

Holbrook School for Autism

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

Inspection dates	18/02/2015 18/02/2015	to
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 experience enables pupils to make excellent progress in their educational, personal, and social development. They grow in confidence, become more independent, and try many new opportunities. Parents say they, 'Cannot recommend what is being achieved highly enough', and all are adamant that their children now do tasks and enjoy activities which would not have been possible had they had not come to the residential provision at the school.
- Residential pupils learn, grow in confidence, and develop independence because they experience a wide range of new opportunities and activities. Responsive and meaningful communication packages enable pupils to best manage their behaviours and anxieties. Behaviour and communication management is an exceptional strength and worthy of dissemination to other schools and services.
- Consistent high quality of care shows a constant commitment to promoting and celebrating the different needs and backgrounds of pupils. Care planning and practice embraces all aspects of pupils' culture, language, individual preferences, and communication challenges. Highly personalised care and close consultation with parents meets the intricate and often complex needs of each residential pupil.
- Safeguarding practices are outstanding. Leaders and staff have an excellent understanding of learning disability, subsequent behaviours, and the sometimes complex safeguarding indicators presented by pupils' circumstances and needs. Staff are alert and sensitive to the needs and challenges of pupils. They are very skilled in identifying and connecting the smaller picture of the risks and vulnerability facing pupils. This insight leads to effective risk management, excellent communication with parents and agencies and robust safeguarding throughout the residential provision.
- Leaders are ambitious in their constant drive for improvement; they consistently look for new ideas, training opportunities and greater partnership working. Professionals' comments such as, 'Staff are proactive, they look for partnership working. They take away advice and implement, then will come back for more consultation' endorse the provision's motivation to work with parents, pupils, education and outside agencies.' These highly motivated leaders and staff manage the residential setting with the pupils' needs and views at the centre of the operation of the school and residential setting.

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 completed by one inspector following a three-hour notice period. Time was spent over two days in the residential accommodation and several pupils contributed their views and experiences and helped with a tour of the accommodation. A range of care, staffing and health and safety records were examined. Discussions were held with members of the management team, care staff, the designated safeguarding officer, parents and health professionals.

Inspection team

Elaine Cray

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Holbrook School for Autism is a residential special school that provides specialist education and care for pupils with autism and learning difficulties, 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 24 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 11 November 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Record name of pupils taking part in fire drills during residential time.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Outcomes for residential pupils are outstanding. They make excellent progress and have extremely positive experiences. Residential pupils have an extremely positive view of the residential setting. They participate in and enjoy their residential stays because consultation is strong and meaningful. Empowering pupils to take part in their placements is possible because staff go to extensive lengths to provide an array of communication processes. Residential pupils have a strong sense of belonging and self-worth because leaders and staff listen and act on pupils ideas about activities, foods, their views on progress and personalising their bedrooms.

Parents' comments such as; 'Precious resource', 'Wonderful provision, 'Highly delighted' and, 'Brilliant', endorse the outstanding outcomes for residential pupils. They say pupils make exceptional progress and these developments have a positive impact. They are particularly pleased because their children extend their new skills and sense of independence at home as well as in school.

Pupils experience high levels of safety, stability and security because compatibility assessments and staff supervision are effective in managing the dynamics between residential pupils. Residential pupils enjoy positive relationships. They live in a harmonious residential community and there are no concerns about bullying.

Residential pupils develop their independence. They make their own beds, tend to their own personal hygiene, shop, prepare and share meals with pupils. Pupils, across all abilities, have responsibility in preparing the meal, setting the table and clearing away. This interactive and sharing experience enables new practical skills, helps pupils try new foods and develop good social skills and excellent manners. Pupils feel good about themselves and their health improves as they take responsibility for improved personal hygiene, healthy eating and taking part in more exercise.

Residential pupils progress well because staff have excellent insight into their needs, anxieties and behaviour. Pupils learn and develop in a calm, structured and extremely nurturing residential setting. Relationships between staff and pupils are exceptionally strong. Pupils are calmer and less anxious because they are familiar with, build trust and receive excellent care from the residential staff. These strong foundations improve behaviour and mean pupils have improved interactions with family, their peers and their own local communities.

Excellent communication processes and behaviour management enable pupils to enjoy individual activities and they also become more comfortable in enjoying group and social outings. Going to the park, swimming, eating out, trips to bowling, cinema and shopping are some of the residential pupils' favourite activities. Pupils regularly refer to photographs which show their extensive range of achievements and sheer enjoyment when they stay overnight at the school.

Quality of residential provision and care

Outstanding

Quality of care of the residential provision is outstanding. Pastoral care is of a very high standard and meets the diverse and complex needs of the residential pupils. Staff's knowledge about the backgrounds and individual identities of pupils gives excellent insight into their needs and vulnerabilities. Staff's intuitive and child centred skills sensitively identifies the emotional and welfare needs of pupils and provides effective support to pupils and families.

Transition planning is a key strength and staff work patiently and tenaciously to build partnerships with pupils and families. All transition plans are bespoke and negotiated with families

and pupils move at their own comfortable pace. Parents are very positive and reassured because plans embrace building relationships and effective communication. Pupils generally settle well and parents are confident in the staff to care for and keep their children safe.

Building independence skills is an integral part and key strength of the residential service. The residential service makes significant contribution to pupils' practical skills and most importantly pupils growth in self-confidence which helps them with transition when they leave the school.

Care planning exemplifies excellent partnership working between staff, pupils, families and education staff. Residential pupils thrive and develop because comprehensive care plans address all aspects of their care and education. Care plan targets dovetail with education and behaviour. Health care planning further enhances the support strategies in place to promote the physical and emotional well-being of the residential pupils. Rigorous procedures for the storage and administration of medication protect residential pupils' health and medical needs. This connectivity in documentation and cohesion between all staff and agencies provides pupils with wrap-round and holistic care.

Care strategies are meaningful and individualised because parents and pupils make a significant contribution to the plans. Regular discussion about life-skills and learning targets ensure care planning evaluates progress and enables staff to adapt their practice. Pupils grow in self-esteem and have a strong sense of pride because they can rate their own progress by using a visual and simplistic traffic light system. Working in partnership, regular communication and review ensures meaningful assessment, effective support and successful outcomes for pupils using the residential provision.

Staff provide an imaginative and varied programme of activities which are tailored to the individual choice, enjoyment and development of residential pupils. Activity planning is purposeful and meaningful in order to enhance the development and growth of pupils. Strategic planning promotes individual targets, takes into consideration the choice of pupils and their social learning. For example while pupils enjoy going out in the mini-bus to go shopping and out to eat; staff have a clear written agenda for the activity. Objectives such as choosing, managing money, interaction with the public, and making peer friendships are the key focus for staff. Routine evaluation of each activity ensures the activities' programme continues to be child centred and purposeful.

Residential pupils stay in well-maintained and comfortable surroundings. The vast majority of pupils stay at the school for one night per week. Staff efforts to ensure the accommodation meets the changing turnover of pupils' needs is commendable. Individually personalised bedrooms enable pupils to feel settled and have a sense of belonging for their overnight stay.

Residential pupils' safety

Outstanding

Safety in the residential provision is outstanding. The safety and well-being of residential pupils is of paramount importance. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures protect all pupils and they are safe because staff understand and consistently implement safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding practice is strong because leaders keep abreast of developments in guidance. For example the school's safeguarding procedures include recent updates, new terminology and represent developments in behaviour management throughout the school. Face-to-face training has reinforced this recent review and ongoing e-learning safeguarding courses further enhance the protection of pupils.

Effective liaison with the designated officer in the local safeguarding children board ensures all

concerns are independently reviewed. Staff confidence in whistle-blowing procedures and rigorous investigation demonstrates that leaders take all concerns seriously and that safeguarding lies at the heart of the school.

Bespoke behaviour management plans, staff training and rigorous monitoring of behaviour management ensures residential pupils' experience excellent support and improvement in their behaviour. Proactive and meaningful behaviour strategies positively impact on pupils because staff understand the triggers, communication processes and anxieties of pupils. Excellent staff training and positive behaviour management leads to infrequent use of physical intervention, and only as a last resort and to protect pupils. Records are accountable and usefully monitor patterns and trends to inform and improve staff support and practice.

Comprehensive risk assessment and practical risk management identifies concerns and effective responses to pupils' challenges and behaviours. Strategies to manage these concerns focus on safety but also ensure all pupils have opportunities to reach their potential and achieve. For example transport arrangements and staffing levels ensure all pupils can safely enjoy going out. Individual risk assessments and computer safety throughout the school ensure the E-safety of pupils during residential time.

Leaders and staff hold health and safety in the highest priority and maintain meticulous monitoring systems. The installation of a new fire alarm positively impacts on pupils. Working in partnership with the local fire service results in practical and productive ways to meet and support pupils with autism. For example, staff carry bleep devices to enable a delay on alarms and this reduces anxiety, distress and disruption to pupils. Holding fire drills during residential time enable pupils and staff to know what to do in the event of a fire. Recording the names of pupils on fire drill records is an area for improvement.

Security measures are thorough with secure perimeters and combination and electronic fob locking devices for staff. Regular review of risk management promotes constant evaluation of young people's safety both inside and outside the residential setting.

Leadership and management of the residential provision Outstanding

Leadership and management of the residential provision are outstanding. Leadership is strong and residential pupils receive excellent care due to a well-trained and cohesive staff team. Leaders and staff are extremely proud that the residential service plays such an integral role in the school. The residential service provides opportunity, supports the school curriculum and makes significant contribution to pupils' potential.

Staff practice is sound due to a well-embedded framework of policies and procedures. Leaders and staff are up to date with the legislative and regulatory framework and use this as an integral monitoring tool. Partnership working is a key strength within the leadership and staff team and this ensures practice is contemporary and sourced to meet the complex and varied needs of the pupils. Residential pupils receive excellent care and experience outstanding outcomes because staff receive extensive training. They embrace opportunities for professional development and to improve the service.

Effective staffing arrangements, with high staffing levels and in-depth knowledge about young people's background, are key to the excellent outcomes for residential pupils. Close supervision, effective organisation of activities, structured routines and safeguarding protocols promote pupils welfare. There are no incidents of pupils going missing while staying at the residential setting.

Pupils, parents, carers and professionals are familiar about the running of the residential service

because they receive good information. The school's website and prospectus provides up to date information and access to the school's policies and procedure about caring and keeping pupils safe.

Pupils' views are very important to residential staff and they are tenacious in advocating their views, ensuring their needs are met and views promoted. Rigorous monitoring drives improvement and includes creative consultation with pupils. Their views and needs are integral to developing their individual placements and the running of the residential provision. An array of symbols, pictures and photographs support pupils information and responds to the complex communication and levels of understanding of the pupils. Residential pupils can access external advice from an independent listener. Interactive and child focused displays in the residential setting enable access to pupils of all ages and abilities to information about how to complain, advocacy and independent agency contact details, which include Ofsted.

Thorough and transparent investigation of concerns and complaints leads to meaningful improvements in the running of the residential service. Leaders and managers are keen to learn from the outcomes of looking into concerns. For example new night time regimes, monitoring and recording systems are excellent examples of recent change to show the service's willingness and motivation to address shortfalls and drive improvement.

Well-maintained records promote excellent care and effective accountability for staff practice. Records provide meaningful information about the pupils experience, achievements and progress. Effective and regular monitoring systems maintain excellent standards and drive improvement. Practice improves because leaders and managers use patterns and trends to evaluate behaviour, progress and the impact of staff practice.

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	131323
Social care unique reference number	SC058960
DfE registration number	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.

Type of school	
Number of boarders on roll	26
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	5 to 19
Headteacher	Mr Julian Scholefield
Date of previous boarding inspection	11/11/2013
Telephone number	01332 880 208
Email address	headteacher@holbrookautism.derbyshire.sch.uk

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