

Tadley Court

Tadley Common Road, Tadley, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG26 3TB

Inspection dates	25/01/2016 to 27/01/2016	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good	2
The quality of care and support	Outstanding	1
How well children and young people are protected	Good	2
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- Young people with complex needs experience the best quality of care delivered by dedicated staff. They are happy and safe. They make excellent progress to manage anxiety and challenging behaviour.
- Young people with communication difficulties have a clear voice. Staff listen and respond to them exceptionally well. Young people are empowered to give their views at important meetings.
- Young people engage in a wide range of stimulating and meaningful activities. They build confidence and independence while learning social skills.
- Staff are well trained, motivated and supported. The work across care, education and therapy is coordinated in a holistic way, with the young person at the centre of practice. There is excellent partnership working with external professionals.
- Young people make excellent progress in their education attendance. They are able to attend a full day's education every day of every week.
- Young people's health improves. Staff support them to eat healthily and to incorporate exercise into their daily lifestyle.
- Safeguarding is paramount to practice. Key senior staff, responsible for safeguarding, keep excellent chronological records of events. They clearly evidence the decision-making process and engagement of other safeguarding professionals.
- An effective and efficient senior management team have established a culture of high expectations and aspirations. This ethos is established in practice.
- There are ambitious plans for development. The management team know the

strengths and weaknesses of the school and plan for continual improvement.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Review the protocol for 'pro re nata' (as and when required) medication for individual young people to ensure it reflects current practice.
- Consider what further monitoring requires documentation following a high-risk intervention.

Information about this inspection

Ofsted carried out this inspection with three hours' notice. Inspection activities included: observation of practice; formal and informal discussion with a wide range of young people and staff; sharing mealtimes; and discussions with the Principal, Head of Care and other members of the senior management team. Contact was made with the local statutory safeguarding authority, some placing social workers and parents. A tour of all the accommodation was undertaken. A wide range of documentation was scrutinised. The responses on Parent View were considered.

Inspection team

Keith Riley

Lead social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

Tadley Court is an independent residential special school that is owned and managed by Priory Education Services Limited who are part of a national company, The Priory Group. The school provides care and accommodation for pupils of mixed gender aged 5 to 19 years with mild to severe autism and associated learning difficulties. Currently, there are 46 pupils on roll. Sixteen of these young people were accessing residential care at the time of the inspection. Young people are accommodated in three units on the school site. Three other units are currently closed due to a major rebuilding programme that is underway. The school is located in a woodland area on Tadley Common, Hampshire.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good

Young people are making excellent progress. They develop a self-awareness and are able to regulate their emotions better. There is a positive impact on behaviour. Young people, with a history of violent behaviour toward anyone around them, are able to engage with others successfully. This includes being able to access the wider community. They are able to manage their behaviour much better in all environments. Going back to the family home is a much more positive experience for all. They are able to join long established mainstream organisations providing activities for young people. Self-esteem and confidence blossom. Young people learn social interaction skills and independent living skills. A parent said, 'The staff are absolutely brilliant with him. We were in a dark place. There has been a massive difference in behaviour.' A placing social worker said, '(Name of child) has excelled there. He goes to school every day and is now toilet trained.' A statutory report stated that the young person placed is very settled and no longer needs a harness when using the mini-bus.

A skilled and dedicated staff team understand the complex needs of the young people, some of whom have come from other placements where their specific needs could not be met. A parent said, '(Name of child) came from another school where they could not meet her needs. We have not been disappointed here. It is all good. She is doing very well.' Staff invest time in the young people. Young people are able to develop trusting and valued relationships with staff, as well as form friendships with their peers. They know staff meet their needs. This lowers their anxieties. Challenging behaviour decreases. Young people learn new skills, such as verbal or pictorial communication (using the pictorial exchange communication system known as PECS). They are able to practice these skills in a safe environment, such as a weekly 'PECS café', where young people are able to exchange pictures to indicate their choice.

Staff go to great lengths to ensure they hear the voice of young people. Young people with severe communication difficulties are able to get their opinion and choice across to the adults caring for them. Staff take what they say extremely seriously, whether it be a choice of furnishing or activity, a safeguarding concern or a complaint. It is particularly impressive that young people have been able to contribute to the décor and furnishing planning for the new building works. Staff are supporting them very well during the transition period.

Activities are a particular strength within the school. Young people have the opportunity to participate in events they otherwise may not have been able to do, such as horse riding and go karting. They clearly enjoy the activities and look forward to returning to the accommodation after school so they can access their evening timetable. Young people are able to choose to see their friends from other homes nearby. Staff fully support and encourage this.

Staff are incredibly effective at supporting young people's education. Joined up work with education and therapy staff mean that young people access a full timetable on a daily basis. For some young people, this is from a starting place of engaging with education for just a few hours per day. Education continues outside the school day. Small, concise targets are readily visible to the young people and staff. All are clear on what the objectives are. A parent commented how much he values this approach, as his child was able to work toward doing complex tasks step by step.

Staff ensure there are comprehensive health care plans in place. These inform staff of all the health needs and who takes responsibility. Young people's health improves, such as losing weight. Staff consider health as potential reasons for behaviour. They consult the relevant health

professionals for advice. There is clear guidance, sanctioned by health professionals and parents, in the event of an emergency, such as the administration of emergency medication. Staff follow the robust procedures in place. There are significant results, such as a change from routine anti-anxiety medication to a prescription for 'as and when required'. Staff support young people's emotional well-being and refer to the therapy team for further intervention if necessary. Staff provide for young people's physical, emotional and psychological health.

Maintenance staff keep the accommodation to a high level of quality. Staff support young people to personalise their rooms. Young people have their favourite items, posters and colours surrounding them. They are able to develop a sense of identity and security. Staff are innovative in practice, such as providing coloured and numbered wall-mounted baskets for keeping toys tidy in a safe and fun way, for young people who have a history of throwing items.

The quality of care and support

Outstanding

Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of young people's needs. They listen to them. They understand what they are saying through their particular idiosyncrasies or behaviour. There is innovative practice, for example the creation of a 'spinning disk circuit' for a young person with an obsession for spinning items. A parent said, 'Staff have a great knowledge of autistic children.' Staff work exceptionally well together to de-escalate situations. They are fully conversant with the comprehensive positive handling plans and are skilled in applying the agreed strategies when necessary.

Staff treat young people with dignity and respect. Each young person is free to develop their own character and express their identity. Staff support them to express themselves in an appropriate fashion. Young people feel comfortable with them; they are able to express how their confidence that staff will support them to make the right choices. An example was observed of a young person expressing his rising anxiety and staff reminding him of his strategy to remove himself from a crowded area.

A strength of the school is the wide range of meaningful and stimulating activities that young people engage in. Young people, who due to their disability require structure, have carefully planned timetables. Young people are fully engaged in community activities as well as within the school. Examples are: walks in the local common; visits to various parks; meals out; horse riding; and cinema. Young people build confidence and learn social interaction skills. There is excellent practice, such as staff working closely with their education colleagues, to ensure young people access activities of their choice that are only available at specific times.

Staff support young people to be fit and healthy. Catering staff ensure there is a choice of healthy options at mealtimes. Residential staff ensure that a range of sporting activities is available, such as going to the local gymnasium. Staff encourage young people to incorporate exercise into their daily lives, such as a short jog to school every day. A young person was able to explain the importance of warming up and breathing to get the best results from exercise.

Parents and professionals speak most positively about the communication with the school. They say staff are readily available and provide a rapid and comprehensive response to any queries. Staff go above and beyond the call of duty, for example by providing support in the family home or a relative's home and transport to/from the school when a parent has an emergency.

Young people make sustained progress in many areas of their lives. They develop an emotional awareness and are able to express themselves appropriately. Staff are successful in applying the agreed strategies so behaviour, such as violence toward others, significantly reduces. Young people develop self-management competencies. Young people, who have struggled to attend

school, now access a full, weekly timetable.

The management team ensure detailed care planning documents and robust policies underpin staff practice. Staff work extremely well with other agencies to ensure each young person has the right support and care. External educational psychologists and clinical psychologists provide professional advice in addition to the therapists on site.

How well children and young people are protected

Good

Staff demonstrate a thorough knowledge of each young person. They understand their routines and idiosyncrasies. Staff are acutely aware of any indicators a young person in their care is at risk. They are clear on how to refer to the therapy team or the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as necessary. The DSL is effective in working with others to keep young people safe. This includes the local authority officer responsible for child protection. The DSL meticulously follows the guidance given. All are protected while any necessary investigations take place.

Young people have numerous adults they can talk to about anything that concerns them. This includes an independent visitor and an advocate, who are clear on safeguarding practice. They take their concerns very seriously and take appropriate action. Staff demonstrate a full understanding of behaviour that is commensurate with autism and respond accordingly. The independent visitor stated, 'Safeguarding is a strength as well as anti-bullying.'

Anti-bullying practice is effective. Key staff are pro-active in giving a positive message about respecting each other. They are creative in their approach, for example by using coloured cue cards to illustrate what is 'nice' and what is 'not nice' to say and do to others. Young people, who struggle with social interaction due to their disability, learn how to use appropriate language and behave in a socially acceptable way.

Young people feel safe and secure with the firm boundaries that are in place. Staff have an excellent approach to behaviour management with effective responses from the whole school team. There are excellent results. One young person said, 'I can now manage my behaviour at school'. Key staff, such as the behaviour analyst, psychologist and speech and language therapist, review and assess responses. They make changes to support plans if required. They scrutinise any high-risk physical interventions with the senior management team. Such forensic examination and reflection means that no individual young person is subject to the routine use of such intervention. Staff who monitor the young person after a significant intervention do not always document what they have done to ensure the young person's ongoing well-being. Staff may administer prescribed medication, as and when required (also called PRN or pro re nata), when a young person is in a highly anxious state. Parents and health professionals agree PRN protocols. These pinpoint the circumstances when staff may administer such medication. One protocol requires updating to reflect current practice.

Health and safety records are of a standard of excellence. Key staff ensure all the necessary checks and certification is in place. They have ensured there are comprehensive arrangements in place to vet a large number of contractors who are on site doing extensive building works. Equally, staff have ensured the building works is contained so young people do not have access to an unsafe environment.

Staff write individual risk assessments based on the information, knowledge and experience they have of the young person. These are of excellent quality and enable young people to participate in the activities they enjoy. Senior staff have assessed the risks across the sleeping accommodation. They ensure robust control measures are in place.

Staff keep young people safe in the cyber world. Software provides a filter so inappropriate web-sites are not accessed. Staff supervise and guide young people in the use of technology. Young people enjoy trusting relationships with staff and are able to show them anything that troubles them.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Outstanding

An effective and efficient management team are highly regarded by the staff. They fully support residential staff through training, supervision and guidance. Senior staff are visible throughout the school. They do not work in isolation and fully grasp the daily challenges in residential practice. They have high expectations, with young people at the centre of practice. Morale is high and the ethos provides an environment where young people thrive. A member of staff said, 'I absolutely love my job.'

Managers ensure there are personal development plans in place for staff. These include all core training as well as specific needs, such as administration of emergency medication. Recently, managers have identified the need to expand staff knowledge on attachment theory. Managers deploy staff in such a way to provide consistent support. Staff and young people build positive relationships. Staff say they feel well led and managed.

Monitoring is excellent, including reports provided by independent visitors. There is objective reflection on the quality of care. The senior management team review significant incidents with the therapy team and other key staff. They ensure any interventions have been appropriate. They consider the antecedents leading up to challenging behaviour and revise support plans when necessary. There is a culture in which striving for continuous improvement is the norm.

The leadership team invite the voice of the child to be heard in many ways. As well as day-to-day interactions young people are supported to complete questionnaires about their care. They have regular access to an independent advocate. Managers ensure staff are made available to support young people to attend statutory reviews. Young people are supported to make formal complaints. These are taken very seriously and comprehensively addressed by the senior management team.

Staff are managing the changes in the environment effectively. Leaders and managers give careful consideration to the impact on young people, especially if they need to move bedrooms. They work on planning careful transition plans in consultation with parents. Staff use the best communication method for each individual, such as a social story, to explain the changes that are happening. Young people are able to choose the décor of their new rooms. Results are remarkable with young people, who struggle with change, not presenting any additional signs of anxiety.

A key strength of the school is the close collaborative working across the disciplines. Residential staff, education staff and the therapy team share ownership of practice. A member of staff said, 'We have an exceptional team here, staff are receptive to change.' They communicate extremely well to ensure that key strategies are known and adhered to. Results are exemplary, for example, young people who historically have exhibited high levels of violence and isolation are able to interact socially and engage in community activities in a calm and safe way.

Likewise, the senior team work effectively with other professionals and parents. They welcome external advice, scrutiny and guidance. Communication is of a standard of excellence. Young people benefit from the close joined up work. An example is work done with health professionals to keep young people safe who are having trouble swallowing at moments of high anxiety. A parent commented that the reply to a query was, 'prompt and comprehensive as usual.'

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework*.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	1132533
Social care unique reference number	SC067647
DfE registration number	850/685

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Type of school	Residential Special School
Number of boarders on roll	16
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	5 to19
Headteacher	Mr Phil Jonas
Date of previous boarding inspection	12/01/2015
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