

Dawn House Residential School

Dawn House School, Helmsley Road, Rainworth, MANSFIELD, Nottinghamshire, NG21 0DQ

Inspection dates	04/06/2013 to 06/06/2013	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Outcomes for residential pupils	Good	2
Quality of residential provision and care	Good	2
Residential pupils' safety	Good	2
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- This residential provision provides specialist support to young people experiencing significant speech language and communication difficulties and/or Asperger's syndrome. The service provides an environment where pupils' diverse identities and uniqueness is celebrated and awareness and understanding is promoted.
- Residential pupils' outcomes are good because they progress in their education and personal life. Trying new opportunities, developing confidence and taking part in independent living programmes are key components to this positive residential experience.
- Safeguarding is good. Students say they feel very safe and are safe. Working in partnership is integral to the school, extending to parents and effective links with external professionals and agencies.
- The residential accommodation is much improved and provides a homely and relaxed environment. Small group living environments promote safe opportunities for pupils to forge positive relationships and learn new skills.
- Leaders and managers are effective in ensuring the smooth operation of the service. All of the national minimum standards are met.

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 in the three residential units at different intervals over two days and evenings. A range of young people of different abilities, ages and gender were spoken with. A range of records were examined related to the care provided and an evening and breakfast meal observed. Discussions were held with members of the management team, care staff, the nurse, Designated Safeguarding Officers, the independent visitor and a team briefing. Documentation examined included health and safety and recruitment records, behaviour management records, care and health plans, young people's year books and management/governors reports.

Inspection team

Elaine Cray

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Dawn House School is a non-maintained co-educational residential special school, one of two run by the national charity 'I CAN'. There are 75 pupils on roll, whose ages range from 7 to 19. All pupils have statements of special educational need for difficulties with speech, language and communication. Some may have Asperger's syndrome.

There is a high level of pupil mobility, as pupils join the school at any time up to the sixth form. There are 20 young people who reside at the school during the week with a further 12 occasional boarders. The residential accommodation is provided in three units located on the school site.

The school is situated in the village of Rainworth, Nottinghamshire. The residential provision was last inspected in May 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop a realistic and safe risk assessment and management strategy for young adults to manage their own medication.
- Ensure fire drills carried out during residential time extend to night time.
- Streamline record keeping and storage processes in order to facilitate effective monitoring.
- Develop the existing quality assurance systems of baseline practice and provision; to include and promote new and best practice in the improvement of quality of care and outcomes for residential students.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Good

Outcomes for boarders are good. Residential pupils make good progress in developing communication skills, educational achievement, building confidence and becoming more independent.

Pupils come to the residential service with a wide range of needs and challenges. All young people receive an effective assessment of and support for their communication and behaviour needs. As a result, residential pupils live in an inclusive and harmonious residential community. They have friends, get on well together and feel included.

Residential pupils enjoy their experiences because they and their families receive an individually tailored induction on admission. Pupils receive a warm and sensitive welcome and are supported to overcome any practical and emotional difficulties. For example, some pupils initially required significant family support with travelling to and from the school. They now do this independently as they are less anxious and more settled.

Residential pupils are relaxed and safe in the residential setting. A key strength in this sense of security is the positive relationships between residential pupils and staff. Residential pupils are assured and confident about being able to talk to the residential staff about how they are doing and any worries or concerns.

Residential pupils benefit from changes in the residential accommodation. The residential units are now smaller, more compact and provide a more homely environment for young people. Pupils say they 'love it' and others commented about how privacy is improved as they do not have to walk past bedrooms to get to communal areas. Residential pupils are positive about the new garden area. They have helped to plant the raised beds and enjoy sitting outside relaxing and chatting. These improved smaller group living experiences enhance the friendships and already strong relationships developed by the residential pupils.

The more compact nature of the residential settings enable all residential pupils to mix and understand what happens socially as young people grow up. As residential pupils progress, they become excellent role models for younger pupils. All pupils understand their responsibility to support and reassure each other. These qualities are progressively emerging in the development of a peer mentoring role within the residential setting.

Growth in maturity and confidence is exemplified as residential pupils take on additional responsibilities. They learn to listen to and represent the views of others. For example, pupils are elected as representatives on the school council. Two older pupils are now student governors. Two pupils who use the residential service have attended a House of Lords Select Committee to discuss opportunities for young people with communication and learning difficulties.

Residential pupils develop good self-esteem and a sense of personal achievement because they try new opportunities. They participate in a range of new and favourite activities, including swimming, cinema, football, going to the gym and shopping trips.

Opportunities to learn new skills result in residential pupils growing in confidence. They have a good sense of achievement as a result of target-led care plans. Residential pupils are supported to achieve their targets by a team of care and teaching staff. Young people are proud and keen to show their year books which include photos and memorabilia about their achievements.

Residential pupils are encouraged to develop awareness and begin to take responsibility for their

own health and fitness. They take pride in participating in a variety of physical sporting activities to keep fit.

Older pupils have plans for and look forward to moving into adulthood. They are prepared for leaving the school to pursue further education or employment in their own local communities or new residential placements. Pupils enjoy and benefit from going to college and completing work experience placements. Further education opportunities, learning domestic skills and exploring independence in the community is supported through education and in their residential units.

Quality of residential provision and care

Good

The quality of the residential provision is good. The service provides a nurturing environment to promote pupils' educational and social development.

The family liaison team ensure induction processes are effective. Home visits facilitate a good retrieval of information about the needs of the residential pupils. Prospective pupils and families can visit the school. Pupils and their families are also supported to explore appropriate moving-on arrangements and placements for young people.

A key strength of the care framework is the strong emphasis on inclusive practice to improve outcomes for pupils. Communication processes, including verbal, written, symbol and signing systems provide an opportunity for residential pupils to contribute their ideas and views.

Pupils' plans focus on clear targets in terms of safe care, encouraging independence and managing complex medical and disability needs. Care plans are drawn up with pupils and parents. They are fully included in the monitoring and regular review of the plans.

The quality of the pastoral support for residential pupils is good. The residential staff team is well-established. They have a good understanding of the backgrounds, behaviour and communication needs of the pupils. Residential pupils value their relationships with staff. They like their key workers, look forward to discussion time and say staff help them with behaviour. Residential pupils actively engage in regular key working sessions to review their targets and progress.

The quality and effectiveness of the school's arrangements for looking after residential pupils' well-being and health are good. Their health is monitored and supported by suitably trained staff. Staff provide comprehensive records which ensure pupils are well looked after in the residential setting. Good working relationships between staff, families and health agencies ensure health and medical needs are met. There are robust arrangements in place for the safe storage and administration of medication. Risk assessments for residential pupils who self-medicate are in place where appropriate. However, these arrangements are often put in place just before young adults are leaving the school. Such practice may not enable young adults to learn the new skills necessary to promote their own health needs.

Residential pupils enjoy the food because they are given choice and educated about healthy eating. They are provided with varied, balanced and nutritious meals. The school catering arrangements are excellently managed. The catering staff are pragmatic and responsive to the needs and preferences of the pupils. Menus and meals reflect the religious, cultural and health needs of all pupils.

The accommodation and facilities support residential pupils' learning and personal development. They stay in three residential units set out in a quadrangle overlooking an enclosed garden area. Each unit has a lounge, dining area, kitchen and a selection of toilet and bathing facilities. The units have been redecorated and new furnishings provide a homely environment. Pupils have

enjoyed personalising their own single bedrooms and the communal areas with pictures and personal items. While pupils do not have locks on their bedroom doors, they do have a lockable facility for valuables and medication.

Residential pupils' safety

Good

The safety of residential pupils is good. The school provides a secure and safe residential environment for pupils.

Robust safeguarding procedures and practices protect and support pupils. Senior staff take the lead for child protection matters. All other staff are suitably trained in child protection and safeguarding. They understand the reporting procedures for concerns about safety and also what to do should a pupil go missing from the school.

Pupils are safe because all concerns are taken seriously. Procedures are robustly managed and promote effective inter-agency working. Procedures and strategies are practically promoted in the day-to-day routines in the residential provision. Risk assessments are practical and ensure pupils are safe, their behaviours are managed and they can explore new opportunities. Residential pupils have confidence in the staff to keep them safe. They are encouraged to develop self-awareness about promoting their own safety. This is exemplified when pupils talk about how to maintain internet and mobile phone safety.

Residential pupils are effectively protected from bullying. Pupils have clear expectations regarding behaviour and treat each other with respect. They are confident their concerns will be dealt with. Safeguarding procedures in the service are enhanced with additional anti-bullying training, giving particular reference to homophobic attitudes.

Behaviour management is a key strength within the service. Residential pupils' behaviour is improved and seen to be exemplary during this inspection. This is as a result of staff understanding pupils' presenting behaviour in terms of communication and sensory challenges. Residential pupils benefit because staff are tenacious in exploring the possible reasons for behaviour that challenges. Staff are patient and committed in exploring ways to encourage positive behaviour, decrease anxiety and value the progress pupils make.

Behaviour and positive handling plans are excellently detailed and individually tailored to each pupil. The use of physical intervention or sanctions is rare due to the excellent early interventions and de-escalation strategies used by staff.

All pupils' protection and safety is promoted with thorough and robust recruitment and vetting procedures.

The school provides a secure and safe residential environment for residential pupils. Health and safety procedures are implemented and checked throughout the school and residential setting. Records are dis-organised and a new filing system was addressed during this inspection. Residential pupils know what to do in the event of a fire. While they recall fire drills taking place during residential time, records do not verify that a night-time drill has taken place.

Leadership and management of the residential provision **Good**

The leadership and management of the residential provision is good.

The residential service has experienced a level of change due to a decrease in numbers of pupils. The resulting reduction in staffing has been well managed. The management and deployment of

care staff is good. Residential pupils experience consistency and permanency as a result of leaders and managers effectively managing the staffing arrangements during the period of change.

The residential experience is an integral aspect of school life and is well embedded across the school community. Pupils grow and develop in an environment where individuality and diversity are explored and respected. Residential pupils are at ease, confident and sensitive to the needs of others within the residential community and throughout the school.

Staff work well in partnership with parents. There is a brochure, website and prospectus to inform young people and their families about the aims and objectives of the school.

Residential pupils are looked after by an experienced and competent staff team. Staff do their jobs well because they receive a programme of good quality training. Regular staff team meetings and briefings enhance communication between staff. Staff's professional development and performance is supported with regular supervision and annual appraisal.

Routines and procedures operate to provide a safe, sensitive and motivating environment for the residential pupils. The working partnership between care, academic, ancillary staff and the nurse is a key strength and benefits residential pupils. While communication processes are good and all required records are in place, the co-ordination of records lacks good order.

Residential pupils' records provide basic information about their development and progress. This progress is reviewed in terms of the set targets within their care plans. In addition, the newly developed process for behaviour management includes detailed behaviour plans. There is an excellent monitoring process for how behaviour management strategies impact on pupils. This management tool is a good example of how information about trends and patterns can be used to measure the impact, outcomes and progress of pupils.

Senior care staff actively and regularly monitor the quality of day-to-day care arrangements. The school makes good use of regular and detailed independent visitor reports to improve provision and outcomes. However, internal monitoring processes are not robust. Some records are not well organised. The monitoring processes are also reactive, for example, only responding to shortfalls that are highlighted by the independent visitor or Ofsted.

Managers and leaders clearly focus on improvement. Self-evaluation continues as an emerging strength of the school. However, the residential service does not always fully embrace a forward thinking approach to explore new and best practice ideas. While national minimum standards are maintained, this lack of innovation does not fully forge a culture of proactive and continuous improvement.

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	122956
Social care unique reference number	SC008761
DfE registration number	891/7022

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	Independent residential special school
Number of boarders on roll	75
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	7 to 19
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Child
Date of previous boarding inspection	16/04/2012
Telephone number	01623 795361
Email address	achild@dawnhouse-ican.org.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.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 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 assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

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.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

