

Lakeside School

Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO53 2DW

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Lakeside School is a maintained local authority day and residential special school for boys aged between 10 and 16 with social, mental health and/or emotional difficulties. Many have associated difficulties, including autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. At the time of the inspection, there were 97 children on roll, including 15 residential pupils.

The residential provision consists of two houses located on the school campus. The inspector only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Inspection dates: 19 and 21 September 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The residential special school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of previous inspection: 17 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children speak highly of their residential experiences, the care they receive and the friendships they develop with other children.

Staff always place the well-being of children at the centre of their practice. The children are comfortable talking with staff and feel valued and listened to. There is genuine respect for one another and there is positive role modelling from staff that enhances the children's sense of belonging and stability.

Children's voices are a real strength in this school. They actively participate in daily meetings, key-working sessions, group activities and a wide range of social and leisure opportunities. One child told the inspector about joining a rugby club and the support they had received from staff in helping them to attend regular training practice.

The activities in which the children participate in the residential provision build on what they are studying in school. Meaning the children make improvements in their reading ages. For some children, this exceeds the national average. Children told inspectors that they like to read and understand the benefits of spending valuable time away from their electronic devices.

Staff help children to achieve in their education. Two staff recently completed training to help support one child to sit their GCSE exams, under test conditions away from the school. This inclusive approach means children achieve their planned outcomes despite any difficulties they may face.

Children who stay overnight have an increased attendance in school from their starting points. Children say that sleeping at the school helps them to get to school on time. Two staff are trained in literacy and numeracy skills, linked to the school's curriculum. Staff tailor this additional learning for children with regular board game evenings and independent targets. This helps the children to improve and build on their skills in enjoyable and creative ways.

Key workers speak to the children about how they can help them achieve their wants and desires. They use this information to create individualised targets that they monitor regularly and celebrate with the children when they achieve these. Staff proudly display children's achievements around the home. This helps children to recognise the progress they are making.

The special educational needs coordinator and therapists work alongside residential staff to help ensure that the children's learning needs are prioritised when they stay. For example, the children have access to a wide range of age- and ability-appropriate books and resources. Furthermore, these resources mirror strategies used in education. This helps the children to apply learning from one setting to another. This

means the children are likely to transfer these skills when they return home to their families. This was echoed by a parent who was spoken to as part of this inspection.

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

Children are protected from harm. They can identify trusted adults they can talk to and can confidently explain how to raise concerns or complaints. Since the last full inspection, there have been no recorded safeguarding incidents or behaviours that place children at risk. This is testament to the relationships staff have with the children that keep them safe.

Staff support the children to understand risks, such as stranger danger, road safety and fire awareness. Children proactively talk about the measures they take to stay safe in and outside of the school.

Children are strong advocates of anti-bullying. During the inspection, one child gave a presentation on helping to spread their campaign against bullying in the school. Most children who board engaged in this presentation and were able to identify key learning points with worksheets and activities. This helps to raise awareness and demonstrates how staff support the children to be key protectors of one another.

Staff understand their responsibilities in good safer recruitment practices for new staff and keep the single central record up to date and in good order. This means children are more likely to be cared for by safe and appropriate adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The head of care started in January 2023 and is currently undertaking a level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential children. He is committed to his role, leads by example and is a key member of the team. He is highly respected by both children and staff.

Since the last inspection, the deputy head has left the school. As a result, there have been internal promotions, changes to the roles and responsibilities within the senior leadership team and a change to the physical intervention model used. At the time of the inspection, leaders had not reviewed policies in line with these changes, or reviewed the local authority changes in the documents. Although this has not had an impact on the quality of care that children receive, it is a missed opportunity to demonstrate effective oversight of important policies, such as child protection procedures.

There are also examples of policies and procedures in the school that do not focus or reflect on the uniqueness of residential boarding, such as how sexual relationships between children may be managed, child-on-child abuse, monitoring of electronic devices and the management of controlled drugs. This has the potential to misguide staff when incidents occur.

The safeguarding governor conducts regular, detailed monitoring of the residential provision. However, monitoring reports have not been received by senior leaders, including the head of care, since the last full inspection. Furthermore, these reports include significant aspects of the independent person's role, therefore intended monitoring is not independent from the school. This has the potential to hinder effective monitoring and independent scrutiny and advocacy for children. Senior leaders recognise that the independent person's reports do not meet all aspects of the regulatory standards.

Senior leaders have not annually reviewed the operation and resources of the school's welfare provision for residential children. This is a missed opportunity to review the quality of care that children are receiving and to demonstrate achieved and planned developments.

The last full inspection took place in January 2023. However, the headteacher did not receive the final report until June 2023. Therefore, the point for improvement regarding children's progress in residential being reflected in their education, health and care (EHC) plans has been repeated.

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:

- 3.2 Monitoring visits are carried out unannounced. They include: conversations with children, the senior management team and staff; conversations with social workers where relevant; conversations with parents/carers where relevant; checks on the school's records of attendance, complaints, sanctions, bullying, restraint (including restrictive interventions), risk assessments, and where they exist, individual care plans for children including in relation to residential provision; evaluation of the quality of the provision and effectiveness of the care provided to children and whether they are safeguarded; and assessment of the suitability and physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment of the residential provision and the external environment.
- 3.3 Written reports of all monitoring visits are provided to the headteacher (or school equivalent) and where applicable the governing body, trust, or proprietor. Reports are also provided to each member of that body (or the appropriate committee of that body) within two weeks and as written by the visitor without amendment or summary. The governing body, trustees, or proprietor of the school should record a formal response to each written report. Monitoring reports and formal responses should be retained by the school and made available during an inspection and, on request, shared with any placing authorities and with the local authority where the school is located.
- 3.4 The headteacher (or school equivalent), governing body, trustees, or proprietor carry out, and record in writing, once each year: a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for residential pupils, in relation to: its Statement of Purpose; its staffing policy; the placement plans for individual children; and an internal assessment of its compliance with these standards and actions it will undertake to ensure compliance. Where appropriate such a report may be incorporated within a review of the whole school.

Points for improvement

- The headteacher should ensure that children's targets demonstrate the progress they are making in line with their statutory plans. For example, children's progress should be reflected in EHC plans and their reviews. This is a repeated recommendation.
- The headteacher should ensure that the child protection policy reflects the school's policy on sexual relationships between children and the approach to child-on-child abuse. This must reflect the unique nature of residential accommodation, the risks

associated with children sharing overnight accommodation and recent changes in designated safeguarding leads for the school and local authority.

- The headteacher should ensure that the written policy to promote good behaviours includes the update in the physical intervention model, and how restraint is managed and monitored within the residential setting. This policy should also reflect how the screening and monitoring of children's electronic devices are managed when they stay overnight.

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: SC012456

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Gareth Evans

Type of school: Residential special school

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Inspectors

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector (lead)

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