

Ramsden Hall School

Heath Road, Ramsden Heath, Billericay, Essex CM11 1HN

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Ramsden Hall School is sponsored by the Parallel Learning Trust. It is a day and residential special school which caters for boys, aged 10 to 16, who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH). Many of the boys have additional special educational needs, such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders (ADHD) and communication difficulties.

There are 93 pupils on roll. The total number of residential pupils is currently 19. Residential pupils can board between Monday and Friday for up to four nights.

The residential provision comprises three flats situated in the main school building.

A welfare inspection took place alongside the education inspection in March 2019.

Inspection dates: 11 to 13 November 2019

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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: 4 March 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The staff have good relationships with the children and work hard to make the evenings fun. The children thoroughly enjoy boarding and benefit from the structure and routine that this provides.

The handover between the academic staff and the care staff at the end of the school day is good. The residential staff use the handover to inform the evening activities. A summary of each child's day enables the staff to provide tailored responses to children, minimising any behavioural incidents.

The children benefit from an exciting range of activities and trips, both locally and further afield. Children go climbing, enjoy outdoor pursuits and going to see a premier league football match. The children are busy and benefit from new opportunities and experiences.

Leaders, managers and staff understand the positive impact that boarding has on the children's outcomes. An analysis of children's progress provides strong evidence to show the added value of boarding at the school.

There are good transitions for leavers. Children have gone on to complete college courses in vocational studies. Further education promotes the children's employability and opportunity to be financially independent.

The staff promote the children's awareness of the world around them by discussing current affairs. They use a creative array of activities to broaden the children's social and cultural understanding.

The decor and cleanliness of the accommodation are notably better. Significant work undertaken has improved the ambience and feel of the bedrooms and the communal areas.

The children eat meals enthusiastically and show an understanding of acceptable table etiquette. The staff sit with the children and talk with them, which helps to make the mealtimes social and relaxed events. The children spoken to said that they feel that the staff listen to and act on their requests. Menus are appealing and incorporate the children's choices. Overall, children have an influence and say in the meal planning and activity choice.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The senior managers report safeguarding allegations appropriately to the designated officer. This provides managers with external guidance in the management of

allegations. However, the procedures to safeguard children do not always reflect the school's policy. The reporting and subsequent investigation of one allegation are poor. This shows that some designated safeguarding staff lack the experience necessary to carry out comprehensive investigations. Other staff have failed to follow the procedure set out in the school's policy.

The risk assessments for individual children are ineffective. Although the staff generally know the children's risks, the risk assessment documents fail to detail how to reduce these risks. Three risk assessments sampled during the inspection were almost identical and they fail to address the children's individual vulnerabilities. The head of residential care has failed to assess the dangers of a railway line that posed a risk to the children on a residential holiday. The staff identified and discussed the risk, but the plans for how to safely manage the children staying in close vicinity to the railway track were unclear.

The children understand and engage in the school's points reward system. They talked about this with enthusiasm. They understand the implications and the potential limitations of the system. The points system works well as a positive behaviour management strategy. This helps the children to improve their behaviour and to learn from their mistakes.

Child protection concerns are reported by the staff without delay. The electronic recording system alerts the designated safeguarding team to any concerns. The staff attend relevant meetings and are aware of interventions and support offered to the children and their families. When referrals do not meet child protection thresholds, children are given support and the staff monitor their welfare.

Generally, the children are safe and supervised well during their residential time. If situations become volatile or unsafe, the children usually go home. The overall analysis of behavioural incidents shows that there is a significant reduction in these incidents when the children are in the residential provision.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The head of residential care has the relevant experience for her role. She is qualified to level 4 and leads an established staff team with enthusiasm and energy. Her creativity and commitment to enhancing the children's experiences have made a positive difference to the quality of the care provided.

The head of residential care and the Parallel Learning Trust have driven improvements and addressed most of the previously identified shortfalls. There is a clear vision to progress the standard of care and achieve better outcomes for the children. Ambitious yet considered plans are in place for a new residential building.

The quality of external monitoring visits has significantly improved. The visits are undertaken with greater rigour and provide challenge to improve practice. The head

of residential care ensures that any actions raised are swiftly addressed. The monitoring reports are shared with the governing body, which enables greater governance and oversight of the residential provision.

The head of residential care monitors the standard of accommodation, the sanctions and the physical interventions effectively. This provides an overview of the strengths and weaknesses in practice.

The head of residential care has ensured that all staff have received their annual appraisal. The staff receive regular supervision that provides support and challenge when needed. This creates a culture in which good practice can thrive.

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

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools:

- 6.3 The school ensures that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.
- 11.1 The school ensures that: arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

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: SC018026

Headteacher: Emma Baker

Type of school: Residential special school

Telephone number: 01277 624580

Email address: info@ramsdenhall.org.uk

Inspectors

Deirdra Keating: social care inspector (lead)

Lianne Bradford: 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 <http://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://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

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: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019