

Woodeaton Manor School

Woodeaton Manor School, Woodeaton, OXFORD, OX3 9TS

Inspection dates

26/03/2014 to 28/03/2014

Overall effectiveness

	Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding	1	1
Quality of residential provision and care	Outstanding	1	1
Residential pupils' safety	Outstanding	1	1
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Outstanding	1	1

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is outstanding because

- Overall effectiveness is outstanding. There is a unique atmosphere and a real sense of community at the school with the residential provision wholly integrated and contributing remarkably effectively to the overall development of individual pupils. 'It's like an extension of my family', commented one parent. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the residential experience and benefit greatly from it. 'The residence has helped me loads', and 'this is the best school I've ever been to', were comments from two pupils which reflected the overwhelmingly positive views about the school held by pupils, parents, staff, the local authority, and professionals associated with the school. 'The school has absolutely changed our lives', remarked a parent spoken to during the inspection. Excellent communication and extremely close working relationships across the school ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to addressing the diverse and complex needs of individual pupils. The school never stands still and there is a clear and continuing commitment to developing and improving the provision for the benefit of all pupils.
- Outcomes for residential pupils are outstanding. They arrive at the school with extremely negative experiences of education, but very soon become part of a nurturing and inclusive community where they are very happy to be, where they feel valued as individuals, and where they are able to access learning opportunities. Pupils have extremely positive and productive relationships with staff across the school which enable them to make highly significant developments in different areas of their lives. These include making and sustaining friendships, becoming more confident socially, having greater self-esteem, developing an understanding of the needs of others, becoming more independent, and learning more acceptable ways to behave. 'The school has helped me massively with my behaviour, and I am now able to concentrate on my work', said one pupil. One parent described the school as having, 'changed my son's life, he now has high aspirations and is motivated to learn'.
- Arrangements for ensuring the safety of residential pupils are outstanding with pupil welfare central to practice across all aspects of the school. The school provides a safe,

secure, and inclusive environment for pupils within which they feel safe and where there is exceptionally good provision for the management of risk. Safeguarding provision within the school is exceptionally good with highly experienced and well trained staff assuming responsibility for child protection. There are established links with the local safeguarding children board and robust policies and procedures being implemented which support and promote good practice across the school. Residential staff receive regular safeguarding training and have an excellent understanding of safe working practice and the action to take should any concerns arise.

- Promoting the well-being of pupils and addressing their individual needs is central to how the school operates. Strong links with parents and external agencies, and the invaluable services of an educational psychologist and mental health specialist practitioner all contribute highly effectively to the provision of remarkably good personalised care and support for pupils. Residential staff provide a comfortable and nurturing environment where pupils are extremely happy, and which contributes highly effectively to the emotional, and psychological well-being of pupils. Healthy lifestyles are actively promoted within the residential provision and across the school. Catering arrangements are remarkably good with high quality nutritious meals being provided. Residential accommodation is of a very high standard and provides a very homely and welcoming environment where pupils are able to relax and feel a sense of security.
- There is outstanding provision for leadership and management. A small team of residential staff operate highly effectively and receive excellent support. Close communication and collaborative working with other departments enables the residential provision to successfully support the on-going work with individual pupils while also providing valuable respite for parents. The school's head is a remarkably committed character who is passionate about the school and it's pupils. 'This is the best place I've ever worked and the head is fantastic', commented a professional closely linked to the school. There is rigorous and regular self-evaluation which takes place and the school is able to clearly demonstrate how the residential provision contributes to the overall success and development of pupils. The governing body are very actively involved in the school, providing regular monitoring and a close scrutiny of how the school is operating. The school meets all of the national minimum standards and has satisfactorily addressed the two points for improvement from the previous inspection. Two further points for improvement identified relate to enhancing the admissions process for pupils, and a need to consolidate pupil information within the residential provision.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools

Information about this inspection

This inspection was undertaken by a single inspector, with a manager observing the first day of inspection. The school was given three hours' notice of the inspector's arrival. The inspector was on-site across three consecutive days. The inspection focussed on the experiences of residential pupils, hearing from them and from parents, observing their residential time and discussing issues with a range of key staff. Relevant documentation was reviewed.

Inspection team

Brian Mcquoid

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Woodeaton Manor is located within the rural community of Woodeaton in Oxfordshire. It is registered as a residential special school and provides education for 60 children and young people who are aged between 7 and 18 years. While the school admits pupils who may be assessed as having behavioural, emotional and social disorders (BESD), it particularly focuses on children with emotional and social difficulties. The vast majority of pupils have autistic spectrum disorders.

Woodeaton Manor provides flexible boarding arrangements for up to four nights a week for up to 12 pupils. A team of residential staff takes responsibility for these pupils after the school day until the following morning.

The last inspection of the residential provision took place on 06 February 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- produce a DVD for prospective pupils which will provide visual information about the school and enhance the admissions process.
- review individual pupil case records held within the residential provision in order to provide easy access to information.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Outcomes for residential pupils at the school are outstanding. Pupils who have invariably had a disrupted and negative experience of education form a strong sense of identity with a school community where they are happy, where they feel safe, and where they feel valued and respected as individuals. Pupil attendance is remarkably high. The school provides a wholly inclusive and supportive environment where pupils receive fantastic support to address their own difficulties while learning a tolerance and understanding of others. 'Because they understand him', 'because he's not made to feel different and everyone is treated equally', 'because she feels she belongs', and 'because they are treated with love, thoughtfulness, and respect by all staff from top to bottom', are responses received from parents when asked if their children were happy at the school.

Pupils develop friendships at the school (sometimes for the first time), and the residence provides an ideal opportunity for friends to spend time together socially outside of the school day. 'The residence is amazing and has played a big part in my sons development', commented one parent spoken to during the inspection, while another said, 'the residence is an immensely important part of the school and has given my son his independence'. Residential pupils grow in confidence, develop socially, become more independent, and are better able to access learning opportunities as a result of the time spent there. 'Life changing', remarked one pupil amongst a group who all agreed that the school was making a real difference in their lives. Parent view responses from parents were overwhelmingly positive with 100% saying that they would recommend the school to another parent.

Talking with pupils and seeking their views is an integral aspect of how the school operates. Circle time is held twice during the school day and also upon arriving in the residential provision. These opportunities demonstrate clearly the sense of community, the confidence of pupils to be able to speak within a large group and the respect and support that they show for one another. Residential staff play an important role in the school's regular residential trips which benefit pupils greatly, and also in helping them to develop an awareness of the wider community and the needs of others. Pupils at the school choose a charity to support each month and help to bake cakes which are sold at a local farmers market to raise funds for the chosen charity.

Outcomes for pupils leaving the school are exceedingly good when considering their starting point upon arrival. Excellent support, information, and guidance is provided for both pupils and their parents. The school has high aspirations for all pupils throughout their time at the school and supports them and their families tremendously well during what can be a very anxious time for both. Thorough planning and preparation allied to significant experience of further education provision within the authority enables pupils to achieve positive destinations upon leaving Woodeaton.

Quality of residential provision and care

Outstanding

The quality of the school's residential provision and the care provided are outstanding. The school's head sits on the local authority's placement forum which ensures that pupils are appropriately placed at the school, and exceptionally thorough placement planning meetings held with parents take place as part of the admissions process. These play a pivotal role in informing the detailed individual plans in place for each pupil and the targets set for them. Parental comments received as part of an annual survey conducted by the school were remarkably positive about the process of admission to the school. 'Amazing', 'everyone was so welcoming and helpful', and 'we were confident staff understood our child's needs', are just some of the comments received. Producing a DVD to provide visual information for pupils prior to visiting is a

point for improvement made to the school which should help to enhance the transition process during admissions.

The emotional and psychological well-being of pupils is central to practice within the school. Remarkable support from an educational psychologist and a mental health practitioner plays a pivotal role in assessing need, informing practice, accessing external services, and providing high quality professional support for pupils, their parents, and the staff working with them. Attending parent support meetings each half term, meeting regularly with residential staff, providing training for all staff, and undertaking counselling with individual pupils are some examples of this. Parents retain primary responsibility for meeting their children's routine health needs, however the school makes excellent provision for addressing any specific needs. Providing all staff with epi-pen training is an example of this. Arrangements for the management and administration of medication reflect good practice with all staff trained, medication being stored securely and records being well maintained.

Residential staff provide high quality pastoral support, and work extremely closely and successfully with staff across the school to the benefit of pupils. Communication is excellent with all departments within the school, staff have a detailed knowledge of each pupil accessing the residence and provide comprehensive reports for the annual reviewing process. The residential provision provides pupils with high quality accommodation which is comfortable and homely, and where pupils thoroughly enjoy spending time. The provision is being extremely well maintained and is subject to the school's rolling programme of refurbishment. Healthy lifestyles are actively promoted within the residential provision and throughout the school. Pupils enjoy healthy and nutritious meals of a very high standard and are active participants in an extensive range of activities which contribute highly effectively to their physical and emotional well-being.

Residential pupils' safety

Outstanding

Arrangements for ensuring the safety of residential pupils are outstanding. Protecting and promoting the welfare of pupils is central to practice across the school, and all policies and procedures relating to aspects of safeguarding are being rigorously implemented. The residential provision provides a safe and secure environment where pupils feel entirely safe, and parents feel totally confident that their children are being safely cared for. There have been no child protection concerns relating to the school since the previous inspection and no incidents of any residential pupil being reported as missing. The school has an excellent working relationship with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), all staff are highly trained in relation to safeguarding matters, and the school is exceptionally proactive in keeping abreast of professional developments relating to the welfare of young people. There is an electronic professional library accessible to staff where information and relevant articles are posted.

There is extensive experience and expertise amongst the school's staff group in relation to child protection. The designated persons have completed training at a level appropriate to the role and there are excellent systems for recording and monitoring any identified concerns. Information and guidance on aspects of relationships have been provided at parent support groups, and the production 'Chelsea's Choice' has visited the school to highlight the issues and raise awareness of child sexual exploitation. All pupils across the school receive excellent information, guidance, and education about personal safety, major risks to health, and the safe use of the internet. Pupils generally are able to talk to a number of staff about any concerns they have, however for those who may find it difficult there are easily accessible boxes where they can post details of their concerns. Recruitment procedures are robust, and are being effectively implemented including the appropriate vetting of potential staff being carried out as required.

There is a palpable sense of community at the school within which pupils are generally

exceptionally well behaved and extremely supportive of one another. Feeling valued, gaining confidence, and developing respect and an understanding of others are all areas successfully fostered by the school. Celebrating the success of pupils is a real strength of the school with circle time held twice daily providing an ideal environment for doing so. A positive culture throughout the school promotes and rewards good behaviour and extremely close monitoring enables early interventions whenever necessary with individual pupils. Bullying is not a significant issue amongst pupils at the school and they report that any instances are dealt with effectively by staff. There have been no incidents involving the use of physical restraint within the residential provision for a number of years, and the use of major sanctions within the school is very rare.

The school provides a safe and secure environment for pupils where there is excellent provision for the management of risk associated with the premises, and all activities undertaken by them both on and off-site. Health and safety arrangements are highly effective with written risk assessments being regularly reviewed, and the school achieving an outstanding rating from a local authority audit being carried out annually. Comprehensive procedures are followed to ensure the safety of pupils during residential trips within the country and when travelling overseas. Provision for fire safety within the residential accommodation is excellent with all checks and tests being carried out as required and fire evacuation practices being held regularly.

Leadership and management of the residential provision Outstanding

The leadership and management of the school is outstanding. The school prospectus and an excellent website provide access to comprehensive information about the school, its underpinning ethos and the aims and objectives it has for pupils. Detailed information about the residential provision is included and since the last inspection a user friendly guide for pupils has been produced. The residential provision is an integral and highly valued aspect of the school which is able to be used flexibly to meet the needs of pupils and their families. Pupils will generally stay for one night a week, however those having to leave very early in the morning on a school trip will stay overnight in order to be prepared and on time for departure.

The residential provision operates extremely effectively and smoothly on a day to day basis. Highly experienced staff and well established routines help to provide a predictable environment within which pupils are able to relax and feel safe. Residential pupils receive remarkably consistent and individualised care and support from a very well established staff team. Excellent training and support allied to close working relationships across the school enables the residential staff to be highly effective in addressing the needs of individuals and in supporting the on-going work with pupils. The school is able to demonstrate clearly with data the highly positive impact that the residential provision is having on pupils. This is also supported by education staff who report how pupils access to learning is improved following their night in the residence.

The head of the school is an inspirational character who has developed a culture within the school where everyone has high aspirations for pupils. Close monitoring, data collection, and rigorous self-evaluation are being used to improve provision across the school and demonstrate a clear commitment to continuing improvement. A pupil premium project is one example of this. The school's governing body are very actively involved in all aspects of the school, and provide for close monitoring of the residential provision. Improvements since the previous inspection include new dining room furniture, significant redecoration and refurbishment, the development of a new website, and the purchase of a new school vehicle which was chosen in consultation with pupils.

All pupils are actively encouraged to express their views and there are daily opportunities both within school and the residential provision to do so. Pupils feel 'listened to' within the school. Recognising the diverse needs of individual pupils and devising plans to address them is a real strength of the school. There is excellent communication with parents and the local authority who

place children at the school. 'The school is highly responsive', 'we really appreciate the weekly updates', 'there is always someone to talk to', and 'the home/school book used for the residence is really good', were comments received from parents in response to an annual survey carried out by the school. Comprehensive records are maintained by the school for each pupil, however there is a need to consolidate pupil information held within the residential provision into a more user friendly format. This is a point for improvement.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	123329
Social care unique reference number	SC013056
DfE registration number	931/7002

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Type of school	
Number of boarders on roll	
Gender of boarders	
Age range of boarders	
Headteacher	Mrs A Pearce
Date of previous boarding inspection	06/02/2013
Telephone number	01865 558722
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