

## Residential holiday scheme for disabled children inspection

<b>Name</b>	Oundle School Mencap Holidays
<b>Inspection date</b>	03/08/2016
<b>Unique reference number</b>	1159390

<b>Registered provider</b>	Oundle School Mencap Holidays 05393382
<b>Registered provider address</b>	35a Pandora Road, London NW6 1TS

<b>Responsible individual</b>	Susan Fletcher-Watson
<b>Registered manager</b>	Catherine Taylor
<b>Inspector</b>	Elaine Cray

<b>Inspection date</b>	03/08/2016
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	N/A
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	None
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences of children and young people</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The residential holiday scheme provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the scheme, including provision of care, contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>

**1159390**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The residential holiday scheme for disabled children is outstanding because:**

- The holiday experience provides excellent opportunities for children and young people of all ages and abilities to grow in confidence and self-belief. They exude enjoyment and make an array of friends and relationships.
- Celebration of individuality is integral to the running of the scheme. Children's, young people's and the volunteers' personalities shine through. Everyone enjoys a keen sense of camaraderie as they look out for each other and maximise each individual's potential.
- Proactive and detailed communication with parents promotes robust care planning, highly personalised care and robust safeguarding.
- Consultation is strong, meaningful and empowers children and young people.
- The all-inclusive and child-centred approach meets the intricate and often complex needs of each child and young person. They are safe, their health is protected and they can therefore enjoy their holiday with confidence and security.
- Leaders and volunteers are ambitious in their constant drive for improvement. They bring and share a wealth of research, expertise and most of all enthusiasm to promote new ideas, excellent training opportunities and new experiences for children, young people and the volunteers.
- Research in understanding learning disability, sensory experiences and communication processes are exceptional strengths and worthy of dissemination to other services.
- Understanding communication needs and exceptional attention to detail ensures effective risk management. Children and young people develop a strong sense of self-determination. They grow in self-esteem and become increasingly independent as a result of safely trying and enjoying a range of activities on the holiday scheme.
- The holiday experience not only provides children and young people with exceptional experiences but also has an impact on the career choices of volunteers. The wonderful sense of nurture and reach for excellence leads to many volunteers returning year after year to the scheme. Some also choose to study and work within a range of children's services.

## **Full report**

### **Information about this residential holiday scheme for disabled children**

This holiday scheme caters for up to 40 children and young people with learning and physical disabilities.

## Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences of children and young people</b></p>	<p><b>Outstanding</b></p>
<p>Children and young people have extremely positive views of their holiday experiences. They are unanimous that activities and making friends are their favourite parts of the holiday.</p> <p>Children and young people stay in well-maintained and comfortable surroundings. They enjoy sharing bedrooms and have access to an array of facilities, including the school’s swimming pool and extensive grounds. The setting-up of sensory rooms and inside activity centres make full use of the school site. The accommodation is very spacious and gives excellent scope for children and young people to enjoy their own space, both in good and poor weather.</p> <p>While children and young people enjoy the active part of the holiday experience, they also appreciate more quiet time. Some say that they sometimes just want to chill out, and snuggling up on large settees, listening to music or reading with a volunteer provide children and young people with quality relaxation and nurture time.</p> <p>Children and young people become fully engrossed in the weekly holiday theme which, on this occasion, was ‘under the sea’. Dressing up, water games, the volunteers’ stage play and many of the craft sessions organised at the holiday setting are thoroughly enjoyed by all.</p> <p>Leaders are proactive and work collaboratively with partnership agencies to extend the range of activities. Using local community facilities includes visits to the coffee shop. Relationships with Outward Bound facilities give access to boating and climbing. Members of the local community also offer workshops, including pottery and a ukulele workshop. These features of the holiday give excellent opportunities for children and young people to learn new skills and have different experiences. The sense of achievement from climbing, balancing on ropes, abseiling and using a zip-wire are both emotional and exhilarating for children, young people and volunteers alike.</p> <p>Group support, constant encouragement and lively celebration of everyone’s attempts and achievements give all children and young people an exceptional feeling of self-determination, build confidence and give children and young people wonderful self-esteem. Smiles, laughter, cheers and high-fives are a constant feature of the holiday experience.</p> <p>Children and young people with more sensory challenges enjoy quieter, one-to-</p>	

one activities. For example, the 'under the sea' sensory activity with music, tactile fabrics and lighting experience was especially arranged for and enjoyed by a specific group of children and young people.

Individual choice and need are facilitated at every level. For example, high staffing levels and the range of facilities mean that some young people can enjoy quiet swimming sessions due to their sensory challenges.

The evening sing-along and the end-of-holiday disco are also excitedly anticipated and thoroughly enjoyed. While children and young people can make their individual choices about activities, the evening sing-along brings everyone together. Some children and young people were keen to test out the ukuleles that they had made earlier in the day. The sense of fun, inclusion and camaraderie typifies the holiday experience and brings calm and a nurturing experience to the end of each busy and fun-filled day.

Children and young people enjoy wonderful friendships with each other and have trusting relationships with the volunteers. The strong sense of belonging and stability results from each child and young person having the same volunteer for evening, night and morning routines. Living in groups and sharing bedrooms and the same table at mealtimes forge an excellent sense of friendship. Children and young people experience nurture and develop a wonderful rapport between themselves and the volunteers.

Individualised and sensitive care and support are guaranteed due to excellent communication-sharing with children, young people and their parents. Important attention to detail about how children and young people like to be supported is essential in the smooth and extremely effective care planning infrastructure. Consistency drives security and helps children and young people to feel valued and able to self-determine what happens to them when they stay away from their families.

Children and young people like their care plans to be known as 'Kids' Sheets' and these excellent plans provide quick, accurate and easy to access information. Children's and young people's individuality, strengths and independence shine from the care plans and further demonstrate this empowering and child-centred environment. Children and young people feel less anxious and more confident because volunteers replicate bespoke care and support. This attention to detail and fluidity of practice mean that children's and young people's individuality is valued. They experience an instant sense of security and stability because their independence is valued and promoted. As a result, all children and young people quickly embrace meeting friends and choosing activities.

Choice, participation and sheer enjoyment are consistently accessible to children and young people due to the excellent use of a range of communication processes. Leaders and volunteers go to extensive lengths to ensure that children

and young people are able to use symbols, pictures, signs and verbal skills to make sense of their surroundings, express their views and help others to understand their needs.

Children and young people have a strong sense of belonging and self-worth because the volunteers research and promote individual communication processes. They are confident and eager to participate because volunteers listen and act on their ideas about activities and how they like to be supported. Volunteers are perceptive and their connectivity with children and young people enables them to monitor behaviours and expressions of upset or dissatisfaction.

These high quality relationships enable children and young people to express any concerns they may have. Children and young people also have access to the complaints process. This is clearly displayed and accessible in a range of communication modes. The service had not received any complaints at the time of this inspection.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<p>Children and young people experience high levels of safety, stability and security due to the excellent care planning framework and exceptionally strong relationships with volunteers. Communication, behaviour and health assessment dovetail into practical care plans, which safeguard and promote the physical and emotional well-being of the children and young people.</p> <p>Robust risk assessment and practical risk management ensure a safe environment, both inside the accommodation and when taking part in outside activities. Close supervision, effective organisation of activities, structured routines and safeguarding protocols promote safety. For example, staff give detailed attention to staffing levels, group dynamics and transport arrangements to ensure that all children and young people can safely enjoy going out. This rigorous approach means that children and young people can take part in more risky activities, such as swimming, climbing and boating.</p> <p>Individual risk assessments and behaviour plans mean that children can be appropriately supported, are less anxious and optimise their enjoyment and participation while on holiday. The joy and sense of achievement for young people with significant sensory challenges and self-injurious behaviours, when they splash and play in the swimming pool, are just some of the outstanding</p>	

outcomes experienced by children and young people.

Children and young people learn, relax and socialise in the structured and extremely nurturing setting because volunteers have in-depth perceptiveness into their needs, anxieties and behaviours. All volunteers attend behaviour management training and skills in de-escalating behaviour mean that physical intervention is only ever used as a last resort. The total lack of physical intervention exemplifies the strengths of behaviour management throughout the scheme.

Changes in behaviour and potential safeguarding concerns, no matter how small, have a pivotal part in daily leaders' meetings. As a result, proactive and meaningful behaviour strategies have a positive impact on children's and young people's safety. Robust yet creative risk management also promotes children's and young people's independence and they can reach their potential in everything they try to achieve.

Leaders and staff are constantly alert and sensitive to the needs and vulnerabilities of children and young people. They are skilled in identifying and connecting the smaller picture with the risks. Prompt and effective identification of concerns leads to meaningful discussions with parents. This transparent approach aids assessment and quickly highlights any need to refer concerns to the host safeguarding team. There are no concerns about going missing, child sexual exploitation or radicalisation. One-to-one supervision resolves any issues regarding bullying. No safeguarding or child protection matters have occurred at the holiday scheme since registration in June 2015.

Monitoring and promoting the health of children and young people is commendable and keeps children and young people safe. Complex medical needs, such as epilepsy and dietary requirements, are managed effectively. Robust medication procedures protect children's and young people's medical and health needs and enable them to have the confidence and security to participate in the holiday fully.

Security and health and safety are held in the highest priority. Children's and young people's security is promoted with combination locks to the main building, close scrutiny of visitors to the scheme and one-to-one staff supervision at all times.

Environmental and fire safety checks are carried out by the school maintenance staff. The registered manager and senior leaders monitor this delegated responsibility effectively. All volunteers, children and young people take part in a fire drill at the beginning of the holiday. All children and young people also have their own personal emergency evacuation plan, which gives volunteers further insight into the needs and behaviours of children and young people. This is essential because they understand how children and young people may respond

at times of the fire alarm sounding and provide appropriate support to keep them safe.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<p>Strong leadership and excellent partnership working between the registered manager, leaders, volunteers, medical staff and health agencies promote outstanding, holistic and wrap-around care for children and young people.</p> <p>Effective staffing arrangements are key to the excellent outcomes for children and young people. Recruitment procedures include a range of checks, including criminal record vetting and references. Robust procedures ensure that all volunteers and leaders are suitable to work with children and young people.</p> <p>Induction and a high regard for safeguarding training extend throughout the staff team. Practice is outstanding because leaders keep abreast of developments and provide effective update training for all staff. For example, a new safeguarding guide supplements training and gives all volunteers practical and easy-to-access information about how to keep children, young people and themselves safe.</p> <p>Children and young people receive excellent care due to effective organisation and allocation of at least one-to-one care. The excellent quality of care is assured, with strong leadership from group leaders and constant oversight by the senior members. High and flexible staffing levels mean that additional staffing can be allocated to ensure that all children and young people can participate in the day-to-day running of the scheme. Focused training, daily meetings and consistent feedback to volunteers lead to a well-trained and cohesive team.</p> <p>The residential holiday scheme is expertly managed by an experienced and suitably qualified registered manager. She works hand-in-hand with the responsible individual, who, alongside senior members, brings a wealth of managerial knowledge and expertise to the scheme. The description of the scheme as a 'well-oiled machine' by the volunteers at the scheme exemplifies the strategic managerial infrastructure that leaders put in place.</p> <p>Care and safeguarding practice is consistent and successful due to a well-embedded framework of policies and procedures. Volunteers feel well supported and facilitated in carrying out their duties. This structure and reassurance leads to relaxed, yet highly professional, relationships with children and young people and between volunteers, group leaders and senior members. Staff practice is</p>	

closely monitored and supported. Volunteers who may initially struggle with their role and responsibility are nurtured and provided with additional support so that they can keep children and young people safe.

Leaders work alongside the volunteers and maintain high quality relationships with children and young people. Everyone's enthusiasm, energy and communication skills are praiseworthy and are the main contributors to the sheer joy experienced by the children and young people.

Children, young people and parents receive detailed and meaningful information about the holiday scheme. The scheme's website and child-friendly welcome guide provide up-to-date information about holiday events, quality of care and keeping children and young people safe.

Well-maintained records promote excellent care and effective accountability for carers' practice. Records, diaries and memory boxes provide meaningful information about children's and young people's experiences and achievements. Decorating memory boxes, choosing photos and working with volunteers to choose symbols and write diaries is such an important part of each day. Children and young people can reflect on and celebrate their achievements, record their progress and share their experiences with parents.

Monitoring is robust, with a central focus on the day-to-day impact of the care planning framework. Children's and young people's experiences and outcomes are consistently central to practice. This self-reflective team is keen to improve the already excellent standards in the service.

Quality of care is outstanding because the registered manager and leaders seek out the views of children and young people, routinely monitor staff practice and update care plans with exceptional attention to detail. This motivational culture nurtures and drives the potential of children, young people and volunteers alike. Leaders are up to date with the legislative and regulatory framework and use this as a useful evaluation tool. There are no requirements or recommendations made as a result of this inspection.

## **What the inspection judgements mean**

The experiences of children 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 'Inspection of residential holiday schemes for disabled children: framework for inspection'.

The inspection judgements:

**Outstanding**

**Good**

**Requires improvement**

**Inadequate**

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences of children attending the residential holiday scheme. Inspectors considered whether the work of residential holiday scheme is founded on safe care and individualised support. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children and each other, and discussed the effectiveness of care given to children. Wherever possible, they talked to children and parents. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the residential holiday scheme knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for children.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with The Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013 and the national minimum standards.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made by following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of this guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234 or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for children looked after and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234 or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2016