help children with their homework and consult with school staff to make sure that any concerns are dealt with promptly.
- Communication between residential staff and school could be better, to ensure that any educational targets are clear for staff to follow and monitor together.
- Staff are provided with specialist training to meet the individual health needs of children before they are admitted to the school or residential provision. Safe and well-documented medication administration procedures promote children's health needs, and children are provided with healthy balanced meals. An experienced health care coordinator provides advice and guidance to children and staff as and when needed.

The school **does not meet the national minimum standards for residential special schools** relating to monitoring by independent visitors and staff supervision, training and support.

The inspectors made **three recommendations** to help the school improve, covering records, safeguarding and the safety of children.

- View the full inspection report for the education provision:  
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/25/104734>.
- View the full inspection report for the residential provision:  
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/10/SC040724>.



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