

# Treloar School

London Road, Holybourne, Alton, Hampshire GU34 4GL

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this residential special school

Treloar School is a non-maintained residential special school for children who have physical disabilities. Residential students are accommodated in a purpose-built house. The school site is accessible to all students. There is a health centre which is staffed for 24 hours a day. Additional support on site is provided by professionals, including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, dieticians, music and play therapists and counselling psychotherapists. Rehabilitation engineers, assistive technologies, caterers and a transport department are also on site.

### Inspection dates: 10 to 12 March 2020

**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 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

Children make exceptional progress as a result of spending time in the residential provision. They thrive because of the trusting relationships that they have with staff. They feel understood and cared for by staff who know them well and who are sensitive to their needs. Children said that staff give them time and space to work through their daily routines, including personal care, at their own pace.

Children are confident in their surroundings and freely approach staff or each other to play or for a chat. Children know how to complain, and they are aware of who they can raise their concerns with. There have been no complaints in the residential provision since the last inspection. The complaints process is adapted according to children's communication styles. All matters that are raised as an issue are taken seriously and children are always listened to.

All children attend education as planned and they are supported to move between the two provisions seamlessly. Information-sharing systems are a particular strength and all members of the children's multidisciplinary teams have access to clear and detailed care plans. Children's views are used to inform these plans.

Practice is well informed by a range of experts in the school. The use of technology to support communication and independence is innovative and the school is at the forefront of practice in this area. Children flourish through an aspirational focus on their independence. Children exceed expectations; they become confident that their disability does not define them, and that they are able to achieve and be all that they can be.

Children have fun and participate in a wide range of activities that are organised in conjunction with the education provision, therapy teams and play and enrichment leaders. Children enjoy the extra-curricular activities, and make the most of opportunities to experience activities that they would not be able to take part in if they did not stay after school. The activity clubs offer a wide range of opportunities for children to relax and get involved in activities such as arts and sport, or to practise their communication skills in a fun way. Children have suggested that some activities could be better suited to their current wishes.

Children's physical health and emotional well-being are central to all plans. Staff actively utilise the onsite nursing team to check any health concerns, no matter how minor. This ensures a swift response to any deterioration in a child's physical wellbeing.

The approach to meeting dietary needs is bespoke. For children who need feeding support plans, this approach takes into consideration how the child can best have a fulfilling meal that is similar to the meal being enjoyed by their peers. The joint

working between the dietician, speech and language therapists and chefs ensures that there is always a varied, healthy diet for the children to enjoy. Innovative and supportive practice means that parents can continue to provide nutritious and varied meals for their children at home, including those children who are tube fed. Further, the head of catering meets with children regularly to seek their views on the foods available, and to make any changes the children would like. The school is thoughtful in its approach to caring for children with degenerative illnesses. This approach includes strong joint-working with parents, and the provision of support for the child to enable them to understand the impact of their condition.

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

Children said that they feel safe in the school. They all identified staff who they can go to for help. Children reported that staff help them to sort out any worries or concerns that they might have. Children described the school as a 'community' and a 'second home', and they are confident that staff will do what they can to help them.

Staff in the residential provision, including night staff, are clear about how to respond to any safeguarding concerns that may arise. All staff reported that they have access to a 24-hour safeguarding helpline, and that this is always answered. Staff value the access to medical consultation at any time, day or night. Staff said that their training is extremely useful in helping them to identify safeguarding concerns, and that there is a genuinely open culture in the school. This means that staff report all concerns, including low-level concerns, to their manager.

Responses to safeguarding and child protection concerns are particularly robust. The designated safeguarding lead has strong, reciprocal links with the safeguarding team in the local authority. Records of responses to welfare concerns are well documented and prompt action is taken to follow up concerns. All welfare concerns are closely monitored through the multidisciplinary team.

A particular strength of the service is its multidisciplinary approach to understanding problematic behaviour and developing thoughtful strategies to help children to learn and thrive. This work is effective and, as a result, there are low levels of physical intervention. All incidents are closely monitored and staff are given clear guidance on acceptable and unacceptable strategies for managing behaviour. This ensures that children do not have their liberty restricted by, for example, wheelchairs being turned off or improper use of devices that are restrictive but necessary for their safety, such as harnesses and seat belts.

Children are treated with dignity and respect. The school undertakes in-depth and reliable assessments to understand each child's capacity to make decisions. This ensures that children can participate as much as their understanding and cognitive abilities allow. It also guards against children making decisions that may have consequences that they cannot comprehend. Children have bespoke incident-debrief templates that are specific to their needs. This encourages evaluation and reflection

that are used to help staff to understand each child's perspective, and adjust the way that they support them if necessary. This also helps children to connect their feelings with behaviours and to learn coping skills.

Children are protected from avoidable risk through recently strengthened vetting and pre-employment checks of staff and volunteers. In addition, good health and safety practice is integral to the running of the school. All children have evacuation support plans that are regularly reviewed, and there are regular and suitable fire checks and drills; these are in line with the school's procedures. Regular reviews of fire drills identify and address any areas for improvement. This demonstrates good oversight from the head of the residential provision. The school has strong links with the local fire service, but the school has not, in recent years, had an independent fire risk assessment carried out by an expert in fire safety.

The physical environment is warm and welcoming, while still being practical and functional. The space in the provision has been used wisely to ensure that all power chairs and equipment can be charged without obstructing hallways, and that unsightly wires are hidden to reduce trip hazards. Redecoration of the whole building has been ongoing. Some bedrooms that have not yet been re-decorated are tired in their decor, and not all are welcoming.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The management of the residential provision is extremely thoughtful and diligent. Managers are constantly looking for innovation and guidance to assist them in developing good practice and improving the experience of care and outcomes for children. The school works closely with other schools and services to ensure that it is abreast of any new practice developments in the care of and support for children with disabilities. The school is also at the forefront of practice in the field. It regularly contributes to national research projects and makes good use of research to inform practice.

The management team has an excellent understanding of the needs and experiences of the children accessing the residential service, and has excellent oversight of children's plans and progress. This insight is well-informed by the close partnership work of the school's multidisciplinary team. Governance of the school is strong. There is a highly skilled team of governors from various disciplines, including education, safeguarding and business.

Residential staff are confident in their roles and said that they are well supported by the management team. Staff have access to managers 24 hours a day, and know they can call at any time for advice and guidance. They said that the school has a genuine open-door policy. Residential staff said that they feel part of the multidisciplinary team for their key children, and are recognised for their role in providing a holistic learning and support package for children. Staff focus on children's life beyond school, devising packages of support to ensure that children

develop the independence skills that they need, in readiness for further education, higher education and employment.

Staff are well trained and have access to a wide variety of training opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. The on-site multidisciplinary teams provide continued support and monitoring of skills. This ensures that staff are competent in their care of the children, some of whom have complex medical needs. Observations and reviews of practice are genuine learning opportunities, to ensure good practice. The competency assessments for staff are reviewed in supervision. This provides a safe space in which staff can reflect, learn and improve their care practice.

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

### **Recommendations**

- Further consult children to ensure that activities are student led.
- Consider contracting/using an external organisation to conduct the fire risk assessment.
- Expedite the redecoration of bedrooms in Gloucester House.

### **Information about this inspection**

Ofsted is aware of the challenges that Covid-19 is currently posing to those we inspect. During this visit, the inspectors took into consideration the impact of any measures being taken to slow the spread of Coronavirus by the school. This has included the effect these have had on staffing arrangements and the current attendance of the children.

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:** SC012024

**Headteacher/teacher in charge:** Martin Ingram

**Type of school:** Residential special school

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## **Inspectors**

Jennie Christopher, Social Care Inspector (lead)  
Lee Kirwin, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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