

St Piers Residential Special School

St Piers Lane, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6PW

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

This is a non-maintained special school for pupils aged between 4 and 19 who have neurological conditions, such as epilepsy and autism. Pupils may also have associated conditions, such as learning and communication difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, 85 children were on the school roll, 14 of whom were accessing the residential provision.

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

Inspection dates: 13 to 15 January 2026

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: 11 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Students receive outstanding, personalised care that consistently meets their individual needs. Their care is carefully planned, with specialist professionals also supporting any complex health, learning and wellbeing needs.

Staff prioritise students' safety, emotional wellbeing and learning, regularly reviewing support to ensure that it remains effective and relevant. Students' views are actively listened to, and families are fully involved in decision-making. As a result, students' complex needs are thoroughly understood and met to an exceptionally high standard, enabling them to thrive and make meaningful progress.

Staff have an exceptional understanding of each student's individual needs and consistently build positive, trusting relationships that promote students' confidence and wellbeing. One student said, 'They (staff) really help us and care about our futures.'

Education attendance is high, and targets are reviewed regularly, including through regular meetings that inform students' annual reviews. Targets linked to students' independence are monitored in the residential houses, and therapy programmes are reinforced through in-house clubs to support sustained progress and achievement. This approach benefits staff as well as students and ensures that learning and development are embedded across all aspects of life in the residential provision.

Staff demonstrate remarkable skill in understanding and responding to students' complex health needs. This expertise has been particularly important for one student, enabling the team to interpret their behaviours in the context of their medical needs. Staff are also supporting this student in preparation for a medical test. This approach helps to alleviate the student's anxiety and ensures that they will receive care from trusted staff.

Staff are trained to safely carry out delegated health tasks, ensuring that students receive support from familiar, skilled adults. To further strengthen practice, students' healthcare plans should also include details of routine health appointments, such as dental and optician visits, to provide a more comprehensive record.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are highly effective and based on a strong culture of professional curiosity, reflection and accountability. Leaders and the designated safeguarding lead apply safeguarding thresholds confidently and consistently, appropriately drawing on external professional consultations to ensure the quality of their decision-making. When concerns arise, they are considered promptly and

proportionately, ensuring that referrals are made when necessary. External feedback is used constructively to refine practice and provide clear benchmarks for future decision-making. This demonstrates strong oversight and a mature, well-embedded safeguarding culture.

Leaders continue to develop safeguarding practice through forward-thinking, research-informed approaches. The therapy team is now part of the safeguarding team, providing specialist insight into children's physical, sensory and communication needs. Leaders continually seek to improve and explore innovative ways to safeguard children and ensure that their voices are heard.

Complaints are managed effectively and in line with the organisation's policies and procedures. Leaders ensure that investigations are thorough, fair and evidence-based, drawing on appropriate professional expertise when required. Outcomes are used constructively to identify learning. Consequently, there is a strong culture of openness, professional accountability and continuous improvement.

Recruitment and vetting processes have strengthened since the last inspection, with careful steps taken to verify references. However, there is no specific policy for situations where reference verification is not possible. Leaders plan to review this to ensure that all recruitment policies are applied consistently.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Staff feel well supported by managers and senior leaders, who have created a culture of openness and accessibility. An open-door approach ensures that staff can seek guidance and advice easily, promoting confidence and professional growth.

Staff benefit from a wide range of training and ongoing professional development, ensuring that they remain skilled and confident in meeting students' individual needs. Leaders actively incentivise staff development and recognise expertise. Leaders also plan targeted future training, including in areas such as online safety and current global developments. This ensures that staff remain knowledgeable, responsive and well informed.

Leaders' development plans reflect their ongoing ambition to enhance the quality of care that students receive. Actions are implemented promptly, and targets are consistently achieved. For example, the students' homes have been thoughtfully refurbished since the last full inspection, with students actively involved in decisions about decor, furnishings and the display of photos in communal areas. Students take pride in their surroundings and can articulate how their views have influenced change.

Leaders have reintroduced a supervision matrix to provide clear oversight of the frequency of staff supervision. Supervision sessions are reflective and supportive, enabling staff to develop professionally, consolidate their skills, and build confidence

in new roles. As a result, the point of improvement from the last full inspection has been met.

Health and safety arrangements are robust, well managed and highly effective. Clear incident reporting systems ensure that concerns are recorded, monitored and reviewed, enabling leaders to identify patterns and mitigate risks promptly. Ongoing building and other work are carefully managed, with strong communication between staff and contractors to minimise risk and disruption for students.

Governors maintain strong oversight of the residential houses through regular visits and appropriate training. Leaders carry out systematic audits that inform wider development plans, ensuring frequent opportunities for improvement and growth. The independent visitor engages regularly with parents and staff to evaluate the quality of care, providing highly positive feedback. Reports are shared with leaders, and actions are promptly discussed and addressed.

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

Points for improvement

- Leaders should ensure that staff keep records of students' immunisations, dental health, and hearing and eyesight checks.
- Leaders should ensure that a clear, policy-underpinned procedure is in place when staff references cannot be successfully verified.

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: 2601107

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Jeremy Law

Type of school: Residential special school

Telephone number: 01342 832243

Email address: residentialmanagement@stpiers.org.uk

Inspectors

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

Chido Mangava, Social Care Inspector

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