

Holly House School

Church Street North, Old Whittington, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 9QR

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Holly House School is a maintained residential community special school for children who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school provides education for 43 pupils aged seven to 14 who have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans. The school is located in Chesterfield, Derbyshire. The residential unit is located in an annex to the main school and is on two floors. The unit provides accommodation for up to eight pupils each night from Monday to Thursday during term time. Pupils access the service on a voluntary basis. The residential provision was last inspected in March 2017.

Inspection dates: 9 to 11 January 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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

Date of previous inspection: 21 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school is good because:

- Pupils make excellent progress. This is because their experience of residential care impacts positively on their holistic development.
- Pupils flourish and thrive. This is due to the care delivered by an exceptional residential staff team.
- Parents are unanimous in their praise for the school.
- Safeguarding is of paramount importance at this school. The safeguarding arrangements in place ensure that pupils are safe and know how to keep safe.
- Leaders and managers are ambitious for pupils. They aspire to all pupils reaching their individual potential.

The residential special school's areas for development are:

- To support managers in promoting improvement, following the visits by the newly appointed governor for residence to the residential provision to meet with the pupils, the governor produces a report which comments on the effectiveness of care and areas for improvement.
- As case files in the residential provision do not contain the same level of detail as those kept in education, case files should include copies of the statement of special educational needs and/or an education, health and care plan. In addition, there should be a copy of records pertaining to the individual progress of each pupil.
- Although a safeguarding incident was appropriately referred to safeguarding agencies, the residential records did not provide a clear account of the decision-making and outcome.
- Consultation with pupils could be further strengthened by their participation in the governing body. This would ensure that the school takes their views into account.
- When delays in training occur, the head of care should ensure that there are alternative training or resources available to the staff team. Following any training or learning activity, managers should evaluate the training for effectiveness.

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 standard(s) for residential special schools:

- 22.2 Each child's file includes the information in Appendix 2 (individual records, specifically statement of educational needs and/or education, health care plans).

Recommendations

- Ensure the governor for residential care provides monitoring reports which illustrate the effectiveness of care provision and highlight areas for improvement. (Linked to NMS 13.1)
- Ensure progress monitoring reports from education are kept on case files. (Linked to NMS 13.2)
- Documents and reports from safeguarding issues and/or internal investigations need to illustrate the full account of the concern; from the point of referral to the outcome. (Linked to NMS 13.8)
- Consider the involvement of pupils from school/residential provision in the governing body. (Linked to NMS 17.1 and 17.2)
- Ensure training or resources for sexual exploitation refreshers and self-harm, and that training is evaluated for effectiveness. (Linked to NMS 19.1 and 19.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This residential provision has some outstanding features and it is highly valued by both parents and pupils. The positive impact that the residential provision has on pupils was referred to by several parents. One parent said: 'This school is amazing! It always has been. Both of my sons have attended. Each one of them has made massive progress.' Another said: 'I cannot sing its praises enough. I would not hesitate to recommend this school. He loves residential and it is so good for him. The extended curriculum has such a positive influence on his progress. This transfers to home.' All parents who took part in this inspection were clear in stating that the residential stays had an exceptionally positive impact on the development and progress of their children.

Pupils had only positive comments to make about residential stays. They were keen to show the inspector around the residential provision. One pupil said: 'It is a second home.' Pupils said: 'This is the best place!', 'I love coming here, I want to have more stays', 'I enjoy it, I learn lots' and 'Staff look after me really well, because they care about us.' Pupils said that they get on well, make friends and love all of the staff. Pupils enjoy and value their overnight stays, and they try hard to learn. The motto of the residential provision is: 'Be the best that you can be!' This message is reinforced in daily practice and is reflected in the good progress that pupils make.

The relationships between pupils, residential staff and managers are the 'golden thread' which enables pupils to progress. Residential staff and managers are exceptional. They are cohesive, dynamic and highly consistent. Their teamwork skills are exemplary. This means that pupils benefit from well-organised residential stays that promote enjoyment, enrichment and wider horizons. Pupils are driven to achieve their personal goals, because they respect staff and they want to do well.

Educational attendance and attainment improve significantly due to the impact of residential care. Pupils who attend residential provision achieve higher than national average school attendance and make expected or better progress in all core curriculum subjects. Many pupils have previously struggled to attend or engage in mainstream schools. Upon admission to this school, pupils benefit from a team of staff who understand their needs. This means that they enjoy a school environment which values them as individuals. Residential and education staff work well together, providing cohesive care. They liaise and update each other on the pupils' behaviours and issues. This promotes a seamless transition from education to residential and vice versa, with all staff fully aware of the needs of individual pupils.

Pupils were keen to tell the inspector about the activities that they enjoy. They have the opportunity to regularly participate in a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities, as well as going on holidays. The home has a new Lego play area – popular with all pupils. It has table football and snooker tables, as well as an

extensive range of books, board games and computer games. Throughout the week, pupils are able to go camping, swimming, bowling and skating, and visit a wide range of local areas of interest. Some pupils are members of local clubs, such as a local boxing and sports club. Residential care staff tutor pupils in indoor climbing, football and outdoor survival skills. Staff ensure that there is a range of structured and enjoyable activities to fully support individual choice. Pupils benefit from opportunities that they might not have if they did not have overnight stays.

Routines in residential provision promote a balanced lifestyle. Pupils learn about self-care and gain life skills. They have a healthy dinner and supper together. They have showers and a set bedtime. The evenings are full of activities, which results in pupils feeling tired at the end of the day. This means that they have a good night's sleep and are refreshed for the school day. The following day they make their own beds, tidy rooms and make sure that bed linen is laundered. All of these tasks ensure that independence skills are supported and developed.

The standard of accommodation is excellent. It is stimulating, bright and creative. Pupils enjoy several dedicated playrooms where they can play board games, go on games consoles or play chess and pool. The rooms are furnished and decorated to the highest of standards. The residential provision is an exceptionally comfortable environment and provides space for communal and private time. Bedrooms have themes such as jungles, underwater or racing drivers. Pupils choose their room according to their preferences. Staff and pupils ensure that high standards of cleanliness and hygiene are maintained in each of the homes.

Pupils' views are heard in a number of ways on a day-to-day basis. They have an independent listener who visits them, as well as having quality assurance visits from an independent professional and the residential governor. Pupils contribute their ideas and views through the school student council. This inspection identified that pupils could be more actively encouraged to contribute their views on the operation of the residential provision. Involvement of pupils in the governing body would ensure that pupils participate in care delivery, and support active participation and citizenship.

The headteacher gathers data and monitors the progress of all pupils. This information measures education, behavioural and social progress. The information clearly illustrates the progress and development of pupils. This information would be of benefit to the residential staff. It would enable them to have a clear overview of progress. Likewise, the case files for pupils, which are kept at the residential provision, require a copy of the statement of special educational needs and/or an education, health and care plan. Having this information would mean that residential staff are better equipped to identify any obstacles to progression.

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

Safeguarding arrangements continue to be skilfully managed. Safeguarding practice is rigorously audited through internal and external monitoring. This ensures that there are high standards of safeguarding.

Pupils at this school have complex needs. Pupils face challenges in learning how to manage their own behaviour and regulate their emotions. Behaviour management in the residential provision is outstanding. Pupils successfully regulate their behaviours. Staff are highly skilled in de-escalating heightened behaviour. There have been no physical interventions at the residential provision. This is reflective of a highly skilled staff team and a very settled, happy residential cohort.

There has been one safeguarding incident since the last inspection. This was appropriately referred once the concern became known. This ensured that local authorities could carry out their own enquiries into the incident. The school kept a chronological account of the actions taken and copies of the referral documents. However, the records did not provide a clear overview of the incident. This means that it is difficult to understand the decision-making process, how things were progressed and the eventual outcome of the case.

There have been no incidents of pupils going missing from residential care. This is because pupils want to be at the residential provision. When they are unhappy, anxious or worried, instead of running away they talk with staff. The physical environment is safe. Window restrictors, door sensors and sensible security measures mean that if a pupil were to attempt to go missing the staff would be alerted and would be able to intervene. Links with local police are strong and the school has plans in place to implement missing from home protocols, in the event of an incident.

The leadership and management team has several designated safeguarding leads. The designated safeguarding leads have primary responsibility for managing safeguarding concerns. They have up-to-date training and provide 24-hour safeguarding support for staff and pupils. Designated safeguarding leads have effective links with the local authority designated officer and other important safeguarding agencies. Safeguarding leads confirm that they have effective working relationships with the residential provision.

The designated safeguarding governor, who is also the residential governor, ensures that safeguarding practice is robust. Her oversight means that safeguarding practice is monitored, reviewed and updated. Additionally, she speaks with the residential pupils to find out if they feel safe and to identify if there is any bullying. Pupils reported to the governor, and to the inspector, that they feel safe and that there is no bullying.

All staff have regular safeguarding training. This means that they have the knowledge to respond appropriately to child protection and safeguarding issues.

Residential staff monitor individual pupils and understand their individual needs. They are highly receptive to any changes in behaviour which could indicate potential concerns.

Fire safety is a priority at this provision. Pupils take part in regular fire drills and know how to evacuate the building safely. One pupil gave the inspector a tour of the accommodation and ensured that the inspector knew how to safely leave the building in the event of a fire. Fire equipment is regularly serviced and the home has an up-to-date fire risk assessment.

Health and safety arrangements are rigorously managed and ensure that staff, pupils and visitors are safe within and outside the building. Two site managers ensure that maintenance and remedial work is undertaken in a timely manner and that the school adheres to relevant health and safety regulations.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The headteacher, head of care and the management team work collaboratively to ensure that the residential experience is a valued and integral aspect of school life. They have high expectations of the staff team and of the pupils. They strive to help pupils to achieve their personal potential.

The management team has addressed the majority of the recommendations set at the previous inspection. The school has appointed an independent governor with responsibility for the residential provision. This has improved external scrutiny. The governor visits regularly, meets with pupils, managers and staff and provides a report outlining her visits. However, these reports do not comment on the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of residential provision. This analysis would promote further improvement.

The recommendation to provide training or resources for the staff team in relation to sexual exploitation and self-injurious behaviours has been set again at this inspection. Training has been arranged for residential staff, but has not yet been delivered. This is because of a lack of training dates with the local authority training department. Managers have failed to ensure that alternative training has been provided in the interim period. The head of care is clear about expectations with regard to training delivery and timeframes. This currently has no impact on pupils due to the effectiveness of generic training in equipping staff with the skills that they need.

The headteacher has formalised the observations and visits that he undertakes at the residential provision. This provides good evidence to support the completion of the annual review of residential provision.

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints from pupils. However, complaint records now include the pupil's views about the outcome. This ensures that pupils' views are sought and provides confirmation that the complaint has either

been closed or requires additional action. Lastly, risk assessments are now more detailed in relation to specific and/or individual risks.

The management team uses a range of monitoring systems to promote continual improvement. Rigorous external quality assurance inspections inform the development and improvement of service provision. The independent visitor said: 'The management team is excellent and does an excellent job.' Extensive internal monitoring and self-evaluation identifies areas of strength and those of improvement. This analysis acts as a catalyst to promote continuous improvement.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the school knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC056234

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Iain Williams

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Inspector

Amanda Ellis, social care inspector (lead)



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