Ingfield Manor School

Ingfield Manor School, Ingfield Manor Drive, Five Oaks, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9AX

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

This is a non-maintained day and residential special school for children aged between three and 19 years. The school provides specialist education for children with neurological motor impairment, such as cerebral palsy, and associated sensory and medical needs. Children follow a conductive education curriculum. Most children stay on a short-break or flexible basis. Others stay for weekly boarding.

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

Inspection dates: 17 to 19 June 2025

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 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Students at this residential special school receive highly personalised, coordinated support that meets their complex needs exceptionally well. Care and support plans are comprehensive, regularly updated and informed by a multi-disciplinary team, including managers, therapists and nursing and care staff. This ensures consistent, safe and compassionate care that promotes each student's independence, safety and emotional well-being. Communication preferences are carefully respected, enabling students to express themselves fully and confidently.

The environment is inclusive and nurturing, with innovative adaptations that enable full participation. For example, an accessible games console and adapted music station greatly enrich daily experiences, promoting enjoyment and well-being. Students actively shape their surroundings and routines through involvement in the school council and activity planning, fostering a genuine sense of ownership, independence and decision-making.

Significant progress is evident in students' growing confidence, communication and independence. One student, who initially struggled to communicate, now actively supports others as a speech and language assistant, while another student has developed strong self-regulation skills and social interactions through targeted strategies. Parents consistently report improvements in their children's ability to advocate for themselves, manage emotions and build meaningful friendships, all testament to the school's success in empowering students beyond their starting points.

Students benefit greatly from opportunities to engage in community life through performances and extra-curricular activities, which significantly enhance their sense of belonging and achievement. Recently, with dedicated staff support, students participated in a music concert at the school for their parents. This event not only showcased the students' skills and commitment to learning but also enabled parents to be actively involved in their children's progress, strengthening family-school partnerships.

The school's transdisciplinary approach is exemplary and is helping to support seamless collaboration across education, therapy, nursing and care teams. Together with families, they set and review personalised goals that build skills that are transferable across settings, ensuring that progress is sustained and meaningful. This holistic teamwork supports students through transitions, such as post-surgery reintegration, maintaining safety and continuity of care.

Daily motor learning sessions, led by skilled practitioners, are expertly tailored to each student's needs. These sessions significantly improve independence and range of movement, directly enhancing daily living skills. Fully integrated into education and

care plans, progress is carefully monitored and celebrated, reflecting the school's unwavering commitment to developing students' potential.

The nursing team demonstrates expert skill and a strong commitment to meeting students' complex health needs. Ongoing training ensures that staff are proficient in medication administration and specialist care. Effective collaboration with parents, community nursing teams, consultants and other health professionals supports personalised, regularly updated care plans. Strong relationships with students and families build trust and advocacy, ensuring safe, coordinated healthcare that promotes well-being and full participation in school life.

The school excels in using digital photobooks and accessible technology to meaningfully engage students, fostering their independence, communication and self-expression. Staff demonstrate outstanding practice by tailoring resources to meet diverse individual needs, including sensory and language requirements, ensuring all students fully benefit. Students' voices are actively sought, accurately recorded and consistently acted on, promoting genuine choice and self-advocacy.

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

Students feel safe, supported and listened to. Trusted relationships with staff and accessible safeguarding information empower students to share worries confidently.

The school demonstrates an exceptional safeguarding culture where every student's safety and well-being are the highest priority. Staff are highly trained, confident and vigilant, supported by designated safeguarding leads who maintain up-to-date expertise. Safeguarding concerns are acted on promptly and thoroughly, with robust systems in place to ensure that no issue is overlooked. Weekly safeguarding meetings provide rigorous oversight, enabling swift, coordinated responses that prioritise students' protection.

New staff benefit from a comprehensive induction that includes face-to-face safeguarding training within 48 hours, ensuring that they are equipped to recognise and respond to concerns immediately. The school promotes a culture of professional curiosity, encouraging staff to challenge and escalate any concerns. Clear whistle-blowing procedures give everyone confidence to speak up, ensuring that students remain safe and supported.

Recruitment processes are robust and well-monitored. Since the last inspection, staff changes within the boarding provision have been safely managed, supporting students' emotional security through familiar, trusted relationships.

Fire safety procedures are exemplary. Recognising the unique needs of students, the school runs simulated night-time evacuation drills during the day. These carefully planned exercises prepare children for emergencies without causing distress, allowing staff to reflect on and continuously improve evacuation processes. This proactive

approach safeguards the most vulnerable students effectively while maintaining a calm, supportive environment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leadership at the school is purposeful, inclusive and responsive, fostering a positive culture where staff feel valued and motivated. Since the new principal's arrival, there has been a clear focus on listening to staff and parents, which has strengthened communication, trust and consistency. This approach has notably improved staff morale and retention, supported by well-considered pay restructuring and professional development opportunities.

Induction processes for new staff are thorough and tailored, with an emphasis on safeguarding, policies and understanding each child's care needs. Training attendance and competency are closely monitored, ensuring that staff have the skills and confidence to meet students' complex needs safely and effectively. Reflective supervision supports ongoing growth and encourages staff to maintain high-quality practice.

Staff training is comprehensive and frequently refreshed, covering a wide range of health and care competencies. Registered nurses employed by the school conduct regular competency assessments, reinforcing safe, effective care delivery. Some staff further enhance their expertise through specialist training, including a full conductive education programme, equipping them with unique skills in empowering students to develop personalities that embrace challenges, seek solutions and strive for personal growth.

Independent visitor reports consistently highlight the school's outstanding safeguarding practice and positive impact on students' well-being. The visitor reports on observing happy, engaged students and praises the personalised care plans and high-quality family support. Feedback from parents and social workers underscores the school's success in fostering emotional growth and independence through a truly child-centred approach.

No requirements or recommendations have been made following this inspection.

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: SC014584

Headteacher/teacher in charge: James Winchester

Type of school: Residential special school

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Inspectors

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector
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