

Holbrook School for Autism

Holbrook School for Autism, Port Way, Holbrook, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 0TE

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

The Holbrook School for Autism is a specialist school for children aged between four and 19 with autism and learning difficulties. The school has had academy status since 2018.

The residential service (Hawk and Falcon) operates Monday to Thursday in term time. There are 157 children on the school roll, of whom 29 use the residential provision. Seven children can stay at any one time in the residential provision. Each child stays for one night a week.

A head of care leads the residential provision. She is well established in her role and is suitably experienced and qualified.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 July 2025

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 last inspection: 25 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children who access the residential provision make good progress. The progress is seen both in the home and school. For one child, having overnight stays away from home has promoted their independence. They are now able to undertake their personal care without any support, and they have started to help with cooking and cleaning.

The staff work hard to continually strengthen their relationships with the children. Staff observe and listen to the children and pick up on the subtle clues from their behaviours. Over time, this has meant that staff know the children well and are highly responsive to their individual needs.

The children have had opportunities to increase their participation in the local community. They have visited a local care home, where one child played the piano for the care home residents. The experience was thoroughly enjoyed by all and offered the children meaningful insight into the lives and stories of the older generation.

Staff in the residential provision work closely with their education colleagues. They participate in regular joint meetings where the progress of the children is reviewed and new targets set.

The staff have continued to offer home visits to parents to share their practice and support parents in developing their own techniques to support their child. Parents have welcomed this as an opportunity to explore alternative ways in which they can support their child and improve their overall outcomes.

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

Each child has an individualised positive behaviour support plan. This is part of a wider system of essential documents on each child's file. However, staff are not consistently recording all known details about children in these documents. As a result, there are gaps in key information which may impact on staff's ability to provide safe and consistent care.

Physical intervention is used as a last resort. When it is used, staff ensure that there is a detailed record of the incident. Staff and children receive a debrief after the intervention. Staff also use various strategies to explore with the children if they are emotionally ready to move on.

There is a good safeguarding culture within the school. A wealth of training is provided to children and staff, and this is extended to include children's families. The training seeks to equip them with the skills and knowledge required in relation to

children's risks and vulnerabilities and seeks to improve the safety of children both in school and their family homes.

There is a team around the child approach to supporting children. Staff work collaboratively with external agencies and parents. This joined-up working leads to improved outcomes for children.

Medication systems are robust and effective. As a result, there have not been any medication errors.

The children's needs necessitate close supervision from staff. Due to this close supervision and monitoring, the children are kept safe and do not go missing.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The head of care and the team of staff are passionate about caring for the children and supporting them to make positive changes in their lives.

Staff meetings are held on a regular basis. Staff talk about the children and share any updates. When staff raise an issue, the head of care ensures that she captures their issues and provides an update. This ensures that staff are heard and their opinions are valued.

Staff spoke of an increased presence of the leadership team in residential and how they value their feedback. Staff are of the view that the leaders now have a better understanding of their role and all the tasks that they undertake.

While management oversight is generally good, leaders have not regularly checked children's files to ensure that the necessary information is captured and is up to date. This has contributed to some of the shortfalls in documentation.

Staff benefit from regular supervision. They also receive ongoing training throughout the year. A new model of care has recently been introduced; however, not all staff have received the training yet.

The staff have continued to offer support to parents. Staff share their care practices to support parents in developing their own techniques in supporting their child. Parents spoke positively of the support they receive from staff. Staff also ensure that the parents are provided with an update about their child's stay. One parent said, 'I don't know where we would be without their support.' This reflects how parents and children value this provision.

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

Points for improvement

- School leaders should ensure that key documents capture the children's essential information and, if necessary, seek clarification regarding health conditions.
- School leaders should ensure that they have systems in place to support their oversight of the home and review the quality of records completed.

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: SC058960

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Samuel Bayliss

Type of school: Residential special school

Telephone number: 01332 880 208

Email address: headteacher@holbrookautism.derbyshire.sch.uk

Inspectors

Lizette Watts, Social Care Inspector

Zoey Lee, 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 looked after children, 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 2025