

# Holbrook Centre for Autism

Holbrook Centre for Autism, Port Way, Holbrook, BELPER, Derbyshire, DE56 0TE

<b>Inspection dates</b>	11/11/2013 to 13/11/2013	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
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

- Residential pupils make excellent progress and are supported in every aspect of their lives. The quality of care is exceptionally good. Pupils benefit from clear routines and look forward to staying at the school.
- The welfare and safety of residential pupils is robustly protected and promoted at all times. Excellent staff practice ensures that pupils are safe and feel safe at the residential provision. Behaviour management is a strength of the service.
- The residential service is very well managed. All staff are clear in their duties and are highly trained in delivering safe and effective care to pupils. Actions from the last inspection have been appropriately addressed and the head of care is committed to further improvements. Monitoring of the service is good and the residential provision is given prominence by the school's senior management team.
- Pupils enjoy staying in the residential service and are happy, settled and familiar with the routines and expectations. There are no complaints and parents have exceptionally positive views about the service; 'the service offered by residential is outstanding. I have no concerns and only the highest praise for the staff. I feel that my child is safe, well looked after and the service offers real opportunity for development and essential life skills.'
- All national minimum standards are judged to be met as a result of this inspection. Two areas for improvement have been identified. These relate to; ensuring that the school's website is updated and that the monitoring of the residential service identifies where national minimum standards are met and exceeded.

### 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

The residential provision, consisting of two separate units and accommodating up to seven pupils, was inspected following notification to the school on the morning of the first day of inspection. A range of activities took place including meetings with various staff members, discussions with the school's senior management team, observations of pupils and speaking with parents and carers. Records, including care files, policies, staffing files and health and safety documentation were checked. Residential pupils were observed in the residential provision, on various on and off site activities and residential pupils' views were sought by the inspector.

## Inspection team

Pete Hylton

Lead social care inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

Holbrook Centre for Autism is a residential special school that provides specialist education and care for pupils with autism, aged between 5 and 19 years. The school is maintained by the local authority, Derbyshire County Council.

Residential pupils stay one night a week, between Monday and Thursday, in term time. There are seven single occupancy bedrooms in two separate, self-contained units. A total of 27 pupils currently use the residential service throughout the week. Pupils have their meals, except lunch, in the units.

Residential pupils can access facilities within the school and also use community resources in nearby towns; the school has its own transport. The residential provision was last inspected on 21 November 2012.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- ensure that the school's website is up to date and includes the most recent versions of the safeguarding, e-safety, complaints and behaviour management policies
- ensure that the monitoring system for residential provision identifies where the residential service meets and exceeds national minimum standards.

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for residential pupils

### Outstanding

Residential pupils make excellent progress in all areas of their lives and their outcomes are outstanding. They develop their social awareness, confidence and tolerance of their peers. Incidents of challenging behaviour are extremely rare and pupils are able to access communal activities positively. As a result, pupils enjoy spending time in the residential provision with staff and each other. A pupil commented: 'I feel happy on residential.' Furthermore, the service is highly valued by parents: 'It is a very important, indeed vital, opportunity for our child to extend their curriculum and learn essential life skills and access the community.'

The health of residential pupils is excellent. Pupils are encouraged, in line with their abilities, to develop their awareness of medication and how this supports their health. For example, pupils are able to recognise their medication and can state why they take it. This ensures that pupils develop an understanding of their health needs and take responsibility and ownership, where appropriate, with their medication.

Pupils are encouraged to play an active part in the local and wider community. They make significant progress in developing their abilities to successfully visit places of interest. A wide range of activities are enjoyed by residential pupils. Swimming, bowling, visits to play centres, arts and crafts and sensory-based games are among the many activities on offer. Pupils look forward to staying in residential and benefit from active, enjoyable and purposeful activities during their stay.

All residential pupils have a voice in the residential provision and they feel included in their care. For example, pupils make choices regarding their activities and their meals. This promotes pupils' independence and lessens any frustrations that they may experience. Where pupils are able, they write parts of their own care plan and take great pride in doing so. As a result, they develop a sense of real ownership with their care and know that their views influence how they are looked after. A school governor commented: 'It is enlightening to see the progress that pupils are making.' A parent commented: 'Our child's communication has improved a million per cent.'

All residential pupils make excellent progress in developing their readiness for adulthood. Pupils follow an accredited scheme of work that enables them to develop skills including cleaning, cooking, managing their money and accessing the community. In some instances, there has been significant progress. For example, where pupils were unable to complete self-care tasks, they now do so with high levels of confidence. As a result, pupils develop their self-esteem and take pride in their achievements. Furthermore, their personal safety improves as pupils develop a better awareness of their privacy. A parent commented: 'Our child is now better at protecting their privacy and has a better awareness of personal safety.'

### Quality of residential provision and care

### Outstanding

The quality of residential provision is outstanding and a key feature of the residential service. A highly trained, committed and stable staff team provides high levels of care to residential pupils at all times. Pupils are supported to make progress in all areas of their lives and have excellent relationships with the staff. A pupil commented that 'the staff are lovely.'

Where staff take on the role of key worker, they ensure that the pupils' needs are clearly identified and met. Any concerns are swiftly resolved and shared with parents, carers, and where appropriate, other agencies. This is valued by parents and carers who feel supported by the residential service. Comments from parents and carers include: 'The keyworker has taken steps to understand our needs as a family', and, 'we feel respected and feel part of a team that is

looking after our child.'

The residential accommodation is well maintained, comfortable and homely. The staff team ensures that the individual tastes and preferences of residential pupils are reflected in their bedrooms when they stay at the provision. For example, pupils are able to place pictures of their families and their favourite posters on their bedroom walls. This helps pupils to quickly settle into the provision and enables them to develop a sense of belonging. As a result, transitions between home and residential are well managed and ensure that pupils' anxieties are minimised. This is underpinned by the caring and knowledgeable staff team who know the pupils' needs and provide highly individualised care at all times. A parent commented: 'The keyworker has made great efforts to get to know our daughter.' Residential pupils are fully supported in contacting their parents and carers while they stay in the provision. As a result, pupils are able to share their experiences with people who are important to them.

Medication is safely stored and administered appropriately. All staff are trained in safely administering medication and rigorous procedures ensure that the correct medications are given in line with prescriptions. Excellent communication with parents, carers and health agencies ensure that the medical and health needs of pupils are promoted at all times. A parent commented that 'medication is exceptionally well managed.' The health of residential pupils is very well managed. Excellent relationships with specialist health services ensures that appropriate referral is made where concerns arise.

Care plans are detailed, highly individualised and are improved since the last inspection. Pupils' individual needs are robustly addressed. Regular reviews with parents, carers, teaching staff and other involved professionals ensure that the needs of pupils are promoted at all times. Pupils are encouraged to write parts of their own care plans, where they are able to do so. This ensures that pupils are empowered to make choices about their care and that their individual wishes and preferences are respected and acted upon.

Meals provided to residential pupils are balanced, varied and nutritious. Choice is actively promoted and pupils enjoy mealtimes in the residential provision. The specific dietary needs of pupils are addressed at all times by a knowledgeable and competent staff team. For example, pupils with specific dietary needs such as allergies or food intolerances are seamlessly integrated into menu planning.

Additional high quality staff training in promoting equality and diversity has significantly improved awareness and understanding in this area of practice. As a result, the individual needs of pupils are embedded into care plans and reflected in the care given in the service. Specific adaptations are made where pupils have cultural or dietary needs. As a result, pupils are able to follow their faiths and beliefs in a supportive and nurturing environment.

The staff team ensures that all residential pupils develop their independence and life skills. For example, all pupils are encouraged to play an active part in helping to set the table, complete washing up and helping to make their beds. This ensures that pupils develop their readiness, in line with their age and ability, for adulthood. A school council is in place and residential pupils play an active part in sharing the views, wishes and experiences of their peers. As a result, pupils develop key skills in working with others and communicating as part of a group.

## **Residential pupils' safety**

## **Outstanding**

The safety of residential pupils is outstanding. Residential pupils are safe and feel safe in the residential provision. The safely maintained environment ensures that pupils can explore their surroundings with high levels of independence. Furthermore, effective staff training ensures that all residential staff are up to date with their safeguarding practice.

Behaviour management is a key strength of the residential service. Training is regularly refreshed and is responsive to the needs of the pupils on residence. Excellent relationships between the residential and educational provision ensure that a holistic package of care is given to pupils. This ensures that highly individualised care is given at all times and incidents of challenging behaviour are exceptionally well managed. Incidents of restraint are very rare and where they do occur, are very brief and safely applied. The staff team is highly skilled in managing the behaviour of pupils in the residential provision. Parents and carers recognise that their children are looked after and protected from harm. Comments from parents and carers include: 'It gives us reassurance. We know that our child is safe and happy', and, 'we have no concerns about safety.'

Highly detailed and regularly reviewed assessments are in place for all activities. This ensures that known risks and vulnerabilities are identified and appropriate measures are put in place. All residential staff are extremely knowledgeable about the pupils and ensure that pupils' safety is at the very heart of their practice. As a result, pupils are able to safely access a wide range of experiences and activities in an enabling setting. Furthermore, where able to do so, pupils are encouraged to develop their independence skills in the community. For example, pupils learn how to safely cross roads and access community-based activities with minimal staff supervision.

The site manager ensures that all required checks are in place and regularly reviewed. As a result, residential pupils stay in an environment that protects and promotes their health and safety. Fire drills regularly take place in the residential provision and pupils know how to safely evacuate in the event of fire. Highly effective and robust recruitment procedures ensure that only suitable staff come into contact with pupils. All required checks are made prior to a member of staff working in residential. As a result, pupils are protected from access to adults who may wish to cause them harm.

The school has effective safeguarding procedures and all staff are appropriately trained in recognising and responding to concerns about pupils. The head of care is responsible for safeguarding and has completed additional and higher level training. This results in clear direction and leadership in this area of practice. All staff are encouraged to raise any concerns using the school's effective reporting systems. As a result, all concerns are swiftly identified and robustly addressed. Furthermore, pupils are similarly encouraged to voice their concerns and an appropriate complaints system is in place for all pupils. A residential pupil commented: 'If I am sad I can talk to staff.'

### **Leadership and management of the residential provision Outstanding**

The leadership and management of the residential service is outstanding. Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the standard of care given to pupils. As a result, the service continues to identify areas to develop and improve. The two areas for improvement from the last welfare inspection in November 2012 have been appropriately addressed and embedded into the residential service. As a result, staff are better trained in equality and diversity and care plans have improved. Residential pupils benefit from a residential service that is very well managed. A member of staff commented: 'Although we are settled and really well trained, we are not complacent. We are always looking to grow and get better.'

All required policies are up to date and regularly reviewed by the senior management team. As a result, staff are current in their practice and changes to legislation are reflected in the school's policies. However, the school's website has not been updated to reflect changes to policies. For example, key policies on the school's website, including safeguarding and behaviour management, are out of date. There is no impact to the outcomes for residential pupils as a result of this area to further develop.

All staff are well trained in a wide range of care practices. Where pupils have specific health needs, additional training is given to staff to ensure that safe care is given at all times. For example, where pupils require a new form of medication, training is swiftly arranged for all staff to ensure that they are competent.

Regular monitoring visits from the governing body ensure that there is a culture of continuous improvement. The views and experiences of residential pupils underpin these visits and the visitor evaluates the standard of care through robust discussions with the staff. The head of care is a key member of the school's senior management team and is supported by the headteacher. This results in a residential service that is valued and given prominence in the wider development of the school.

Management systems to evaluate the quality of residential provision are effective. The service's self-evaluation clearly sets out the developmental objectives for the coming year. This plan is regularly monitored and the impact of changes is robustly evaluated. For example, enhanced staff training has improved working practices and this is evidenced through improvements to care planning. The residential service uses a range of rigorous quality assurance systems to ensure the highest levels of care are provided at all times. However, the monitoring systems do not currently identify where the service meets or exceeds national minimum standards.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131323
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC058960
<b>DfE registration number</b>	830/7001

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Residential Special School
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	27
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	Mixed
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	8 to 19
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Julian Scholefield
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	21/11/2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 880 208
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@holbrookautism.derbyshire.sch.uk

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