

Kings Mill School

Victoria Road, Driffield YO25 6UG

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Kings Mill School is a residential special school that is maintained by a local authority. The school is in the heart of the town of Driffield. It provides education for 137 children aged from two to 19 years. All children have complex needs, including some with autism spectrum disorder. Many children have multi-sensory needs.

Up to 32 children access the residential provision. Children can stay in the residence up to four nights per week. The residence is open one weekend in four for one child with a specialist care package. All children have education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Inspection dates: 3 to 5 May 2023

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	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

The residential special school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of previous inspection: 4 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy trusting relationships with the adults who care for them. Staff have strong insights into the children and use their knowledge to provide the level of care that meets the individual needs of the children. The recruitment of new staff has increased this resource and thereby enhanced the quality of the children's experiences. Having additional staff in the team has enabled strong and positive relationships to develop between staff and children.

For some children and their families, the positive effects of residence are significant. The flexibility of the service allows children to receive additional help at weekends. Children have social opportunities they may not have if they did not stay in residence. One parent said, 'Seeing our child enjoy the activities has given us the confidence to try them at home. Staff offer us advice about what works and share their expertise. This has really helped us.'

Staff have effective lines of communication when caring for children to ensure that each child receives the level of care and supervision that they need. They use a variety of dialogue and communication techniques that take into account the children's individual needs, to promote an inclusive culture.

Children are helped to adjust from a busy day in school when they arrive in residence through individual routines facilitated by staff. Doing arts and crafts activities, playing with toys or having a more relaxed period of adjustment by taking a nap help children to prepare for the evening ahead. Strong morning routines ensure that children are prepared in good time for going back into school.

The different needs of children at mealtimes are well managed and the children thoroughly enjoy their food. There are a variety of food options available for children to choose from each day. Specific dietary needs and choices are also taken into consideration to support children to have enjoyable mealtimes.

The children's achievements are captured through 'wow moments'. Staff consistently recognise the children's achievements and offer positive praise to help build the children's self-esteem.

A speech and language therapist and family liaison worker support the work of the residential team. They offer their expertise to support the children's development and the ability of families to meet their children's complex needs. They offer training and helpful advice to staff when needed. This can be in relation to the group of children or individual children. These working relationships enhance the quality of help that children receive.

Small child gates are secured on most of the children's bedroom doors. The level of restriction the gates provide is necessary to keep some children safe. However, for

other children, they are not required and are not aligned to their individual needs. This is not aspirational for children, and it does not help the residence to feel homely.

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

Positive behaviour is consistently promoted. Staff's knowledge of the children helps them to use effective de-escalation techniques to manage unwanted behaviours. The flow of communication between school, parents and staff enriches the quality of behaviour support for children.

The children's behaviour plans provide staff with clear direction and guidance about what they must do to keep children safe when helping them to cope with difficult emotions. This helps staff to be consistent in their approach and provide children with a sense of safety.

There have been few safeguarding incidents in the residential provision since the last inspection. There have been no serious incidents of self-harm, going missing from home, bullying or allegations about staff practice. Strong lines of communication between the designated safeguarding lead and senior leaders ensure that, when concerns are raised for children, they are responded to swiftly. The effective use of the recording system keeps essential people informed about what actions have been taken to safeguard children. This promotes a strong safeguarding culture.

The system for collating and recording information about low-level concerns in relation to staff practice is clear and unambiguous, and provides a way of seeing patterns and trends. This enables managers to take timely action and reduce the risk of children being unsafe.

Safe recruitment procedures help leaders to check that staff are safe to work with the children. Those recently recruited have the relevant knowledge and experience aligned to the needs of the children. This has helped to reduce the children's sense of uncertainty because the new staff have been quick to adapt to their roles and support the children effectively.

The use of physical intervention is rare. Since the last inspection, there has been only one incident of physical intervention. However, the recording lacked accurate detail of the event. It does not support managers to evaluate that staff practice was necessary and proportionate. The staff debrief does not show how the residential manager scrutinised the incident to be reassured that staff acted in the best interests of the child. The record does not show that the child was spoken to or observed to understand their feelings. Leaders have a plan to improve the quality of restraint incident recording. However, this has not yet been implemented.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The residential team is led by an experienced and highly committed head of care. The level of commitment he shows is infectious to the team. There is a shared

emphasis throughout the team to ensure that children in residence receive the best experience possible. However, shortfalls remain in the leadership and management of the residence where further improvements are required.

Some improvements have been made to the internal environment of the residential provision since the last inspection. However, in the children's bedrooms, there are two beds where the supportive padding needs to be replaced due to wear and tear. One of the outside play areas looks tired and has broken play equipment. This does not enhance the children's experience.

The staff induction programme supports new staff into working effectively in the residence. The induction covers all areas that might reasonably be expected, including the provision of intimate care. Staff have to be observed doing intimate care tasks before they are signed off by their line manager. However, staff competency in this area is not revisited beyond induction, to evaluate whether intimate care practice by individual staff or the team is aligned to current and best practice.

The children's care plans describe each child's individuality. The style of writing enriches staff's understanding about the care needs of each child. However, care plans are not kept under regular review. This does not support staff to show how children make progress during their time in residence or provide reassurance that plans are aligned to the children's current needs.

Staff supervision takes place regularly. Staff also undertake a range of training to equip them with the skills to understand and meet the needs of the children. New systems are in place to ensure that any review of training is undertaken promptly. Where there is a delay, there are enough experienced staff members, so the children's quality of care is not affected.

External scrutiny of the children's experiences is provided through an independent person who regularly visits the residential provision. The visits are enhanced by the visitor observing and speaking with the children, family members and staff. This helps the visitor to better assess the quality of the service and raise the standard of help and care provided to the children.

Reports shared about the residential provision allow the governors to have a better understanding of the experiences of children in residence. This is further strengthened by periodic visits by a governor to see the children and staff. This is helping to develop the quality of service provided to children.

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

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools:

- Leaders should ensure that good-quality sleeping accommodation is provided for children. It is well organised and responsive to children's needs and is managed with ongoing assessments of risk (which should be documented) and the findings acted upon to reduce risk for all children. Accommodation gives children appropriate privacy, taking into account sex, age and any individual needs. Where children share a bedroom, they are able to express a preference about who they share with. To minimise disruption the school should aim to avoid mixing accommodation arrangements for children on longer placements and those on short breaks. (Residential special schools: national minimum standards 9.1)

Points for improvement

- Leaders should ensure that placement plans are regularly reviewed (not less than every term and in conjunction with reviews of any EHC plan) and amended as necessary to reflect significant changes in the child's needs or progress in his or her development. Ensure that children and parents/carers are aware of the content of the placement plans. (Residential special schools: national minimum standards 7.2)
- Leaders should consider providing clear analysis of oversight of physical intervention and any outcome from this. (Residential special schools: national minimum standards 20.1)
- Leaders should ensure that all children and staff are given an opportunity to discuss with a relevant adult (who was not directly involved) incidents of restraint they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by, where possible within 24 hours. Discussions should take account of the age of the child, their capacity and cognitive ability and communication needs, and the circumstances of the restraint. (Residential special schools: national minimum standards 20.5)
- Leaders should create and make accessible a stimulating environment to encourage children to develop their emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical skills in a developmentally appropriate way taking account of any special needs. This should include daily living skills, independence, health and employment skills needed by the child for their likely future living arrangements, taking account of their needs and in line with any EHC plan. These activities are described in the SEND Code of Practice under supporting successful preparation for adulthood. (Residential special schools: national minimum standards 23.1)

- Leaders should ensure that the learning and development programme is evaluated for effectiveness at least annually and is updated if necessary. (Residential special schools: national minimum standards 26.4)

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: SC055984

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Alison Hall

Type of school: Residential special school

Telephone number: 01377 253 375

Email address: kingsmill.specialschool@eastriding.gov.uk

Inspectors

Aaron Mcloughlin, Social Care Inspector (lead)
Jane Titley, 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
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023