

Woodeaton Manor School

Woodeaton Manor School, Woodeaton, OXFORD, OX3 9TS

Inspection dates	15/01/2015	
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of residential provision and care	Outstanding	1
Residential pupils' safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is outstanding because

- The residential provision is an integral part of the school community, where the ethos and values of the school are replicated. There are clear aims and objectives for the residential provision and these are understood by all staff. Residential pupils make significant progress in developing improved social skills, and become less isolated in their communities. Pupils learn to co-operate and work as a team, and demonstrate increased empathy for their peers. Over time, residential pupils develop improved self-confidence and self-esteem and a growing sense of well-being. This enhances their ability to engage in education, and achieve outstanding outcomes.
- Residential pupils receive an outstanding quality of care, which is informed by good quality plans and strategies which recognise the diverse range of pupils needs. A multi-disciplinary approach is taken to identifying pupils needs, and this is reflected in their care plans. Pupils have excellent relationships with care staff and their peers, and engage well in group discussion and decision making processes. The residential facility provides a warm, homely environment, where pupils' rights and dignity are respected and they feel valued as individuals.
- The school has robust policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety of pupils, and these are implemented in practice. A pro-active approach is taken to identifying and monitoring any child protection concerns, and good multi-agency working ensures appropriate sharing of information. Residential pupils report that they feel safe, and that bullying is not a concern. Creative approaches are taken to raising awareness and supporting parents and carers to identify potential risks pupils may face.
- The residential facility is well managed by the head of care, and a dedicated and skilled team of care staff ensure residential pupils receive consistently high levels of care. The performance of care staff is monitored effectively, and ensures professional development and continuous improvement is maintained. Multi-agency working and communication with parents and carers are particular strengths within the school, and all express

confidence in the professionalism of management and staff.

- Pupils say they really enjoy staying in the residential facility, and speak enthusiastically about the activities provided. Many pupils are able to reflect on the progress they have made since becoming a resident. Parents and carers are confident in the quality of care pupils receive, and clearly identify the benefits of the residential facility.
- All national minimum standards are met.

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 announced in the morning, and the social care inspector arrived at the school in the afternoon of the same day. The residential accommodation area was visited on the main school site. Inspection activities included meeting young people formally and informally, eating meals with young people, observing after school activities, meeting the headteacher and head of care, meeting a group of residential staff, meeting staff with designated responsibilities such as the educational psychologist, mental health practitioner and safeguarding lead, and analysing the responses from the Ofsted surveys received. Various documentation was sampled relating to the safety and welfare of young people and the monitoring of performance and staff development.

Inspection team

Stephen Collett

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 26 March 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop the quality of records to ensure their accuracy.
- Ensure new applicants are asked about their knowledge of safeguarding at interview.
- Review school policies and procedures in care staff team meetings.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Residential pupils enjoy excellent relationships with care staff and with their peers. Interaction between the pupils and care staff is relaxed, friendly and supportive and there is a sense of inclusion among the group. Pupils who have previously experienced social isolation and limited engagement with their peers begin to develop lasting friendships. Many pupils develop an increased ability to empathise and support one another with practical day-to-day tasks. Pupils benefit from a sense of 'belonging' and speak affectionately about the residential provision.

Pupils generally maintain very good behaviour within the residential environment and co-operate well with the expectations and boundaries. Pupils who have sometimes experienced difficulties in managing their behaviour and anger in the classroom, rarely display challenging behaviour in the residential setting. Pupils were observed to listen and demonstrate consideration and tolerance of others views.

All residential pupils develop improved social skills and become more confident in expressing their views and opinions. Their increased levels of confidence helps boost self-esteem and this has a positive impact on their sense of well-being. The residential experience builds upon and enhances the progress pupils make in other aspects of their lives as a result of their attendance at the school.

Pupils who access the residential provision overwhelmingly report that this is a positive experience, and speak favourably of the opportunities to make friendships and take part in a range of social activities that have not previously been available to them. Some residential pupils take pride in becoming more independent and acquiring practical life skills. Occasionally individual pupils express the view that becoming a resident was not right for them, but attribute this to their own personal or family circumstances rather than any shortfalls in the residential provision. These pupils are listened to and their views are taken into account in the care planning process.

Residential pupils take an active role in planning their individual care and contribute well to the development of the residential provision. Pupils engage well in group meetings and provide feedback on their experience of being a resident. Pupils respond positively to the range of school and community based activities that are provided, despite initially lacking confidence as a result of limited previous experience.

Pupils benefit from following a healthy diet and engaging in activities that provide good exercise. As pupils only reside for one night a week, they are reassured that if they become unwell arrangements will be made for them to return home to their parents or carers. Pupils are confident that they will be well cared for while staff make the necessary arrangements to return them home, or seek immediate medical attention if this becomes necessary.

As a result of the improved confidence and social skills pupils develop, and the considered transition arrangements put in place by the school, pupils generally feel well prepared for moving into further education. They feel reassured by the continuing contact and support they receive from staff as they embark upon this process.

Quality of residential provision and care

Outstanding

Pupils who access the residential provision benefit from receiving an outstanding level of care. The child centred culture, values and ethos of the school is mirrored in the residential facility, and consequently pupils experience consistency of approach from all staff. Care staff are familiar with the individual needs of all the pupils, and consequently they receive personalised care which

makes them feel valued and safe.

The residential facility provides a warm, homely environment, with sufficient space and appliances for group living. A good standard of furnishing and decoration is maintained and pupils are able to personalise their own space if they wish to do so, although most do not, as they are only resident for one night per week. Pupils always sleep in the same bed every week, and have their own bedding and towels which are not shared by other residents.

Pupils who are identified as potential residents receive good information about the facility, and are able to spend time in the residential house before staying overnight. Parents are provided with an induction pack and opportunity to visit and meet the care staff, and one parent commented that all her questions were fully addressed before her child became a resident. The care staff are familiar faces within the school, and so all pupils have the opportunity to get to know them before becoming a resident.

The residential provision is viewed as an integral part of the school. Care staff and teaching staff communicate effectively, and all contribute towards the planning and review process for residential pupils. Staff across the school have access to pupils care plans, individual education plans, behaviour management plans and risk assessments. This ensures that both teaching and care staff adopt a consistent approach to supporting individual pupils.

The written plans for pupils clearly identify individual needs, and are reviewed and amended regularly. These are good quality, comprehensive documents, which define strategies well. However, it was noted in one case that information relating to a pupil had not been accurately recorded.

The head of care takes into account the differing needs of pupils, their ages and the group dynamics when deciding the most appropriate night of the week for the pupil to be resident. Staff take a pro-active approach to supporting pupils, taking into account their histories, family circumstances and particular anxieties. Pupils likes and dislikes, routines and personal interests are all taken into account when planning group activities, so that no pupil feels excluded. Individual achievements are praised and pupils always celebrate each others birthdays.

Residential pupils are encouraged to make their views known and have a say in how the residential facility is run. A group meeting with all residents and care staff takes place at the end of the school day, giving pupils the opportunity to describe how their day has been, any anxieties they may have and contribute towards planning the after school activities. Pupils are able to access many of the school resources during the evening, including the games room and music room. An off-site leisure activity is often negotiated and agreed within the group, and this enhances the development of pupils team working skills.

This inclusive approach to involving pupils through open group discussion is embedded in practice throughout the school. The school day begins with all pupils engaging in 'circle time', where pupils and staff share news, information and engage in discussion regarding school life. Resident pupils are therefore familiar with this approach and so feel comfortable engaging in group discussion when staying in the residential facility.

Pupils also benefit from the support of care staff to complete homework tasks. Care staff are able to access the school's information technology resources, and will encourage and advise pupils, on a one-to-one basis if necessary, to complete the work that has been set. Residential pupils are therefore well prepared and ready to engage in education following their night in the residential facility.

Care staff work closely with the schools educational psychologist and mental health practitioner

from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Both practitioners provide consultation time for the care staff, and this ensures practice within the residential facility recognises the individual emotional needs of each pupil. Care staff also make an invaluable contribution towards needs assessments for pupils, as they are able to observe and comment on how pupils function over an extended period.

Arrangements for storing and administering medication are robust, and the head of care keeps parents well informed of the expectations for safely delivery and collection of medication from the residential facility. As pupils only stay for one night per week, the residential facility does not have a dedicated sick bay, but the school does have the capacity to provide a bed in isolation for sick pupils until they can be returned home.

Residential pupils report that they enjoy the food, which is prepared in the school kitchen and served in the dining room. The food was observed to be of good quality, varied and nutritious. The catering manager keeps a record of the likes and dislikes of all residents, and the care staff monitor any special dietary needs that pupils may have.

All national minimum standards are met, and there are no weaknesses which have had a direct impact on any of the residential pupils.

Residential pupils' safety

Outstanding

The standard of safeguarding practice in the school is excellent. There are robust policies and procedures in place to address all aspects of pupils safety, and these are understood by staff and are regularly reviewed, and amended when necessary, by senior staff across the school. There is a designated member of staff who leads on safeguarding and child protection matters, who liaises with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and works closely with the headteacher to ensure safe practice is maintained. The Local Authority Designated officer commented 'it appears this is a school where safeguarding is always taken seriously'.

Thorough recruitment procedures are in place to ensure unsuitable adults are not employed in the school. Necessary checks and references are obtained, and these are checked for validity Any gaps in the employment record of applicants are explored during the interview process. Questions asked at interview do not always establish a candidates knowledge of safeguarding and child protection, but this has not resulted in any unsuitable adults being employed.

Any issues or observations relating to the safety of a pupil are recorded on safeguarding monitoring forms, which are then shared with the headteacher and safeguarding lead. This enables the well-being of pupils to be monitored over a period of time and helps build a picture of any potential child protection risks. Pupils who have a child protection plan are closely monitored, and the headteacher works closely with other professionals to support the pupil. Consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer and the specialist child sexual exploitation team have taken place when concerns for a pupils safety have arisen.

All staff receive child protection training, which has been approved by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and is delivered by the school's educational psychologist. Care staff are able to access additional training to further enhance their skills and knowledge in safeguarding practice. The school takes a pro-active approach to raising awareness of the risks pupils may face, and recently delivered a work shop for parents, to inform and advise them on how to ensure pupils can stay safe on the internet. Throughout the school posters and information leaflets advise pupils on how to keep themselves safe and who they can speak to if they have concerns.

The school has a detailed behaviour management policy which is reflected in the individual behaviour management strategies for each pupil. The school models and teaches respect and

tolerance for one another and prioritises rewarding positive behaviour rather than imposing sanctions. There is a recognition that due to the particular needs of the pupils in the school, sanctions are likely to be ineffective, and consequently these are rarely used, particularly in the residential facility.

There have been no physical restraints of pupils in the residential facility since the last inspection. It has been necessary to use restraint in the school, but this is strictly undertaken in accordance with Department for Education guidance, and only as a last resort. Restraints are carried out by staff who have received specific training and all incidents are recorded. Pupils are always given the opportunity to reflect on the incident when a restraint has been used.

Detailed risk assessments are undertaken and these reflect the needs and behaviours presented by individual pupils. The quality of risk assessments is enhanced by ensuring the educational psychologist and mental health practitioner contribute to the process. Risk assessments are proportionate and contain strategies for managing risk. Care staff are familiar with these and implement them in practice. Consequently, residential pupils are not unnecessarily prevented from undertaking activities which promote their growth and development.

All residential pupils have risk assessments in relation to them going missing. These reflect the school's policy on missing children which follows the Police and Local Authorities agreed protocol. No pupils have gone missing from the school since the last inspection. There have been occasions when distressed pupils have left the school buildings but remained in the grounds or near the perimeter fence. On these occasions, staff have kept the pupil in view and responded quickly to ensure the most appropriate member of staff supports the pupil to return. The school has taken a pro-active approach to minimising such incidents, and pupils who are assessed as a high risk of leaving the building have been able to nominate an area of the school where they can go and feel safe, rather than resort to leaving the premises.

All staff are vigilant to the potential for bullying, and the issue is discussed regularly with the pupils. There are pupil 'anti-bullying ambassadors' in the school, who receive guidance and support to undertake their role. Residential pupils have the confidence to speak to care staff if they have concerns regarding bullying, and report that swift action is taken to address any emerging issues. Consequently, residents feel that bullying is not an issue. All residential pupils spoken to during the inspection stated that they feel safe when in residence, and could all name a member of staff they would speak to if they were worried.

Robust procedures are in place for ensuring the residential facility is a physically safe environment for pupils. The premises manager oversees regular safety checks on all installations and equipment, and any hazards are quickly identified and remedial action taken. Pupils are familiar with the evacuation plan and take part in regular fire drills. Fire safety risk assessments are in place and pupils have personal emergency evacuation plans where necessary. Fire safety equipment is inspected and serviced in accordance with fire safety regulations.

All national minimum standards in relation to safety and safeguarding pupils are fully met.

Leadership and management of the residential provision Outstanding

Since the last inspection, an outstanding level of practice has been maintained across all aspects of the residential facility. The two areas recommended for improvement have been addressed. Excellent progress has been made towards producing a dvd to provide visual information on the school, and one pupil in particular has made a significant contribution to driving this forward. In addition, steps have been taken to ensure there is easy access to pupils information in the residential facility.

Leaders and managers ensure that the residential facility is an integral part of the school community. One teacher from the junior school commented that the residential facility is discussed with new pupils from day one, in order to 'plant the seed'. Consequently, all pupils see the residential facility as a positive feature of the school, that they may be able to access as their school career progresses. There is a consensus across the staff team about the value of the residential provision and all can identify the positive outcomes for pupils who have accessed the facility.

The residential facility is managed well by the head of care, who supervises a committed and skilled team of care staff. Routines are well established and understood by the pupils who access the facility. This provides them with a sense of security and reassurance that they will be well cared for. Care staff are suitably experienced and qualified, and access a range of highly relevant training courses to ensure their continued professional development. Performance is monitored through supervision and appraisal, and team meetings enable staff to reflect on their interactions with pupils. However, team meetings do not always provide an opportunity to discuss policy and procedure developments across the school.

There is an established and effective process for monitoring and evaluating the overall performance of the school, and the residential facility is an integral part of the process. Pupils' individual academic progress is monitored and analysed, and consideration given to whether accessing the residential facility would benefit those pupils making insufficient progress. Consequently, pupils who have needed to expand their vocabulary or required support with homework have been identified and referred to the residential provision and subsequently benefitted from the experience. Pupils whose academic progress suffers as a result of problematic family circumstances are also targeted, and some parents and carers express the view that admission to the residential facility for their child has prevented family breakdown.

Care plans and individual education plans indicate that the diverse needs of residential pupils have been clearly identified, and this is reflected in practice. Care staff have a thorough understanding of autism and attachment disorders and the impact this has on individual pupils' ability to manage in the residential setting. This enables staff to alleviate pupils' anxieties and make the residential experience enjoyable.

Excellent communication is maintained with parents and carers. A parent commented that the level of information given prior to her child accessing the residential facility, and the subsequent weekly telephone calls and written reports from care staff left her reassured that her child was safe and well cared for. Parents are familiar with the practice model adopted by the school, and receive the support and guidance needed to adopt similar approaches at home. This excellent practice has ensured pupils' progress within the school environment is replicated at home.

Independent monitoring visits take place regularly, and residential pupils are given the opportunity to speak to the visitor to express their views. High quality reports of these visits are produced, and these are reviewed in senior management and governors meetings. Residential pupils take advantage of the many opportunities they are given to provide feedback on their residential experience, and a group of residential pupils spoken to during the inspection unanimously confirmed their belief that recommendations they made would be taken seriously and acted upon where appropriate.

All required policies and procedures are in place and all recommendations made at the last inspection have been acted upon. All national minimum standards are met.

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	26/03/2014
Telephone number	01865 558722
Email address	office.7002@woodeaton.oxon.sch.uk

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