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# Moor House School & College

Moor House School & College, Mill Lane, Oxted, Surrey RH8 9AQ

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this residential special school

Moor House School & College is a co-educational, non-maintained residential and day special school and a registered charity. It provides specialised schooling, therapy and care for children with speech and language difficulties. The school and college are specialists in developmental language disorder (DLD). At the time of inspection, there were 200 children on roll, including 41 residential children. There are 53 residential places that provide weekly boarding.

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

### Inspection dates: 23 to 25 September 2025

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The residential special school provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the school contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

**Date of previous inspection:** 12 November 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

Students benefit from high-quality, individualised care delivered within a nurturing and stable environment. The consistent routines, specialist therapeutic input and wraparound support contribute significantly to students' emotional security and sense of belonging. Relationships between staff and students are warm, respectful and built on trust. As a result, students develop the confidence to engage in their environment, form friendships and build life skills.

Students make notable progress in their independence, communication and self-care. They are supported to make meaningful choices in their daily lives through a strong student voice and personalised experiences. These include participating in activity planning, contributing to house routines and shaping enrichment opportunities, all of which promote autonomy and self-worth.

Therapy teams are embedded within residential care and play a vital role in enabling students to overcome barriers to learning. Occupational, speech and language, and mental health support are highly accessible and routinely integrated into daily life. The addition of a health and well-being team further enhances care planning, ensuring that staff, families and external professionals work together to provide coordinated, student-focused interventions.

Students are supported to prepare for adulthood through carefully planned transitions. This support includes developing practical skills such as cooking, budgeting and travel, alongside wider preparation for independence. From early secondary age, discussions begin regarding future aspirations, with staff, students and families collaborating to create personalised pathways. These pathways are flexible and are supported by partnerships with local colleges, work-based opportunities and life-skills training. Students who have moved on from the school demonstrate strong outcomes in employment, independent living and social relationships, which are tracked at regular intervals to evaluate the school's long-term impact.

Social and recreational opportunities are wide ranging and student led. Enrichment activities reflect students' interests and promote social inclusion, community access and cultural understanding. Recent activities have included themed cultural evenings, cinema trips, football, guided meditation and seasonal events such as pumpkin picking and lantern festivals. These experiences help students to develop friendships, build self-esteem and feel part of a wider community.

## **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

Safeguarding is a central priority and is embedded across all aspects of the school. Investigations into concerns are thorough, well-managed and proportionate. When concerns arise, leaders act swiftly, demonstrating professional curiosity and careful consideration of historical context. Communication with staff is clear and supportive, and students are informed of outcomes where appropriate. Referrals to external safeguarding agencies are timely and reflect a strong commitment to multi-agency working.

Staff demonstrate a deep understanding of the individual needs and vulnerabilities of the students in their care. They are highly attuned to subtle changes in mood, behaviour and presentation, enabling early identification of emerging concerns. This awareness supports swift and sensitive intervention, often preventing issues from escalating. Safeguarding is seen as a shared responsibility, with care, education, therapy and health teams working closely together to ensure a joined-up response. This collaborative approach creates a safety net around each student, ensuring that protection is embedded in daily routines, relationships and the culture of the school.

Students feel safe and know who to go to if they are worried. Behaviour is managed with empathy and consistency. Sanctions are used sparingly and focus on learning and reflection. For example, asking a student to create an educational poster about school expectations turned an incident into a meaningful opportunity for learning and accountability. Positive behaviour is regularly acknowledged, contributing to a calm and supportive atmosphere.

The school provides effective health support, with experienced healthcare staff managing medical needs, liaising with external professionals and ensuring students' physical well-being. Health plans are detailed, regularly reviewed and tailored to the needs of students with complex conditions. Although two minor medication errors have occurred, leaders acted swiftly and appropriately to investigate, review procedures and strengthen systems to prevent reoccurrence.

Fire drills, including night-time evacuations, are carried out regularly and are well documented. Buildings are well maintained, creating a safe, welcoming and homely environment. Students' living spaces are personalised and reflect their interests, reinforcing their sense of safety, ownership and identity within the school.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

Leadership and management are highly effective. Leaders at all levels demonstrate a strong commitment to student welfare, personal development and protection. They know the students well and model a reflective, student-centred approach. Long-serving staff speak highly of the leadership culture, describing it as supportive, open and empowering. Supervision is regular and meaningful, offering space for reflection, skill development and monitoring well-being.

Staff benefit from high-quality training and professional development opportunities that are tailored to the complex needs of the students they support. New staff receive a comprehensive induction, while established team members access regular training in safeguarding, mental health, trauma-informed care, autism and communication. Practice is monitored closely through observations, incident analysis and multi-disciplinary reviews, ensuring ongoing reflection and continuous improvement.

Governance is strong and governors are highly engaged. They visit the boarding houses regularly and speak directly with students and staff. Regular collaborative forums ensure that the student voice, safeguarding and well-being remain central to strategic oversight. Safeguarding is reviewed weekly by designated leads and there is clear evidence of learning from incidents and audits.

Students consistently make progress across key areas of development and staff morale remains high. Effective oversight ensures that policies are implemented in practice, that staff are held to high standards and that improvement is continuous.

Leaders and staff play an active role in preparing students for life beyond the school. They celebrate success and ensure that transition planning is robust and highly personalised. Staff work closely with families and external agencies to support students' moves into further education, employment or supported living. Former students maintain positive contact with the school and reflect on how the care and support that they received helped them to build meaningful and independent futures.

## **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:** SC013926

**Headteacher/teacher in charge:** Helen Middleton

**Type of school:** Residential special school

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## **Inspectors**

Kelly Monniot, Regulatory Inspection Manager  
Jay Shekleton, Social Care Inspector

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