

Limpsfield Grange School

Limpsfield Grange School, 89 Bluehouse Lane, Oxted, Surrey RH8 0RZ
Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Limpsfield Grange School is a maintained day and residential special school catering for girls between the ages of 11 and 16 who have communication and interaction difficulties. The majority have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and suffer from high and persistent levels of anxiety. Residential accommodation is available from Monday to Thursday. Currently, 27 pupils access the boarding provision. Some of these are on a shared basis, with pupils staying on different nights, as there are 24 available beds.

Inspection dates: 5 to 7 February 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 March 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school is outstanding because:

- Leaders and managers are creative, innovative and highly ambitious. They continuously strive to improve support for residential students to maximise their future life chances.
- Residential students flourish as a result of research-led and highly individualised support.
- The sharp focus on well-being, achievement, communication and independence provides opportunities for residential students to develop their skills, confidence and self-esteem to take with them into adult life.
- Residential students thoroughly enjoy the residential experience, are proud of their achievements and have fun while learning important life skills.
- Within a culture of excellence, the staff team embraces new challenges, training and development, which has a positive impact on the support they provide for the residential students.
- Safeguarding residential students is at the heart of the support provided by staff. Proactive safeguarding practices raise the residential students' awareness and understanding of the risks they face and how to keep themselves safe.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Through research-led practice and highly individualised care and support from staff, residential students make significant progress in managing their communication and social interaction difficulties. With a purposeful focus on well-being, achievement, communication and independence, the staff support residential students to develop skills to prepare them for their future lives.

Parents are very positive about their child's experience. Residential students are unanimous in their view that they 'love' the residential provision. They are happy, relaxed and appreciate the support provided by the staff, who they describe as 'kind, helpful, supportive, caring and funny'. Residential students recognise their personal achievements and particularly their progress towards independence. They feel safe and have fun while learning how to manage their lives.

The support that staff provide is sensitive, well organised and meticulously planned to meet each of the residential student's complex needs. The well-being of residential students is a high priority, as is the well-being of staff. Staff participate in activities to promote their own well-being, modelling to residential students how they take responsibility for themselves. Evening and morning routines for residential students include specific activities to promote their well-being and help them to manage their emotions. Residential students are encouraged to explore new experiences and find out what works for them in reducing their anxiety, which they can continue into their adult lives.

With the ongoing, sharply focused support from the residential staff, residential students develop confidence and self-esteem to the extent that they participate in activities in the wider community and in work experience.

The staff value the views of the residential students, who stated that they can talk to any member of staff if they are worried. Regular key-work sessions, student focus groups, the school council, the residential forum and surveys are all examples of the numerous ways residential students can express their views and opinions. Managers and staff are responsive and act on residential students' views, demonstrating to them that they are listened to and that their views are important.

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

Extremely effective safeguarding measures protect residential students. All staff take their responsibility very seriously for ensuring the safety of residential students. Staff are vigilant, diligent and recognise the residential students' specific vulnerabilities. Concerns are promptly reported to the experienced team of designated safeguarding

leads, who take appropriate action. Systems for reporting concerns are embedded into practice. Successful partnership working between the school safeguarding team, external safeguarding agencies and families promotes the welfare of students. Managers are robust in challenging external safeguarding agencies when they consider appropriate action is not being taken to protect students.

Educating the residential students to raise their awareness of how to keep themselves safe is a priority for all staff. Through the curriculum, sessions with students from specialist external agencies and talks on safeguarding issues for parents and carers, residential students are learning about the risks they face and how to protect themselves. Continuous conversations between staff and residential students reinforce an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. With this 'drip-feed' approach, the staff are able to check the residential students' processing of information and identify areas where further support is needed. Staff are highly conscious of the vulnerability of students when integrating in the wider community. Their priority is to prepare students for the realities of life after school. Staff are well trained in all current safeguarding issues.

Relationships between staff and residential students are extremely positive and are at the heart of successful behaviour management strategies. Structure, routines and clear boundaries help residential students develop a sense of safety, protection and trust. Staff model appropriate social interactions, supporting residential students to make friends, maintain friendships and learn to live with others.

The staff know and understand each residential student very well. They implement personalised strategies to help residential students self-regulate their emotions and manage their difficulties. Incidents are rare and physical intervention is not used. The staff understand the residential students' behaviour and are skilled in defusing and de-escalating potentially difficult situations. Residential students respond to the support provided by the staff and behaviour is excellent.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers are highly competent, creative and innovative. They successfully maintain an inspirational culture in which residential students flourish. Their vision that 'together we make a difference' unites the staff team in providing individualised support for residential students to prepare them for their future and to confidently face the demands of everyday life.

Leaders are highly ambitious and passionate in their continuous drive to not only provide an excellent quality of care for residential students, but to participate in research projects with academics. They strive to find new and effective ways to promote the future life chances of girls with an autism spectrum disorder. Leaders disseminate excellent practice to other schools to help other practitioners in their approach.

Staff are proud to be part of a dynamic team. They are keen to develop their skills and knowledge to benefit the residential students. Their personal development is fully supported by managers through relevant training linked to their identified specific interests. Staff training is then implemented effectively in their practice to promote positive outcomes for residential students and enrich their experience.

The progress of residential students is under constant review. All the staff work together to support the individual needs of the residential students. Cohesive working, and a flexible approach to trying new strategies to promote positive outcomes, results in residential students receiving appropriate and responsive support to advance their personal development. Leaders and managers actively encourage staff to be creative and put forward new ideas to improve the support for residential students. The staff enthusiastically contribute to this process of ongoing improvement.

Strong, systematic monitoring by the head of residential provision, enhanced by insightful and perceptive monitoring by an independent visitor, helps maintain high standards. Detailed, termly development plans ensure that managers keep a sharp focus on improvements. The active governing body provides effective scrutiny, challenge and oversight of the residential provision.

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: SC013885

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Mrs Sarah Wild

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Inspector

Jan Hunnam, social care inspector



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