

Lakeside School

Lakeside School, Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO53 2DW

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Lakeside School is a maintained local authority day and residential special school for boys aged between 10 and 16 who experience social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Many students have additional needs such as autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

At the time of the inspection, there were 97 pupils on roll, including 16 residential pupils.

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

Inspection dates: 21 to 23 January 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 16 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children said they love coming to the residential provision. They spoke with great enthusiasm and excitement and described a range of fun and exciting activities. The children said the staff who care for them are brilliant and they know how much the staff care about them.

The staff team provides excellent care for children. Staff are child focused, consistent and deliver individualised support. Staff nurture strong and effective relationships with children. Staff are exceptionally committed to children and share high aspirations for them. Staff are forward thinking and proactive in their care, using reflective work, specialist knowledge and developments from research to develop support.

Staff provide children with an exceptional range of activities and opportunities. These are fun and purposeful and include life skills and team working. Staff support children to follow their own interests as well as trying new experiences. Some parents said that the staff provide the children with activity opportunities that they cannot do at home. Of note is the 'staycation', which the children loved. This was a week full of activities where children stayed in the residential provision doing lots of activities.

Children make excellent progress in all aspects of their lives, including developing essential skills that will support them in their future lives and learning journeys. Staff prepare children for the next steps in their lives. This may be from developing their self-care skills, cooking skills to moving into the independence house. Staff provide great support to children and families as children approach their school-leaving age. This is done well in advance of the child's leaving age to provide time for the child to have a smooth and effective move onto the next stage of their lives. Staff remain in contact for several years after the children leave to provide support and guidance. Staff spoke of children who have left the school staying in touch through phone calls or visits. This demonstrated the importance of children's time at the school.

There is a seamless approach to children's care and development across the whole school. Education and care work together and fully involve parents, sharing approaches, goals and targets. This promotes excellent consistency of care and support for the children and their families. Some parents spoke about using strategies that the staff use at home and which have improved family life.

Consultation with the children and their families is a major strength of the work undertaken. Staff seek, value and implement children's ideas. This empowers the children, increasing their sense of self-worth and self-confidence.

Children's healthcare needs are well met. Children benefit from the school having a range of therapists, a school councillor and a social worker as part of the staff team.

This team works with the children and staff, supporting the development of the children by providing resources and assisting in the developing strategies.

Children's moves into the residential provision are extremely well managed. Staff are very aware that this is a crucial time for children and their families. Children gradually build up to overnight stays at a pace to suit the children and their families. As with all approaches and strategies, this work is individually based.

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

Across the school, there is a very strong safeguarding culture. Staff have an in-depth understanding of the children's additional vulnerabilities and work with the children to develop their understanding of these and the skills to keep themselves safe. Staff work very effectively in safeguarding the children. Due to their in-depth knowledge of each child, staff can swiftly identify concerns, no matter how small, and take effective actions. Staff share information effectively and ensure that swift and appropriate actions are taken.

A clear culture and ethos of tolerance and acceptance underpins staff practice to support children's wellbeing. Staff use positive reinforcement to promote expected standards of behaviour. This has led to there being no incidents of restraint since the previous inspection. When incidents do happen, children respond positively to the staff's nurturing and educative approach. Staff use incidents as a learning opportunity, helping the children develop their own skills for conflict management. Staff communicate their philosophy clearly with parents, which helps parents to implement the same strategies at home, therefore improving relationships.

Staff identify risk effectively and manage it well they promote children to safely take appropriate risks. Staff support the children to develop their own safe management skills in this area. This includes work on online safety and safe relationships. Staff encourage older children to become role models for their younger peers through ambassador roles for online safety and anti-bullying. These ambassadors deliver presentations to the other children based on research they complete themselves.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers have a wealth of experience and skills in caring for children with additional needs. They are aspirational for the children, the service and have embedded effectively their ethos throughout the staff team. Leaders and managers are extremely ambitious for each child, wanting them to have the best possible outcomes, and they strive with the staff team to achieve this. This includes being tenacious advocates for the children and their families. Leaders use research and development in practice effectively to continuously improve the provision's offer.

Staff find leaders and manager very approachable. They feel well supported by them and inspired to develop professionally. Staff receive very good-quality training, which starts at their induction programme. Leaders and managers have disseminated effectively their passions for development and learning to the staff team, which in turn continues to develop the quality of care the children receive.

Feedback from parents is extremely positive. They spoke of their children's achievement, saying it is more than they hoped for. One parent said they wished their child had come to the school earlier in their school life and described their child's progress as 'amazing' and 'unbelievable'.

Leaders and managers have developed an outreach programme to share their expertise and practice wider. As such, leaders and managers' influence and aspiration extend beyond the sphere of the school.

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: SC012456

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Gareth Evans

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Inspector

Wendy Anderson, Social Care Inspector

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