

Glenwood School

Rushbottom Lane, New Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 4LW

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Glenwood School is a community special school maintained by the local authority. It caters for 232 learners aged between three and 19 years.

The residential accommodation is provided in a purpose-built building on the main school site. The school, which is based in Essex, is a co-educational school for children with severe or profound and/or multiple learning difficulties.

The head of residential care has an appropriate qualification and has been in post since 5 January 2023. They are supported by a head of residential education who is currently undertaking a leadership and management qualification.

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

At the time of the inspection, there were seven children boarding at the school.

Inspection dates: 21 to 23 November 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: 17 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are supported by motivated residential staff who understand their needs. Staff provide highly individualised short-term support which is in accordance with a tailored curriculum for each child. The work with children and their families results in children having positive outcomes and enhanced future life opportunities.

School leaders and managers ensure thorough assessments take place with families before children stay. This planning establishes clear goals and ensures children quickly settle into well-planned routines. As a result, children receive highly personalised introductions to residence that are centred around their preferences and needs.

Children make notable progress with their independence, self-care, and communication skills. The staff help the children to develop these skills through adapted plans which are matched to children's developmental stages. Parents said that the progress children make has made a positive and lasting difference to their family lives. The staff support improvements in children's sleep routines, continence management and daily life skills. Helping children to build these skills is a continued strength of residence.

School leaders, managers and staff work effectively with speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, nurses and social workers. Professionals consistently highlight the depth and success of joint working and how this meets children's individual health and social needs.

There are improvements in the quality of the residential accommodation. There are a wider variety of games and toys for children to play with during their stays. Staff have used recent charity investment to resource new outside areas including sensory paths, swings, seating areas and hideaways. These improvements are valued by children and provide a more welcoming and stimulating environment.

Children receive support from staff that enables significant progression in their confidence and skills to use their alternative communication aids. School teachers report that these skills are maintained during the school day. When children raise concerns, these are responded to appropriately. More views from children are being captured about their direct experience in residence. However, for children with the ability to express their feelings, further work could be done to capture their wider views.

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

Staff are nurturing, kind and committed to children. Interactions between children and staff show positive regard and are based on mutual respect. Staff work with children to share their spaces and learn important social skills. Comprehensive

planning ensures that children's personalities are compatible with each other, so they feel safe and at ease during their stays.

Staff have an in-depth understanding of children's additional learning needs and vulnerabilities. There is a good safeguarding culture in residence and in the wider school. School leaders and managers have provided additional training to staff in line with new statutory guidance. This includes understanding additional safeguards in relation to children's online safety. Staff are well informed to respond to risks.

Comprehensive weekly safeguarding meetings take place with school leaders and managers. These meetings include rigorous discussion about the actions needed to further children's welfare and well-being. Although there have been no direct safeguarding concerns in residence, there are appropriate systems to monitor and action any such concerns. School leaders' responses to safeguarding concerns in the wider school are proactive and effective.

Staff are confident and skilled in de-escalation interventions when responding to children's emotions. All staff are trained in the school's wider behaviour support approach. There have been no instances where physical intervention has been necessary in the last year.

School leaders maintain appropriate health and safety arrangements to ensure children's safety. Suitable fire prevention equipment is in place and checked as required. The staff are familiar with fire safety procedures and regularly practise drills. All children have personal evacuation plans which provide guidance for staff on the actions they need to take, in the event of a fire. The plans are reviewed by school leaders to provide further guidance to consider a child's mobility needs when necessary.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A qualified head of residential care works alongside a competent residential education manager. This provides a successful partnership of social care and education expertise in the management of residence. Managers are well supported by school leaders. Collectively, school leaders and managers provide confident leadership that enables effective support for children. School leaders and managers are very well regarded by families and professionals.

School leaders and managers create a positive culture of aspiration and enablement for children. They have strong expectations of their staff to change and improve the lives of the children.

School leaders know the strengths and areas for development in the residential provision. A comprehensive self-assessment and development plan has been compiled which has identified further learning areas. Governors regularly visit residence and contribute to these development plans.

School leaders and managers share good practice with other schools. This has included delivering practice sessions with other schools around the implementation of individualised strategies for children with additional needs. Managers have recently joined a residential special schools strategy group to ensure they can share their insights and be informed and improve their practice.

School leaders and managers have actioned their previous plans to consider children's families social goals. There is now more focus on this during the planning stages of children's stays in residence. Families report that they have more confidence to support children's participation in the wider community as a result of staff's support. However, the monitoring of children's social development activities and opportunities across the school, when children are in residence, needs to be improved.

Most staff benefit from child-focused, developmental and reflective supervision sessions. However, one part-time member of staff did not receive a supervision during one term. There was one instance where a response to a staff members concern was not documented during a supervision session.

School leaders have ensured that all national minimum standards have been met. Three points for improvement have been made at this inspection.

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

Points for improvement

- School leaders should ensure that all staff receive supervision sessions on a termly basis and any concerns identified through these discussions with staff include follow-up actions.
- School leaders should ensure that consultation with children enables frequent and diverse feedback on their views about the residential provision.
- School leaders should ensure that during children's time in residence there is regular monitoring of activities and opportunities for social development across their whole curriculum.

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: 2644080

Headteacher: Elizabeth Cornish

Type of school: Residential Special School

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Inspectors

Mark Anderton, Social Care Inspector (lead)

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