

Dawn House Residential School

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

Inspection dates	17/01/2017 to 19/01/2017	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good	2
The quality of care and support	Outstanding	1
How well children and young people are protected	Outstanding	1
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good	2

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- Safeguarding of students is paramount for managers and staff. Meticulous safeguarding practice ensures that students are kept safe. There have been no significant safeguarding incidents since the last inspection.
- Effective communication systems have been established between the school and residential care. This ensures a continuity and consistency of response to students' issues between the school and the care setting.
- Students benefit from a highly developed collaborative approach to providing care. The holistic needs of students are promoted through the work of the highly skilled multi-disciplinary teams. This means that the unique and changing needs of each student receive meticulous oversight.
- Exceptionally accomplished residential workers provide seamless care to students. Attentive and nurturing care by staff enables the students to thrive and develop in the residential provision.
- Parents and carers are extremely complimentary about the residential provision and the school's success in enabling students to flourish and to achieve their potential.
- Students make excellent progress in all areas of their development because of the residential experience. This is especially strong in the areas of social skills and independence, which support their transition to adulthood.
- The principal and vice-principal ensure that leadership and management arrangements within the school are exemplary. They empower leaders and managers and collaborate to drive improvement in the school and residential provision.

- Operational management arrangements within the residential setting have changed since the last inspection. The head of care requires further training and support to ensure that he is effective in performing his duties. There has been no negative impact on students as a result of this.
- The head of care is also acting as the temporary maintenance and site manager. The demands on his time mean that he is not carrying out his roles to a sufficient level. This is with specific regard to ensuring that supervision of staff is in line with the provider's policy and ensuring the maintenance of records, as stipulated in the national minimum standards.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools:

- 13.3 The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role. With specific regard to the head of care's knowledge of residential care and inspections.
- 13.4 The school's leadership and management consistently fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that standards are met. With specific regard to the head of care.
- 13.8 The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate.
- 19.6 All staff have access to support and advice for their role. With particular reference to ensuring that they have regular supervision and formal annual appraisal of their performance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

There were no areas identified at this inspection.

Information about this inspection

Two inspectors conducted a three-day inspection following a one-hour notice period. Inspection activities included analysis of files and case records and a tour of the premises. Discussions with the senior management team, the head of care, governors, the independent visitor and an external consultant took place throughout the inspection. Additionally, residential care staff, business support and catering staff participated in the inspection. Time with the students included observing evening and morning routines and activities. Inspectors spent time discussing residential provision with a number of new students and established students. The views of parents were fully considered within the inspection.

Inspection team

Amanda Ellis	Lead social care inspector
Judith Longden	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 71 students on roll, whose ages range from 7 to 19. All students have difficulties with speech, language and communication. Some may have Asperger's syndrome. There are 12 students who reside at the school during the week. The residential accommodation comprises three units located on the school site. The school is situated in the village of Rainworth, Nottinghamshire. The last inspection of the residential provision was in February 2016.

Inspection judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good

The residential provision is well organised and run for the benefit of students. Management arrangements within the residential provision are good overall. The senior leadership team is aware of the actions needed to drive improvement in order to support a judgement of outstanding experience and progress for students.

Students make excellent progress from their starting points. This is particularly evident in their education, speech and language skills, behaviour and emotional well-being. This is because 'joined up' work between the residential team and the wider multi-disciplinary team ensures that there is consistency between the school and home routines. Students' life chances improve as a result of the residential experience.

Students are happy in the residential provision. They say that staff have helped them to make good progress. One student said: 'I am better behaved since coming here. This is because the staff are stricter than at home.' Students say that they feel well supported, valued and respected. They like the staff and generally get on well with each other. Students feel cared for and have strong, trusting relationships with staff.

Students say that they enjoy their residential time and have fun. The residential provision provides a wide range of sporting, social and recreational opportunities. They engage in community-based activities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's award. Students use community resources, such as the leisure centre, gymnasiums and youth clubs. Through participation in these activities, students benefit from improved confidence and self-esteem, which enables them to have fun.

Safeguarding arrangements across the school and residential provision are exemplary. The designated safeguarding lead ensures a consistent and robust response to any safeguarding issues. Students confirm that they feel safe and residential staff keep them safe.

The quality of care and support

Outstanding

The quality of care and support in the residential provision continues to be outstanding. A highly skilled multidisciplinary staff team undertakes rigorous assessments of individual needs prior to acceptance by the school. These assessments provide clarity for care planning and form a basis to encourage all students to achieve their individual targets. Continuous assessment and review of students' needs ensures that they progress and develop in line with their potential.

The principal and vice-principal ensure that the education of the students receives the highest priority. Residential students benefit from significantly improved outcomes in education. The interface between education and residential care is characterised by highly developed communication systems. Consequently, both care and education staff are able to implement individualised programmes when students are experiencing difficulties. Equally they recognise and reward strengths and

achievements with all students.

Healthcare arrangements are particularly strong in this school. Excellent healthcare practice empowers students to learn about their health. Over time, students become skilled in administering their own medication. All residential care staff have received a comprehensive programme of healthcare training. Medication is securely stored, meticulously administered and routinely audited.

The emotional and psychological needs of all students are very well understood. The school works with child and adolescent mental health teams, as well as working with a child psychotherapist. This means that staff and parents benefit from specialist advice, training, guidance and support. Students can also engage in direct therapeutic work. A recent innovation has been the introduction of a new well-being team. This service is to provide additional levels of internal and/or external support to students. The purpose of this resource is to promote the students' increased sense of well-being. This initiative is forward thinking and demonstrates the school's drive to improve services for all students.

Parents are unanimous in the praise of this provision. They say that the positive outcomes and the progress that students make because of their residential stays underpin improved long-term outcomes. For the fourth year in a row, the Parent View survey shows that 100% of parents strongly agree that the residential provision helps their child's progress and development. One parent said: 'These are early days, but we are already getting results.'

Since the last inspection, there have been significant improvements to the internal residential accommodation. The head of care undertook the project management of this refurbishment. Extensive consultation with residential students enabled them to participate in the plans for the residential accommodation. The residential environment is considerably improved. Students are enthusiastic to state that they really like the changes and especially the opportunity to choose their own bedrooms.

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding

Safeguarding practice in this provision is exemplary. Since the last inspection, there have been no significant safeguarding incidents, allegations against residential care staff, incidents of students missing or complaints from pupils, parents or professionals.

The vice-principal is the key designated safeguarding lead for the school. She is highly effective in her safeguarding role. She oversees safeguarding arrangements within the residential provision. In addition, there are a number of fully trained designated safeguarding officers. This ensures that at all times there is a suitably trained person to respond to safeguarding issues. The designated officer and safeguarding team confirm that they have not had any concerns about safeguarding arrangements. They confirm that safeguarding issues are well managed and when safeguarding matters occur, appropriate advice is sought. This demonstrates robust safeguarding practice.

Strong governance provides appropriate challenge and supports the school and

residential provision to improve safeguarding practice continually. All governors undertake a range of safeguarding training. The safeguarding governor reviews all safeguarding incidents and assesses the suitability of their outcome. This includes regular audits to monitor the trends and patterns. Each governors' meeting considers the operation of the residential provision. A student governor attends these meetings. This ensures that the views of residential students are heard.

All leaders, managers and care staff have up-to-date safeguarding training. Senior leaders have undertaken training on topics including:

- child sexual exploitation
- hate crime
- children who go missing from home, care or education
- honour killings
- forced marriages
- female genital mutilation
- radicalisation and the 'Prevent' duty.

Safeguarding training is available to parents, carers and students. This means that staff, families and students have up-to-date knowledge on specific safeguarding topics.

An independent visitor conducts monitoring visits every half term. Each visit has an in-depth focus on safeguarding issues. The monitoring reports illustrate that the visits provide effective external monitoring of the residential provision. In addition, every half term, an external safeguarding specialist undertakes the professional supervision of senior leaders and the head of care. These external visits provide an additional layer of independent scrutiny to review any safeguarding concerns. This illustrates that safeguarding practice is rigorous and consistent.

The monitoring of behaviour continues to be exceptional. Behaviour management has the same priority and lines of reporting as any safeguarding or bullying issue. This ensures a robust and well-coordinated response. There is daily communication to share information and analyse incidents between education, care, speech and language, and occupational therapy. Students do not report bullying to be an issue.

Good health and safety arrangements ensure that students live in a safe and secure environment. The buildings and grounds have a continual programme of maintenance, which ensures timely remedial work and significant improvements to the home's structure and infrastructure. Health and safety checks, including fire equipment and drills, are current and environmental risks assessments are in place. External contractors are quality assured, therefore ensuring the highest standards of safety for pupils.

Senior leaders and the school business manager have undertaken safe recruitment training. Recruitment records demonstrate compliance with safe recruitment practice. This practice prevents unsafe adults from working within the school and thereby ensures the safety of students.

The leadership and management team are passionate about improving outcomes for students. Newly revised policies and procedures demonstrate that the provision is working in line with updated legislation and guidance. The operation of the residential provision is consistent with the aims of the statement of boarding principles.

Leaders utilise a range of effective monitoring systems in the pursuit of continual improvement. Extensive internal and external quality assurance processes ensure that the quality of service and the welfare of residential pupils are monitored. Additionally, rigorous internal self-evaluation helps managers to identify the current areas of strength and those that need improvement. This systematic review of the care provision promotes continual improvement in its delivery.

The principal and vice-principal work collaboratively to ensure that the residential experience is a valued and integral aspect of school life. They each demonstrate highly effective leadership to the whole school. They are committed and proactive in implementing plans to ensure continual growth.

Some aspects of the operation of the residential provision do not fulfil national minimum standards. This includes staff not receiving supervision in line with the school's internal policy. Staff state that they have had annual appraisals, although there are no records. Inspectors could not assess the quality of induction of new starters, as the induction assessments were not available. The head of care has not evaluated the impact and effectiveness of training provided, and his management oversight is not robust. The head of care did not demonstrate consistency in his management skills and understanding of his role and responsibilities. This has not, however, had a negative impact on students, but does mean that the overall experience and progress of children is not outstanding.

Staff do confirm good support by the head of care. They feel that they are part of a cohesive and stable team and that the head of care is 'hands on' and 'very good with the students'. All members of the residential care team have significant experience and knowledge of working with students in this care provision. The deployment of staff provides effective cover to manage shifts and incidents. The team ensures consistency and meets students' social, recreational, care and education needs.

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people 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 'Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework'.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children's and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

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	Residential special school
Number of boarders on roll	12
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	11 to 19
Headteacher	Melsa Buxton
Date of previous boarding inspection	02/02/2016
Telephone number	01623 795 361
Email address	m.buxton@dawnhouse-ican.notts.sch.uk

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