

Woodeaton Manor School

Woodeaton Manor School, Woodeaton, Oxford OX3 9TS

Inspection dates

06/02/2017 to 08/02/2017

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Outstanding **1**

The quality of care and support

Outstanding 1

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding 1

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Outstanding 1

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is outstanding because

- Children's safety and welfare are given the highest priority in the school. Safeguarding arrangements are strong across all areas of residential and school life. Rigorous whole-school systems keep residential children safe. There is creative direct work with children about personal safety.
- Children are empowered to share their views and have an active voice in the school.
- Children thrive in, and enjoy this residential provision, and each makes exceptional progress across all areas of their development.
- Seamless links exist between home, school and the residential provision. This ensures a well-informed approach to care delivery.
- Systems of governance are very effective and the school consistently seeks to improve on its practice. This results in a smooth running and child-focused residential provision.
- Children engage in many stimulating activities. They engage wholeheartedly in the residential provision.
- There are no shortfalls against the national minimum standards. A recommendation is made to improve some aspects of record keeping.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools :

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all children's records are kept up to date and include all relevant details.

Information about this inspection

This inspection was carried out within three hours of telephone notification to the school and took place over three days. Discussions with the designated officer for safeguarding, staff, parents and children informed the inspection judgements. The inspection included scrutiny of documents and policies, and observation of practice and care routines. Thirty-six Parent View responses were obtained at the inspection.

Inspection team

Natalie Burton

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 70 children and young people who are aged between seven 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 who have emotional and social difficulties. The vast majority of pupils are on the autistic spectrum. Woodeaton Manor provides flexible boarding arrangements for up to four nights a week for up to 12 pupils per night. 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 19 January 2016.

Inspection judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Outstanding

The children say that they enjoy the residential experience. They recognise that this helps them to learn new skills and to become more independent; they say that the best part is the social interaction with their peers. This is having an extremely positive impact on the children's personal and social development.

The children receive care from an established, familiar staff team whose members are consistent in their approach to the children. The staff know and respect the individual identities of children; they use positive reinforcement and celebration of difference to allow individual personalities to shine. Children respect all staff and the staffing hierarchy is not evident in the presence of the children. This reflects the ethos of equality across the school provision. Peer relationships are strong and the staff support children to understand each other's differences.

The children make exceptional progress in all areas of academic and emotional development from their starting point. They engage with staff, and are both motivated and supported to learn. There is good data capture and analysis to evidence children's attainment and their behavioural changes. The staff provide highly personalised care, which means that residential stays further enhance children's progress.

The children's experience is extremely positive for their social and personal development. They learn through positive role modelling of the staff and positive peer interaction. This has built a culture in which children respect and nurture one another, and it has enabled all children to feel respected and equally valued.

Safeguarding in the school is given a high profile, the children say that they feel safe, and the staff are trained for their designated safeguarding roles. There are clear systems to monitor children's welfare.

Leaders and managers are passionate about the quality of the school, and they have high aspirations for the children. They have addressed the recommendations made at the last inspection, with improvements made to the menu planning, which ensure that nutritious food is served, and to the decor of the home.

Feedback from parents is extremely positive. The parents spoken to during the inspection were unanimous in their recognition of the benefits of the school and of the positive impact on children's lives. One parent said: 'The biggest thing is that he does not have a lot of opportunity to be able to stay anywhere, he has only ever stayed at my parents'. So for him to have this opportunity is brilliant. He goes overnight, eats his dinner and I can trust them completely. From the day he started there he wanted to stay.' Another parent said: 'As a facility, overall, they are fantastic for independence.'

The quality of residential provision and care are outstanding. The admission process for children is sound and child focused. Once the school identifies that a child would benefit from accessing the residential provision each week, they go to considerable lengths to prepare them so that they can settle easily. The children's introduction to the residential provision is individualised to meet their needs. This enables children who may not be ready initially to stay overnight to have an opportunity to spend time socially with other children and be in control of when they feel that they are ready to stay. The head of care, headteacher and educational psychologist consider the child's age, gender, diagnosis and ability when assessing which night(s) and with which other children would be the most beneficial for the child.

The staff, who are excellent role models, treat children with respect. This helps teach children how to treat others. The relationships between staff and children are supportive and nurturing as they adjust to residential overnights and help children to build emotional resilience while away from home.

The children have and use the opportunity to engage in a wide variety of activities in-house and externally. The staff seek children's views about their interests and children think of new suggestions for activities, which they share in circle time at each visit. They access an array of exciting opportunities, enabling them to develop new interests and broaden their horizons. These include ice skating, trampolining, boat and train trips, and fishing trips. In-house activities include playing pool, football, and accessing the large gardens and play equipment within the grounds. The staff support the children to take reasonable risk, developing their understanding of personal safety, and promoting their independence and developing their ability to keep themselves safe. These stimulating activities provide children with a sense of achievement and create opportunities for social relationships to develop. All children spoken to at the inspection said that it was the socialising with peers that they enjoyed the most.

Therapeutic support is excellent. In addition to the children and adolescent mental health services, a speech and language therapist who visits weekly, and a school nurse, the school employs an educational psychologist whose role is pivotal in the work with children and the staff. The role includes: counselling for some children, individually or as part of a group; attending special educational needs annual reviews; working with parents to support the work of the school or with issues at home; facilitating termly parent group meetings; planned meetings with residential staff, and termly multi-professional meetings with the speech and language therapist and the school nurses. This promotes consistent, responsive and well-coordinated work with children.

All children have comprehensive plans which are clear, up to date and identify their individual needs. They are child focused, and based on parents', carers' and children's contributions. The educational psychologist involves the child, parents and carers, and professionals to identify and frequently review the plan's targets, aims and objectives. This enables the staff to measure the efficiency and impact of the overnight stays.

Parents, carers and children can see the positive benefit of the residential provision on educational progress. Children who have previously had unsuccessful education

placements have overcome these barriers with the support of the residential provision.

The senior management and staff provide exceptional support to parents. A parent said; 'I feel able to question them about anything. They send me emails the day after about what he did, and I always feel able to contact them. It is lovely to have some input. He is involved in everything, about what time they have their dinner and what they will have. The school overall has a fantastic feeling. It's brilliant.' The staff call parents weekly to provide an update academically, and weekly reports are provided following the child's overnight stay. The educational psychologist provides additional support to the family when needed through home visits, and staff will go to great lengths to support families, for example by assisting parents with transporting children to appointments.

The school makes excellent provision for healthy food and social mealtimes. Meals are home cooked and healthy, and there is a wide variety and choice. Children and staff eat breakfast and lunch together, ensuring that the children receive a balanced diet, and a time for staff and children to interact together. The staff and children plan the menus, sometimes purchase the food, take turns in cooking and eat the evening meal together in the residential accommodation. This in turn helps children to learn new skills and develop their independence.

The staff seek and respect the children's views. The staff use children's suggestions and ideas to make reasonable changes to the provision. This gives children the confidence to express their views in the knowledge that these are listened to.

The residential accommodation is warm and welcoming. All communal areas are well maintained, clean and well decorated. There are photos and displays of achievement and personal pictures. The staff appropriately risk assess if children share bedrooms, ensuring that any risks are identified and compatibility is considered fully. The children learn to keep their rooms and communal areas tidy, and take pride in themselves and their surroundings. The children say that they feel safe and secure at night.

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding

Children say that they feel safe, and they are undoubtedly safe. Parents spoken to have confidence in the school's ability to ensure their children's safety and they appreciate the level of supervision provided. Information displayed throughout the accommodation informs children about how to make a complaint or raise a concern.

The staff approach to safeguarding is thorough. The designated safeguarding lead ensures that procedures are followed rigorously. The child protection records are clear, and the new system of monitoring safeguarding concerns ensures that records detail the immediate action taken to protect children's welfare. A professional reported that recently the school supported him well with a safeguarding concern external to the school. The local safeguarding team views the school's safeguarding practice positively, saying, 'They are extremely proactive in contacting myself for advice on a range of safeguarding issues, including risk assessments for children with concerning behaviours, and generally use our service and guidance on a regular basis.' The children have a range of 'safe people' they can tell if they have concerns, including an external person

who visits the school. There have been no allegations against staff, and the staff receive regular safeguarding training to refresh their understanding of the procedures to be followed if an allegation were to be made.

The staff have a comprehensive understanding of potential risks to the children and are proactive in their approach to reducing risk. Daily circle time meetings with all children include topics that educate children to keep themselves safe. While children have limited access to the internet on school premises, the staff acknowledge that they may use it at home. External agencies support the staff and engage with the children providing additional information, in areas such as cyber-bullying, and the dangers and risks of contact with strangers on the internet. The children recognise this as helping them to understand about the dangers of the internet. The parents and carers can attend evening information sessions held during the year, or access the school website for a variety of key resources.

There have been no incidents of children leaving the site without permission or being unaccounted for. This demonstrates children's comprehensive understanding of the rules and structures in residential provision. Children are busy and engaged outside of the school day. Good role modelling by senior peers has resulted in a culture in which children adhere to basic rules. There are no concerns in regard to child sexual exploitation; however, the staff have a good understanding of the signs to be aware of.

The children are clear about the expectations of their behaviour, as staff implement behaviour management strategies positively and proactively. The staff focus on diffusion and preventing incidents, and children are well stimulated during their stays. As a result, there have been no physical interventions and minimal incidents. When incidents do occur, staff and children have the opportunity to reflect and learn new strategies to help manage their anger and frustration. This helps children to manage their anger more positively, and to build confidence and emotional resilience.

The site is physically safe and secure. The staff ensure that visitors are monitored, that they sign in and are chaperoned. Children are made aware, where possible, prior to visitors coming to the school to prepare them and also where required to support them. Maintenance is of a high standard, with minor repairs completed quickly. Therefore residential accommodation is free from hazards and children are physically safe. The houses are individually risk assessed. The premises manager takes pride and care to ensure that the premises and grounds are well maintained, with good risk awareness and risk management. Overall, the health and safety of the residential provision is robust. Recruitment procedures ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so. These comprehensive measures result in a school that is safe for children.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Outstanding

The headteacher, head of care and staff form a very strong and stable staff team. They strive to deliver the highest quality of care and focus well on helping children to achieve. The joined-up school and residential management and staff teams provide effective and attuned leadership and care across the provision.

Along with an experienced governing body, the school and residential management team understand the residential provision and champion aspirational aims for children. They use a range of monitoring tools, internal audits and feedback from children, their families and professionals to inform decision making and monitor the quality of practice. They strive to improve children's residential experiences, and seek innovative ways to promote short- and long-term outcomes.

The leadership team regularly reviews and updates policies, procedures and guidance to ensure that they meet the changing needs of children. There is close management oversight of how staff implement policies and the impact that this has on care delivery.

The stable and mutually supportive residential staff team is a hugely valuable resource. Its members have the energy, skills, personal qualities and experience to enhance their work with children. The staff team is extremely resourceful in maximising and seeking ways to help children, not only in school but at home with parents and carers too. The minimal changes to staffing provide children with consistency and security, and this helps children to know what to expect and to feel secure.

The educational psychologist provides staff with a robust induction to their role, and with in-depth training, to enhance their knowledge in areas such as child sexual exploitation, adapting therapeutic skills, attachment theory, safeguarding and autism. The staff receive regular supervision and attend weekly team meetings. They are cohesive and supportive of one another. This results in good team morale and ensures that they clearly understand the responsibilities of their roles. The staff spoke positively about the headteacher, whom they feel is approachable, supportive and listens to new ideas which may improve the quality of care for the children.

There have been no complaints in respect of the residential provision; however, clear and detailed procedures are in place. The headteacher and the governors ensure that the policies are up to date and suitable. They are available on the website for current and prospective parents. Records are generally well maintained; however, on occasion, not all known information is consistently updated on all children's paperwork. The impact on the children is minimal due to the staff's in-depth knowledge and understanding of the children, and robust communication between all staff. This minor shortfall does not detract from the excellent practice and high quality care that the children receive.

External monitoring visits routinely take place, and reports completed are thorough. They clearly demonstrate time spent with the children and note any areas for improvement.

The school works well with outside agencies, parents and carers, who are positive in their feedback about the school. A professional said that the school is: 'Really good in terms of their multi-agency working'. One parent said: 'The head of care sends reports every week, and we work together'. Parents and carers know where to raise any concerns and feel that these are dealt with quickly.

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework'.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceed the standard of good and result in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact that the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	1021002
Social care unique reference number	SC013056
DfE registration number	

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	Residential Special School
Number of boarders on roll	12
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	7 to18
Headteacher	Anne Pearce
Date of previous boarding inspection	19/01/2016
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Email address	office.7002@woodeaton.oxon.sch.uk

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