

Bramfield House School

Walpole Road, Bramfield, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 9AB

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Bramfield House is a privately owned residential special school for 112 pupils aged between seven and 16. At the time of this inspection, seven children were using the residential provision. The residential accommodation is provided in Istock House, which is situated on the school site. The school, which is based in Suffolk, caters for children with social, emotional or mental health needs.

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

The boarding manager has been in post since September 2021 and has an appropriate qualification.

Inspection dates: 18 to 20 September 2023

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: 6 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy boarding at this school. Staff build positive and nurturing relationships with children and children enjoy spending time with them. Children say they that can talk to staff if they are upset or worried.

Staff help children make progress in their education. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the progress that children are making in school, and this is reflected clearly in children's plans. Children have excellent attendance and there are good links between care and education staff. Twice-daily handovers between education and care staff, as well as an effective electronic communication system, ensure that children's progress, and any challenges, are known. Targets for children in school and in boarding are contemplated together to ensure that these are consistent.

There is a good level of support in place for children's emotional well-being. An on-site therapy team works closely with children. They then work with care staff to help develop strategies to care for children, making good use of the knowledge they have of their needs. In addition, they also provide resources which care staff then use to work with children. Staff have worked closely with one child in relation to appropriate relationships and sexualised behaviours, using resources provided through the therapy team. This has helped develop the child's understanding in this area.

Staff help children develop skills which will support them in adulthood. Children regularly enjoy cooking and are provided with support to understand how to manage finances and use public transport. This helps prepare children for when they are living more independently.

Staff promote positive family relationships for children and work closely with them to manage changes. When one child moved to a mainstream school, staff provided good levels of support for him and his family members to help prepare them for this. Another child has been able to talk to staff about challenges at home. Staff have responded to these sensitively and provided support which has ensured that the child is not stigmatised in relation to some of these issues.

The boarding environment is of high quality. It is homely and child-friendly. Children can influence how it is designed and furnished, helping to give them some ownership of it.

Children's care is generally well planned. Their health, care and placement plans are detailed documents and child-friendly. They contain clear information about how children's needs are met in different areas of their lives. The staff work in line with these plans and understand the strategies to best support children. However, one child's placement plan does not reflect the outcomes from his most recent education, health and care plan or decisions made in his last looked after review. This means

that staff are not being provided with the most up-to-date information about the child's plans and targets.

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

Children feel safe in boarding. Staff have a good understanding of risks to children and there are clear and realistic strategies in place to manage these.

There have been some incidents of children self-harming and displaying suicidal ideation. Staff respond well to these incidents using strategies that help children calm at times of distress. Following incidents, there is a clear and coordinated response from staff and managers. This includes ensuring that relevant professionals and children's parents and carers are updated promptly. Risks are discussed with key people in the child's network and strategies to manage them updated on children's plans. Staff help children to think about triggers for incidents and how they can manage situations differently in the future. Comprehensive debriefs with staff help identify learning that can be taken from incidents. Good responses to incidents of self-harm help to ensure that children are kept safe.

Staff support children to build positive relationships with each other. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare. When one incident did take place, staff responded well. Following the incident, staff worked with the perpetrator to ensure that they understand the impact of their actions on others. Responses to this incident made it clear such behaviour will not be tolerated while helping the children involved learn from it.

There are clear procedures to respond to any safeguarding concerns. Staff understand these well. Managers share information with relevant people without delay and have excellent oversight of actions taken in response to any concerns.

The use of restraint is relatively rare. When it is used, it is only as a last resort to ensure people's safety. Records are clearly recorded and there are good follow-up actions, including debriefs with children and staff and time spent with children to further explore the incidents.

A local police officer has delivered two sessions to children in relation to online safety and substance misuse. Staff revisited these sessions with children to help embed the learning from them. This has helped increase children's understanding of risks in these areas.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The boarding manager is suitably experienced and qualified to level 5. He has high aspirations for children's care and works to ensure that these standards are met.

Leaders and managers have good oversight of children's care and the progress that they make. They have clear monitoring systems in place and this helps them identify

when children need additional support. Reports from the independent visitor are of good quality and make suitable recommendations, which managers use to help improve children's care.

Staff feel well supported by managers. They say that managers are a highly visible presence within boarding and that they respond appropriately to any concerns which staff have. Staff receive regular, good-quality supervisions which consider their own development as well as the needs of children.

A comprehensive programme of training is provided to staff. Since the last inspection, a significant amount of training has taken place in relation to autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Staff speak positively of training and say that it has benefited them in their roles. A thorough induction programme is also in place for new staff. Good training and induction help ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge needed to undertake their roles.

Managers actively seek and respond to children's views. Regular boarders' meetings and key-work sessions give children the opportunity to share their views about their time in boarding and make suggestions. Managers write responses to these meetings, and this helps children know that their views are taken seriously.

Managers have good working relationships with other professionals and children's families. They say that communication is good and that staff are supportive and proactive in managing any challenges. Managers appropriately challenge other professionals when needed. Good working relationships help ensure that everyone involved in children's care is working together effectively.

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

Point for improvement

- School leaders should ensure that children's placement plans are kept up to date and reflect the outcomes and decisions made in their looked after children reviews and education, health and care plans.

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: SC024575

Headteacher: Leigh Bailey

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Inspector

Joe Matkar-Cox, Social Care Inspector

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