

Oundle School Mencap Holidays

Oundle School Mencap Holidays 05393382
58 Claphorn Road, Oundle, Peterborough PE8 4PT
Inspection under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential holiday scheme for disabled children

This holiday scheme caters for up to 40 children and young people who have learning and physical disabilities. The scheme is staffed with senior leaders from a variety of professional backgrounds, some of whom work at the school during term time. The majority of volunteers are recruited from the upper sixth form at the school.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 August 2017

Overall experience and progress of children and young people, taking into account: **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The residential holiday scheme for disabled children provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the residential holiday scheme contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

Date of previous inspection: 3 August 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This residential holiday scheme for disabled children is outstanding because:

- Children and young people enjoy inspirational opportunities on a fun-packed holiday with a wide variety of activities.
- Communication and consultation with children and young people are exceptionally strong and meaningful.
- Children and young people are given the opportunity to make their own choices.
- Celebration and enthusiasm flow through each day. Fun is infectious and children and young people flourish.
- In-depth assessment, effective information sharing with parents and attention to detail ensure individualised care planning.
- Leaders keep up to date with social care issues and safeguarding procedures.
- Risk assessment and management are exceptional and ensure that all children and young people can access a full range of activities.
- Highly motivational senior leaders bring a range of professional skills and knowledge to the scheme.
- Day-to-day monitoring ensures care is meaningfully adapted to meet children's and young people's emotional, behavioural and health needs.
- Leaders' ongoing research and training demonstrate the constant and ambitious drive for improvement.

The areas for development for the residential holiday scheme for disabled children:

- To record verification of external applicants' references.

What does the residential holiday scheme for disabled children need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Record verification of references for external applications for volunteers to the scheme. (Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education guidance, Paragraph 3.36)

Inspection judgement

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children and young people grow in confidence and have greater self-belief because of taking part in this activity-based holiday scheme. They have exceptional experiences because their emotional, social and leisure needs are fulfilled with expert support from leaders and volunteers running the scheme.

Older young people value their experiences and achievement to such an extent that some now want to pass on their positive experiences by returning as volunteers.

Children and young people develop an excellent team spirit by participating in activities and having fun. Individuality shines through as children and young people feel empowered because their choices are listened to and supported. They are able to contribute fully because volunteers support a range of communication needs. All the information about the scheme is available to children and young people in symbol form.

Each child and young person has their own individualised communication programme, including signs, symbols and the use of body language. Volunteers' knowledge about and consistent implementation of individual communication programmes ensure that children and young people settle quickly, and experience less anxiety. They are calmer, make their own choices and therefore enjoy their experiences.

Children and young people experience a consistent sense of safety and security because at least one helper is allocated to each child and young person throughout the day and night. Volunteers spend time exploring information about each individual child and young person and they are able to meaningfully encourage each child's and young person's participation. Children and young people feel understood as they are able to express themselves. They relax and have fun because volunteers find the best way to support their interactions with others and divert their attention away from triggers that may cause distress.

Children and young people receive excellent behaviour management support which results in the outcomes that they achieve. This effective support is due to staff being highly skilled, and able to assess and regularly adapt communication programmes. For example, staff develop social stories in symbol form and this has been key to children and young people making sense of their needs and better managing bedtime routines. Children and young people are enabled to understand and adapt their behaviours in a positive and meaningful way. This promotes their safety and enjoyment.

Some children and young people develop a sense of real achievement from trying new activities such as archery, climbing and boating. New holidaymakers have more

self-belief in their capabilities as they overcome their anxieties and try things for the first time. Other children and young people sign up for these activities because they are keen to excel beyond their achievements from previous holidays. The trip out to Twin Lakes remains a firm favourite for all children and young people as they enjoy a range of fairground rides.

Sporting, musical, creative and sensory activities help children and young people to express their physical and creative qualities. Some children and young people who initially present as shy and withdrawn blossom and display confidence. They are keen to 'strut on the catwalk' at the fashion show and enthusiastically take part in the evening singalong. Swimming sessions are another favourite for all children and young people.

Children and young people with sensory challenges, such as autistic spectrum disorder, make exceptional progress as they are supported to join group activities. Sensory activities with craft products provide important sensory fulfilment. Children and young people who prefer more solitary time can take time to enjoy their own space in the two sensory rooms that have been set up within the accommodation.

Leaders seek out and work collaboratively with partner agencies to extend the range of activities. For example, a music activity includes making ukuleles with local musicians. Children and young people thoroughly enjoyed making tie-and-dye T-shirts with help from a local person who runs a craft agency.

Children and young people are always treated with respect. Having an allocated helper at bedtime and clear protocols for supporting children's and young people's personal care ensure excellent levels of privacy. Respect for the privacy and confidentiality of children and young people means information is only shared as required. For example, only senior leaders have access to medical information. In addition, practical safety procedures, such as using a secure site for photographs, result in good sharing of information between holidaymakers and their families, while protecting their privacy.

Friendships and a keen sense of camaraderie are key and crucial strengths that contribute to the outstanding nature of this scheme. There are no concerns about bullying. This is due to leaders and volunteers monitoring the relationships and interactions between children and young people. Pre-admission assessments help leaders and volunteers to take positive action to manage dynamics that may negatively affect individual children and young people.

Children and young people maintain good health during their holidays due to well-managed medical arrangements. Excellent partnership working with parents ensures that children's and young people's medical needs are clearly identified and catered for. This outstanding medical care and the close partnership working with parents mean that children and young people with very complex medical needs can access and enjoy the holiday experience safely.

The location of the holiday scheme is excellent. The environment meets the needs of children and young people who have physical disabilities. Accommodation is well maintained and children and young people enjoy sharing rooms with friends. The two communal dining rooms are central hubs for children, young people and volunteers, and enable them to socialise and eat meals together. Other facilities include a large swimming pool and extensive grounds, where marquees are erected. A dressing-up marquee, another for arts and crafts and a third for games ensure that children and young people have easy access to leisure activities.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Children and young people experience exceptional levels of safety, stability and security. This is because of excellent care planning frameworks, medical support, risk management processes and children's and young people's outstanding relationships with volunteers.

Safeguarding practice is outstanding because senior leaders transfer their professional knowledge to the running of the holiday scheme. Contacts with the host safeguarding authority are well established and can be easily accessed should concerns arise.

Volunteers and group leaders have up-to-date knowledge about radicalisation, child sexual exploitation and the risks of social media due to updated safeguarding procedures, training and easy-to-access resources. Clear and concise information ensures that volunteers and leaders know exactly what to do should they be concerned about a child or young person.

There are no incidents of children and young people going missing from the holiday scheme. Children's and young people's safety is consistently promoted with at least one helper allocated to each individual at all times. Senior leaders and volunteers are fully versed in the scheme's safeguarding procedures, including the protocol to follow should a child or young person go missing. Practical arrangements, such as placing a summary of the policy, contact numbers and reporting procedures on the group leaders' keyrings, ensure a speedy response should volunteers lose sight of a child or young person.

Leaders show excellent insight into the safeguarding needs of children and young people and the risks that they may face. This is supported by strong partnership working with parents. Volunteers are perceptive. The way they connect with and understand the children and young people helps them to monitor behaviours and expressions of upset or dissatisfaction.

High-quality relationships with volunteers help children and young people to express any concerns that they may have. Children and young people also have access to a clear and accessible complaints process. The service has not received any

complaints.

Robust and contemporary risk management plans identify and mitigate for both environmental and individual risk. Security and health and safety are high priorities. Practical arrangements include scrutiny of visitors, combination locks to houses and at least one-to-one staff supervision at all times. Fire safety checks are carried out, monitored by the responsible individual and tested with a fire evacuation drill at the beginning of the holiday. Concerns are immediately addressed. Personal emergency evacuation plans are in place for children and young people who may need additional support in the event of a fire.

Recruitment procedures are generally robust. They have improved further due to training undertaken by the responsible individual. For example, all senior leaders have updated their employment histories since volunteering for the holiday scheme. This also ensures ongoing scrutiny of volunteers who return to the scheme year after year. Some volunteers are recruited from other schools. While recruitment has been thorough, telephone verification of references is not recorded. The responsible individual has full knowledge of the background checks on the external candidates and this administrative shortfall has not had any impact on children or young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

An experienced and suitably qualified registered manager manages the residential holiday scheme. She works alongside the responsible individual to expertly lead a skilled and motivational team of senior leaders, group leaders and volunteers.

Children and young people achieve excellent outcomes due to effective staff management. Senior leaders come from a range of professional backgrounds. They are up to date with the relevant legislative and regulatory frameworks. They are motivated and use research to continually improve the operation of the holiday scheme. For example, one senior leader's current research into communication systems brings new ideas and improvements to the scheme's already excellent approach to communicating with children and young people. The responsible individual's term-time safeguarding responsibilities and ongoing training provide an excellent basis for the scheme's safeguarding protocols. The registered manager places a strong emphasis on continuous professional development in behaviour management. She consistently drives improvements to better understand and manage children's and young people's communication and behaviour needs.

Strong teamwork coupled with a strong commitment to children and young people underpin the outstanding nature of this holiday scheme. The motivational culture nurtures and develops the potential of children, young people and volunteers alike.

Safeguarding practices are well developed due to effective induction and training programmes for volunteers. Practice is outstanding because leaders keep abreast of developments and provide effective update training for the care team. For example,

a new safeguarding guide supplements the training programme and gives all volunteers easy access to information about how to keep children, young people and themselves safe.

Children and young people receive consistent and individualised care due to excellent partnership working with parents. New parents are reassured by the sensitive transition process. They say that they feel fully consulted and involved in devising support plans and sharing information about their children. Home visits with the registered manager and meeting their children's helpers on arrival at the scheme are particularly valued by parents. Parents' comments included, 'It is wonderful, having them in a place where I don't have to worry.'

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, the quality of care and how children and young people are kept safe. Positive planning for children and young people in advance of their move to the holiday scheme means they settle well and there are few, if any, instances of homesickness.

Crucial information is transferred onto daily children's records which are used as working documents. Daily meetings regularly review the support provided to children and young people. The excellent quality of care is child centred. Children's and young people's experiences are assessed by asking them for feedback. The care team's attention to detail means that all aspects of children's and young people's needs are met, and their views are valued.

Children's and young people's diaries and memory boxes provide meaningful information about their experiences and achievements. An array of diary sheets, photos and items made in activities mean that children and young people can reflect and celebrate their achievements, sharing them with their families when they return home.

High staffing levels mean that additional volunteers are allocated to make sure that all children and young people can participate in activities and remain safe. Daily meetings also include a review of the volunteers' practice, achievements and areas for development. Volunteers are nurtured and provided with additional support if needed. This ensures that children and young people receive an excellent standard of care.

A well-embedded framework of policies and procedures underpins care and safeguarding practices. Volunteers feel well supported. Leaders work alongside the volunteers and maintain high-quality relationships with children and young people. Everyone's enthusiasm, energy and commitment are praiseworthy and these attributes are the main contributor to the joy experienced by children and young people.

The quality of care is outstanding because the registered manager and leaders

routinely monitor staff practice and update care plans with exceptional attention to detail. Children's records are updated on a daily basis and this information is used to inform their care and support for future holidays. The views of children and young people are central to the operation and development of the service. For example, this year's holiday includes a feedback thermometer, where children and young people can rate their activities. This is used to inform next year's holiday experience.

The registered manager and senior leadership team are forward-thinking and self-reflective. These qualities ensure excellent standards in the service and drive further improvement.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of the help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the residential holiday scheme for disabled children knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013 and the national minimum standards.



Residential holiday scheme for disabled children details

Unique reference number: 1159390

Registered provider: Oundle School Mencap Holidays 05393382

Registered provider address: 35a Pandora Road, London NW6 1TS

Responsible individual: Mr Robin Banerjee

Registered manager: Mrs Catherine Taylor

Email address: oundlemencapholidays@gmail.com

Inspector

Elaine Cray: social care inspector



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