

Cicely Haughton

Cicely Haughton School, Westwood Manor, Wetley Rocks, Stoke-on-Trent,
Staffordshire ST9 0BX

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Cicely Haughton is part of the Manor Hall Academy. It offers day and residential places to girls and boys aged five to 11 years. There are 50 pupils on role and the school offers 33 residential places in its' residential provision. The residential provision was last inspected in February 2018.

Inspection dates: 8 to 10 January 2019

Overall experiences 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 special school provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the school contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

Date of previous inspection: 5 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school is outstanding because:

- Children love their residential stays. They are excited beforehand and happy afterwards.
- Children make exceptional progress in their confidence, social development, emotional and physical well-being and their communication skills.
- Residential stays significantly enhance children's progress at school.
- Dedicated, caring staff ensure that each child is treated as an individual.
- Children with highly complex needs feel secure and cared for.
- Enthusiastic staff warmly welcome children to the comfortable and homely residential provision.
- Children have great fun and make friends.
- Vigilant staff keep children safe.
- Leadership is highly effective. Managers have excellent oversight.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children choose to come for residential stays and reported that they love them. They feel a strong sense of belonging. Children with highly complex needs feel secure and cared for. They benefit hugely from the warmth and nurturing provided by staff. Dedicated staff treat all children with kindness and respect and ensure that they fully understand and meet each child's individual needs. One parent commented, 'Staff do everything that a mum or dad would do at home.'

Nurturing staff pay close attention to the impact of the environment on children's well-being. Children bring personal items such as pictures and toys to personalise their bedrooms and choose their own bedding. Routines are skilfully planned to provide children with stimulation as well as quiet times. The therapeutic approach employed by staff is underpinned by research. This approach recognises the fundamental link between children's physical and emotional well-being and their mental health, ensuring that children experience the very best care.

The residential provision is welcoming and comfortable. Children said that they love the food, which is freshly prepared and nutritious. Fruit and vegetables are always available, which encourages healthy eating. Each month, staff encourage each child to say what they want to eat, and their preferences are then added to the menu. Eating together provides enjoyable focal points in the morning and evening when staff highlight and celebrate achievements, big and small, for each child.

Children's views, wishes and feelings are sought after each residential stay. Staff listen carefully to them and ensure that each child's voice is heard. Staff regularly consult children about what activities they want to do when they stay. Children have great fun with each other and the enthusiastic staff, who engage them in a range of stimulating activities. This includes playing in the school grounds, football, games and using the bicycle track. Games in the home encourage sharing and social development, and craft activities support the development of fine motor skills. Staff creatively adapt activities to enable children of all abilities to join in.

Children enjoy one-to-one time with staff as well as having opportunities to make friends with their peers. Staff actively promote equality and diversity, encouraging each child to value themselves and each other.

Children demonstrate a strong trust in the staff and talk to them about their home lives, their feelings and any worries that they may have. Children know how to contact the independent person if they want to share any concerns with her. They also know how to use the 'listen up' system where they write a message and put it under the head of care's door. They are confident that she will respond to them immediately. The relationships between staff and children are exemplary.

Children make significant progress in their self-esteem, confidence, communication and independence skills. Their behaviour demonstrably improves. They learn to follow the clear routines and boundaries and learn to manage their own emotions and behaviour. Perceptive staff pay close attention to children's behaviour and are highly skilled at enabling children to relax and enjoy each other's company safely.

Children's residential stays significantly enhance the progress that they make in their education. Several children have progressed enough to move to a mainstream school. This includes children whose parents thought that this would never be possible. Children who attend the residential provision outperform their peers who attend the school but do not use the service. This is evident particularly in English and maths.

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

Children feel safe because of the support that they receive from the highly trained staff. Everyone is vigilant and takes responsibility for children's safety. One child said that there was never any bullying because 'this is a caring school'. Staff help children to understand how to keep themselves safe. One parent commented that her child 'used to run off when he was out with the family'. Since having residential stays, he now tells her that he needs to stay close to adults.

Excellent risk assessments are detailed and regularly reviewed. They include information gathered by staff daily from parents and school staff. Staff training is excellent. Since the last inspection, staff training has included topics such as diabetes and asthma. Training in special holds ensures that staff can safely meet the needs of specific children if physical intervention is required. However, staff rarely need to use physical intervention.

Detailed behaviour support plans are central to keeping children safe. Staff prioritise rewards and positive reinforcement. They diligently monitor and manage children's moods and behaviour and listen carefully to what children are saying. This approach reduces opportunities for conflict and defuses potentially risky situations. Positive and trusting relationships between staff and children are key to reducing anxiety. Staff provide positive role models and teach children to recognise and minimise risks.

Staff work closely with local authorities to provide valuable support for children who are at risk of significant harm. Multi-agency work and close daily communication with teaching staff and parents are highly effective and keep children safe.

No child has gone missing since the last inspection. Despite this, staff are well trained and vigilant to this and other risks, including child sexual exploitation and radicalisation.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The highly experienced and committed head of care and deputy pay constant attention to every detail of the provision. They are proactive, child focused and creative in their approach. Practice is research based, with recent innovations specifically focused on supporting children's mental health. Consequently, the service is tailored to the individual needs of each child. Managers offer excellent support to staff to enable them to provide outstanding care to children.

Staff are dedicated, nurturing and hard working. Their practice reflects the provision's ethos of respecting, enabling, promoting and supporting children. A thorough staff induction builds on each staff member's previous experience. Training is excellent, and staff engage in 'improving good practice meetings'. These systems significantly enhance staff practice.

Internal and external monitoring is robust and includes excellent consultation with staff, children, parents and other professionals. The head of care values and responds positively to suggestions from the independent visitor and governors. She tirelessly reviews and audits the service to ensure that standards are continually raised.

Each child has a 'life skills audit', which is a clear and valuable monitoring tool. This provides evidence of the exceptional progress that each child makes in their life skills, mental health and behaviour. This information is easily understood and is shared with the child, families and professionals. In consultation with the child, staff set targets and work with the child to achieve them. Staff reward children's efforts and achievements. The head of care uses these audits to monitor and evaluate the progress that children make.

Staff communicate with other professionals effectively. They liaise closely with the school nurse, teachers, child and adolescent mental health services and social workers. Staff also go to school one day a week to spend time with the children in their class. This newly introduced practice adds to the exceptional communication between the residential provision and the school. This communication is central to the progress that children make.

Staff also work closely with parents, including them in the development of children's placement plans and targets. Communication with parents is innovative and effective. Parents can now use an app on their mobile phones to see their child's achievements every day, send messages to staff at any time and share information and photographs. One parent praised the residential provision for having made such a significant difference to the life of her child and family, stating, 'There is no way on the earth I could ever repay them [the staff] for what they have done for us as a family. I can't even put into words how life-changing it's been.' Another parent said of the staff and managers, 'They are fantastic.'

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 differences 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 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 school knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989 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 national minimum standards.

Residential special school details

Social care unique reference number: SC038731

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Paul Spreadbury

Type of school: Residential special school

Telephone number: 01782 550 202

Inspectors

Louise Whittle, social care inspector (lead)

Karen Gillingwater, social care inspector



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