

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 252 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 a relevant qualification and has been in post since 5 January 2023.

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

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

Inspection dates: 3 to 5 December 2024

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: 21 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, children have continued to make good progress. This is because of the bespoke 24-hour curriculum offered to children. Staff work proactively with parents and carers to agree children's targets. Staff create and share guides that help to break down tasks in ways that children understand. School staff and residential staff follow the agreed approaches. This means that children receive a consistent approach at home, in the residential provision and at school.

Children thrive in a loving, caring and supportive environment. Staff provide good care and enjoy the time that they spend with children. This child-focused approach improves children's lives and experiences. Parents and carers said that children enjoy spending time at the residential provision.

Children's views are at the forefront of the staff's practice. Regular residential council meetings support children to share their views, which are acted on by staff. Children choose activities and meals and can personalise their bedrooms. Staff meaningfully use a range of communication methods and understand children's preferred communication styles. This helps children to express their views and feel valued.

Children enjoy going to school. They are well prepared for their school day and evening routine because of the seamless transitions between the school and residential staff. Handovers are detailed and both staff teams meet twice a day.

Staff ensure that children's moves into and out of the residential provision are planned meticulously. Children are identified for the residential provision by the head of care, headteacher and school staff. This means that comprehensive information is gathered about children. Children visit before they spend time in residence. Staff are patient and understand that some children may need more visits than others to feel settled. Staff continue to provide support to children and their families when the children leave.

Staff work in partnership with other professionals in the school. The intervention and support guides the staff in their work with the children. One parent said, 'My child was really supported with the transitions from start to finish. Speech and language therapists, health specialists and occupational therapist came together as one. We didn't have that before.'

Staff administer medication safely and meet children's health needs extremely well. The school nurse works in partnership with staff and parents. This collaborative approach ensures that children's health needs are supported effectively. However, an epilepsy protocol in a child's file was significantly out of date. While the protocol in the child's emergency bag kept on their person was in date, the different protocols available could lead to confusion in the event of a medical emergency.

Since the last inspection, the residential provision has moved to a new purpose-built building. The accommodation offers both large and smaller spaces, and resources are available to help children with sensory and physical needs.

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

Leaders have created a good safeguarding culture. There is an effective system for reporting and monitoring any concerns. Staff receive safeguarding training that is regularly refreshed and updated. The head of care, who is one of the designated safeguarding leads, has an excellent understanding of children's needs. Consequently, children experience a safe and supportive environment.

Children are safer because everyone has the information that they need to meet their safeguarding responsibilities. School and residential staff come together twice a day to share important information about the children. This ensures that all those directly involved with the children can respond effectively to any emerging needs or concerns. Weekly safeguarding meetings between the school staff, head of care and the designated safeguarding leads mean that there is an effective safeguarding team.

Children become safer and their vulnerabilities reduce as a result of the support that they receive. Staff ensure that there are clear boundaries and expectations for children. One parent said that her child has learned not to touch hot surfaces anymore, which is good progress. All plans and assessments are detailed and reviewed regularly.

There are no serious concerns of bullying. The head of care plans children's stays well. Consideration is given to children's ages, interests and hobbies. Children with varying degrees of communication talk and laugh with each other. One parent said, 'My child is being encouraged to mix with the other children socially. It's been so lovely for us to see him doing that.'

The staff are insightful about the children's complex needs because of the relationships that they have nurtured with the children. The staff are accomplished at applying the agreed strategies that are clearly recorded in the children's support plans.

Since the last inspection, there has been one physical intervention, which was used for the least time necessary to keep the child safe. The head of care had good oversight of the incident and met with staff to reflect and discuss alternative methods.

Children take part in regular fire drills. However, staff's records did not clearly show if children left the building. Furthermore, when faults in the fire safety system were identified, it was not clear that these were addressed. School leaders adapted fire drill recording systems during the inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The head of care is suitably qualified and experienced. The headteacher and senior school leaders play active roles in the development of the residential provision and they support the head of care. Together with the staff team, they have a clear understanding of the progress that children are making. Staff said that they feel supported.

The independent visitor attends the residential provision to scrutinise and evaluate children's safety and whether their needs are being met. The head of care and headteacher record their responses on the independent visitor's reports. The children's voices are heard throughout the reports. The quality of the reports gives the school leaders and the governors an impartial overview of the effectiveness of the residential provision.

Governors take pride in their roles and are invested in the residential provision. They have had training and support to develop their knowledge of the residential provision and the role of the governors. They show professional curiosity during their visits. This helps them to feel reassured that the children are safe and have opportunities to make individual progress.

Staff receive termly supervision that focuses on personal and professional development. This means that staff are supported to continually develop their interests and hone their skills.

Children benefit from the consistency of the small and stable staff team. Staff work a mix of days and nights, which means there has been no use of agency staff. Since the last inspection, one member of staff has joined the team. Safer recruitment processes were followed and the staff member benefited from a comprehensive induction.

Internal and external monitoring of the residential provision is good. The head of care has a detailed plan to drive continual improvement. The points for improvement made at the last inspection have been met.

Staff complete the school's mandatory training. All staff are either qualified or working towards a relevant childcare qualification within timescales. There is a wide range of training to equip staff with the skills they need to meet children's individual needs and staff are trained to carry out delegated healthcare tasks.

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

Points for improvement

- School leaders should comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 by recording if children left the building during fire drills and, if faults in the fire system are identified, that records evidence that the shortfall has been addressed.
- School leaders should ensure that accurate records are kept about children's emergency medication, in particular, that historic protocols for emergency medication are archived.

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

Telephone number: 01268 792575 option 8

Email address: admin@glenwood.essex.sch.uk

Inspector

Mandy Start, 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 looked after children, 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 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://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024