

Welburn Hall School

Welburn Hall School, Welburn, Kirkbymoorside, York YO62 7HQ

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

This is a local authority maintained residential special school for boys and girls aged eight to 19 years old. All students have an education, health and care plan. There are 79 students on roll and 15 students board a maximum of four nights per week. All boarding students are currently in the sixth form.

Students may have learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, physical disabilities, sensory impairment and/or other medical conditions. Most of the residential provision is in the main house. There is a detached bungalow which has been converted into two single-bedroom flats for students to practise independent living. The school is set in grounds of 20 acres near the village of Welburn in North Yorkshire.

The residential and safeguarding manager has been in post since March 2020. The headteacher has been in post since January 2016.

Inspection dates: 28 to 30 June 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The residential special school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of previous inspection: 11 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children like to stay in residency and they enjoy good relationships with the staff and each other. Through the time they spend together, the children's social skills and confidence grows. From staying in the residency, the children enjoy a range of social opportunities, and some make friends for the first time. Some friendships grow and they learn how to enjoy time with friends in their own homes.

The children benefit from seamless interactions between school and residential staff in their approach to the children's learning and care. This ensures that children keep learning both in school and in residency. The children gain awards for the skills they learn. They make progress in all areas of their development, and, for some children, this is the first time that they have experienced success. This supports children's self-esteem and confidence.

The children's emotional well-being is a high priority. Specialist services support the children where needed. In school, children provide peer support through the student well-being ambassador role. The peer-to-peer support helps children to recognise how others are feeling, and they learn how to help them.

The staff manage the complex health needs of children well. They work closely with parents and specialist professionals to respond quickly to children's changing needs. This means that children consistently receive optimal health care, regardless of their level of need. In one case, the health records did not reflect the recent changes to medication. The lack of clarity could cause the staff confusion. There is no impact from this on the health of the child, who continues to receive excellent care.

The children gain certification for developing their independence skills. The skills they learn help them to prepare well for when they move on from this school. Some of the things the children learn include how to cook, clean and how to use public transport.

The children enjoy a range of social activities. These social opportunities enhance their life experiences, with some trying activities for the first time. The things they like to do include camping, visits to theme parks, cinema trips, meals out, going shopping and walking.

The children's views are listened to. Their voice is heard through a variety of ways, such as in the student forum and in individual sessions with the staff. They also choose their own activities and awards they would like to work towards. The children's self-esteem grows as they speak out without fear of judgement. They know staff listen to their opinions with respect.

Differences are celebrated. The children learn to develop understanding, tolerance and respect for others. They are taught about wider faiths and beliefs. The children

gain confidence to explore their own identity. The staff support them well with this and provide them with guidance and information.

The quality and choice of food in the residential provision remains inconsistent. The residential manager has made efforts to ensure that meals provided to children improve. Children confirm that the food is better than it was. They choose their meals each term from the menus supplied by the Local Authority. During the inspection, concerns were raised about meals for some children. The concerns were around the variety of healthy foods and limited choices for those with individualised diets.

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

The staff know the children well. The focus on proactive support and individualised behaviour strategies reduces the risk of children reaching crisis point. There is no use of physical restraint. When children are upset, managers and staff work closely with the children and their families to learn how to support them. This approach ensures that risk management strategies are effective because children are fully involved in their own plans.

Children are supported to take age-appropriate risks as they get older. This includes some children being able to go for independent walks, as a way of helping them to manage their feelings. This approach means that children are preparing for life as young adults.

The staff regularly refresh their safeguarding training. This helps them identify risks to the children. The training they complete helps staff recognise risks such as radicalisation, child sexual exploitation and online safety.

The systems for responding to safeguarding concerns are effective. The managers take quick action to share information with relevant professionals to make sure the children are protected. The staff are confident to report any concerns to designated safeguarding leads.

The children complete work in groups and in individualised sessions both in school and in residency to help them understand the dangers and risks to their safety. They learn what they need to do to keep themselves safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The residential manager leads the residential staff team by example. He sets high standards and models excellent care practice. The staff are mirroring his positive approaches. He balances the dual leadership role of residential manager and designated safeguarding lead very well. Within this, he plays an active part in the children's care and has excellent relationships with them.

Leaders are taking forward the development of the whole school. For example, the school has succeeded in attaining an accreditation award that reflects its approach to supporting children with autism. This increases the level of expertise among staff caring for children.

The residential manager has high aspirations for children. He continues to develop the residential provision to ensure that staff support children to meet their potential. The positive changes that he made following his appointment to the role have been sustained and built on. As a result, children are thriving, and families are delighted with their progress.

The residential manager has effective monitoring systems which help him track the children's progress. He understands the progress of each child. His tracking systems allow him to identify any issues for children. He then quickly addresses them to ensure children keep making progress.

Staff feel very well supported by the residential manager. One staff member said, 'He is brilliant, I can go to him with anything.' Staff receive regular supervision and appraisals of their practice. This gives them time to think about their care practice and develop targets to make them more effective.

Staff receive the training to help them perform well. They undertake learning specific to the needs of children. The training includes sessions with specialists, such as nurses and psychologists. This gives them accurate information about how to ensure the children receive the care they need.

Leaders are helped by oversight from the independent visitor. The independent visitor makes regular visits to the residency. Leaders respond well to the recommendations made to improve practice. There is an experienced governing body in place. The governing body provides challenge to the senior leadership team. They also offer support, particularly when responding to external constraints, such as funding issues. The support offered by these professionals helps to ensure progress is sustained and shortfalls are understood and addressed.

The residential manager works very closely with parents and carers to make sure the children get all the help they need. Parents are included in all decisions involving their child's care. The school operates an open door policy, welcoming parents' input. The residential manager works closely with other professionals, such as social workers, the local authority designated officer, police and medical professionals. This joint working ensures that information is shared effectively in order to support children.

What does the residential special school need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Leaders should ensure that children's health records reflect the practice of medication administration. (Residential special school: national minimum standards 3.12)
- Leaders should ensure that children are provided with tasty meals that are nutritious and have variety. A range of alternatives should be provided for those children who have individualised diets. (Residential special school: national minimum standards 8.1)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people 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: SC007943

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Mrs Marianne Best

Type of school: Residential special school

Telephone number: 01751 431 218

Email address: admin@welburn-hall.n-yorks.sch.uk

Inspectors

Jamie Richardson, Social Care Inspector (lead)

Jane Titley, Social Care Inspector

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022