

# Fosse Way School

Inspection report for residential special school

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## About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

## **Service information**

### **Brief description of the service**

Fosse Way school is located in the town of Radstock. It provides education for students aged three to nineteen years who have a statement of special education need. In addition it offers weekly residential provision for 12 students who have autistic spectrum disorders. While the majority of these students will be between 11 and 18 years of age, where appropriate, accommodation may be made available to those aged 19 or 20. The residential unit is purpose built and provides well designed accommodation and facilities for the students. The accommodation is not suitable however for use by students who are wheel-chair users. Local shops and amenities can be easily accessed to provide after-school activities.

### **Summary**

This was a statutory announced inspection which was conducted over a period of eleven hours. One inspector conducted the inspection. She was able to meet with deputy head teacher, head of care, a member of the social care team, the school nurse and a representative number of students accommodated in the residential unit. She had full access to the school's policies, files and logs and was able to tour the residential unit. She also contacted the social worker of one young person resident at the school. In arriving at the judgements contained in this report, reference is made to meetings with the above individuals, inspection of the residential unit and of the school and unit's policies, logs and files. Reference is also made to the self assessment questionnaire and the residential special schools questionnaire which had been completed by the school, and to the one inspection questionnaire which had been completed by a young person.

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Significant refurbishment has been undertaken in the kitchen of the residential unit. Flooring has been replaced, as has the broken tumble dryer referred to in the inspection report of 2006.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The school is part of the healthy school initiative and is expecting to achieve the Healthy School Award. Its 'Whole School Food Policy' acknowledges the connection between a healthy diet and a student's ability to learn, play and achieve full educational potential, and has had a causative role in the introduction of the 'Healthy Tuck Shop' which opens once a week. Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) classes also encourage students to take responsibility for their own health and to develop a healthy lifestyle. The school's 'Golden mile', which equates to a specified number of laps around the school field, is seen to further promote and encourage physical exercise. There is ongoing consultation with students as to the placement of an external water fountain. In the residential unit, evidence is seen of more than one student's need to follow a particular diet. There are no reminders of the particular requirements of the students in the unit's kitchen as it is felt that staff are aware of needs, and the display of notices would 'institutionalise' the area. The unit's kitchen, which is routinely locked to prevent the unsupervised making of hot drinks, is used for the preparation of breakfast, snacks and supper for residential students. The School Nutrition Action Group continues to operate. The group

includes a representative from the local education authority, the school cook, the deputy head and school council representatives, and meets once each term to audit all aspects of food and drink provision in the school, including that of the residential unit. School menus are routinely sent home to parents for review. For those students who feel anxious and uneasy in large groups, the school has a small dining area in addition to the main dining hall. Lunch times are also staggered with the youngest children eating first. Medication is correctly stored and administered by the school's residential unit. The use of a locked cabinet within a locked cabinet, meets the storage requirements for controlled drugs, and medication sheets are correctly completed. Student files contain an appropriately detailed health record, but it is noted, that as students in the unit are weekly borders, they remain registered with their own GP, Dentist and Optician. Signed parental permission slips, permitting the administration of both prescribed and non-prescribed medication are found in the examined files of students. Parental permission has also been given for attendance at hearing and vision clinics, for the taking of growth measurements and use of sun protection creams. The residential unit has its own separate sick bay. Those residential students who are acutely ill and who require a short course of medication for example, antibiotics, will however normally remain at home. Antibiotics in liquid form cannot be administered at the school. The school reports that it is able to draw widely upon the services of various health professionals, thereby ensuring that the physical, emotional and mental health needs of its students are met. A speech therapist attends the school for two days/week and an Educational psychologist is available to the school for 20 days/annum. The school has also recently introduced the services of a student counsellor who works on a self referral basis. Other professional support is provided by a music therapist, occupational therapist and physiotherapist. The Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Service is accessed through the school nurse. Arrangements for the handling and laundering of soiled linen which better facilitates infection control, were discussed with the residential unit manager.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

A summary of the school's complaints procedure is detailed in the document given to parents. It indicates that a formal investigation of a complaint will be undertaken where informal discussion has proved unsuccessful, and that parents will be made fully aware at this point, of the formal procedure. The document now erroneously includes contact details for parents of the National Care Standards Commission. No information was observed on the residential unit, informing students of the process to be followed in the event of wanting to make a complaint. No complaints have been recorded in the reporting period. There are no ongoing child protection issues, and no incident has occurred in the reporting period. The school has an anti-bullying policy and although bullying is reported as occurring, it is seen as appropriately addressed. For example the deputy head teacher reports that the school participates in the national 'Bullying Week'. Bullying is also routinely addressed by the school during PSHE classes. It is further noted that the residential unit has a 'Feelings Box'. This is readily accessible by students and may be used by them to 'post' concerns they might have about bullying. As some residential students may not however have verbal skills, and may therefore find it difficult to tell a member of staff that they are being bullied, the importance of staff observation is correctly underlined by the unit manager. The school's behaviour policy indicates that all staff must sign the policy to indicate that they are familiar with it, although a signed copy of the document was not found in every personnel file reviewed. The guidance on physical intervention which was reviewed, appropriately defines physical intervention and gives key aspects of the school's practice. Individual care plans also detail any specific need for physical intervention, including the use

of restrictive physical intervention to prevent injury or damage to property. Where physical intervention is part of a behaviour management plan, all identified behaviours necessitating use of physical intervention are risk assessed. Both the school and residential unit have a physical intervention log, with one recording incidents occurring during the school day and the other incidents occurring on the unit. The unit log is bound and numbered and includes a reminder to staff as to the types of incident to be recorded. No incidents, including that of physical restraint, have occurred in the residential unit in the reporting period. The school reports use of various rewards and sanctions, including a merit slip system, 'Good Work' assembly, use of low sensory rooms, removal of privileges and fixed and permanent exclusion in order to reinforce positive behaviour. The one quiet room in the school is minimally furnished in order to create a distraction-free environment. The room which cannot be locked, has an observational panel in the door allowing for continual monitoring of the student. The residential unit also utilises sanctions to promote appropriate behaviour. Ten sanctions are recorded in the reporting period, all of which appear appropriate. The sanctions log is bound and contains appropriate headings. In the residential unit evidence is seen of regular fire drills, although no night time drill has taken place. Fire alarms have been regularly conducted and evidence is presented to indicate appropriate maintenance and servicing of the alarms. The unit's extinguishers and fire blanket (found in the kitchen) were last checked 18.09.06. The school reports that hot water in areas accessible by children is regulated to below 43 degrees C. The school's Emergency Plan has been reviewed. It covers a major emergency in the school which may arise through a serious incident involving students or staff, fire, severe weather conditions, epidemic, the death of a student or a student going missing. It details information that is kept regularly updated and the process for dealing with the incident. The plan is reviewed annually. The files of four members of the care staff have been reviewed. The files largely contain appropriate documentation, although it is noted that no evidence is presented to indicate that one member of staff has read school policies on whistle-blowing and the confidentiality of data. Evidence is however available to indicate that the school has obtained necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks for its staff. Although one member of staff commenced employment prior to receipt of the CRB check, the deputy head reports that the member of staff was supervised at all times in this period.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The school obtained Technology Specialist status in September 2005. The Ofsted Education inspection report of January 2005 considers practice at the school, in its various areas, to be outstanding. As most of the staff of the residential unit also work during the school day as teaching or learning support assistants, consistency in care and effective links between the school and residential unit are easily maintained. Communication between the school, the residential unit and parents is further supported by the use of link books, which provide an opportunity to comments on issues or the behaviour of the student. PSHE classes in school introduce the students to different cultures and religions and ensure that equality and diversity are promoted, as is awareness of race, gender, disability, sexuality and age. The school has also identified a designated teacher for international and multi cultural education. Residential students are given the opportunity participate in a wide range of after school activities and to join local clubs for example, the Bath area play project and Teenage Rampage. They can also use local facilities for example, Trowbridge and Wansdyke sports centres, specialist and club coaches contribute to a broadening of the range of physical activities. After school students have a snack in the unit kitchen and then have an hour of free time before their evening meal

and risk assessed organised activities for example, bowling, walking, visiting local shops, going out for a snack (Macdonald's), team games and trips out. Students also have access to the school's scooters, bikes and rollerblades. A daily activity planner provides each residential student with information about what is scheduled for him/her. The activity planner uses Makaton symbols, and although this may not be necessary for all students, the information is readily understood by all. The school has identified one of the school governors as an independent visitor for the residential students. A school governor however cannot be considered as independent of the school and therefore an inappropriate independent visitor for students. It is observed that all students have individualised schedules to support them with intimate care and personal hygiene needs. The unit is however, careful to advise staff that if a student has a particular preference as to which member of staff helps them to meet their needs, that this is recognised wherever possible.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

The relationship between students and care staff is based upon trust and honesty. Evidence is seen of home-school agreements which detail the school's, student's and home's responsibilities towards each other. It is further noted that each residential student has a key worker who is responsible for ensuring that specific targets and care objectives identified for the student are met. However, the key worker is not responsible for conducting 1:1 sessions with the student and these may be undertaken by any member of the care staff. No evidence of key work sessions are present in reviewed student files. The school reports that all residential students are supported to complete termly feedback sheets in order to ensure that their views and ideas are taken into account. No evidence however of these sheets are found in reviewed students files. The residential unit manager reports that prior to admittance to the unit, staff will visit the student at his or her home. The student is also given the opportunity to visit the unit on two or three occasions and may experience an overnight stay. Prior to admittance, the student may also be given the opportunity to begin personalising his or her bedroom. The unit manager also reports that the student's subsequent move to another unit is handled in a similarly sensitive manner, with the student (and friends) encouraged to visit the new unit and representatives from the new unit encouraged to visit Fosse Way school. The unit manager reports that after moving on, the student's photograph will not be immediately removed from the unit, which is a sensitive accommodation of the feelings of the remaining students. The files of two students were reviewed. Both files contained a comprehensive and detailed placement plan, covering health needs and health promotion, communication, educational needs and attainment targets, cultural, religious, language and racial needs, leisure, special needs, behavioural needs, independence and intimate care needs. Drawing upon the placement plan, both files also contained an individual care plan which identifies strategies by which the various identified needs can be met. The care plans showed evidence of regular review and it is further noted that where the care plan is particularly complex, the life time nurse may become involved in its formulation. The care plan is supported by a series of residential education targets. Although these targets are regularly assessed, progress in achieving specific targets was not noted and information following the reviews is limited in scope. The Student Information file, which provides additional information and is kept on the unit for the reported purpose of informing new members of staff of the particular needs of individual students, does not appear to have been updated in nine months. Information in this file is therefore out of date. The unit manager reports that a student may retain the use of his or her mobile phone whilst on the unit. Alternatively, students may use the office phone for private conversations. Telephone

conversations are not monitored by staff. Regular contact with parents and/or carers is further facilitated by the school's open day, parent's evenings, induction meetings, reviews and through regular workshops that the school conducts on aspects for example, of autism. School governors periodically issue a parental questionnaire which asks for feedback on the quality of care provided by the school. Reviews initiated by specific governor sub-committees also reportedly allow for an examination of specific aspects of school life.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

The school is located and of a size and layout that is in keeping with its statement of purpose. As the residential unit, which provides specialist provision for male and female students with autistic spectrum disorders, is located on the first floor of the school and is not served by a lift, the unit, as noted in the Statement of Purpose, is not suitable for wheelchair users. School security is reported as improved with the installation of coded entry and exits, which prevent unauthorised access. The physical environment of the residential unit is warm, welcoming and friendly with the unit office physically separating the boys' from the girls' rooms. Students have their own bedroom and each is able to choose room colour, curtains and wall border. Staff always knock before entering bedrooms. With two bedrooms having lino floors, not all bedrooms are, however, carpeted. While lino is an appropriate flooring in some circumstances, where circumstances have however changed, carpeting can be re-introduced to maximise comfort. The unit has a number of bathrooms, with students either having one to themselves or sharing with one other. With the exception of one bathroom which is less well furnished than the others, all are appropriate and toilets and bathrooms have locks that provide external access in the event of an emergency. The unit has three lounges, and again all of are comfortable and welcoming and together provide adequate space for students who may wish to meet with their families or enjoy quiet time on their own. The kitchen, which includes a dining area, has been recently refurbished. A new tumble dryer has been purchased and a new floor has also been installed. All windows in the unit have been fitted with restrictors. It is observed that the unit's boiler cupboard is not locked and does not therefore, prevent access by students. Although a 'Childline' poster is observed on the wall of the unit, the unit manager agrees that some of the students may not be able to read and act upon the information it contains. Evidence is available to indicate some involvement of care staff in the promotion of independence skills for example, the budgeting of money, shopping for food and the cooking of simple meals by students. In bathrooms it is also observed that there are specific routines for individual students together with the level of staff support required. This aide memoir is reviewed at each student's annual review. However, although a number of the students have been entered by the school onto an Asdan programme of achievement which incorporates social modules, there is no evidence that the unit has developed or contributes to a systematic and sequential programme for the achievement of skills relevant to life in a further education college, or a supported housing or employment project. Although students at the age of 11 develop a transition plan in conjunction with the school's Connexion officer, the school currently reports that its post-16 and vocational facilities are limited. The school's Draft Development Plan 2007-2010 details however, that it is to create and implement both post 16 attainment and a benchmarking system, allowing for the monitoring of individual progress in the acquisition of skills.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.



The Statement of Purpose has been reviewed and is found appropriate. However, although it is to be updated annually, the document indicates that it will be only reviewed every three years. The Student Information Pack contains the policies, procedures and information relating to the residential unit and has been written in a child friendly manner. Each student is supported to look at, and understand, the pack when they first arrive at the unit. A copy of the document is kept in a central location and is easily accessible to all students. There are an appropriate number of staff to fully meet the needs of the students in the residential unit, both during the day and at night. The unit manager reports that agency staff are not utilised to cover short term staff absence, and that the unit prefers instead to make its own internal arrangements. This is seen to promote consistency of care. Evidence is provided to indicate that a range of appropriate in-house training for care staff has been undertaken in the reporting period, including speech and language development, child protection, health and safety, first aid, food hygiene, fire protection and autism awareness. Evidence is also provided to indicate that the majority of staff hold the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 in Care & Health. Discussion with the Children's Workforce Development Council indicates that this qualification is seen as equivalent to the NVQ level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People, providing that young people are at least 11 years of age. Where night staff do not hold the NVQ level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People, or an appropriate alternative, they work alongside a qualified colleague. Evidence was provided of regular residential staff meetings. Minutes of these meetings detail who was present, although staff do not sign to verify the accuracy of the minutes. Although logs and files provide no evidence of regular monitoring, the deputy head retains a monitoring file which shows that regular monitoring of records is occurring. Although a representative of the governing body is to also visit the school at least every half term and complete a written report on observed conduct, evidence is available to indicate that these visits have not occurred so frequently. Visits that have taken place in the reporting period are seen to be unannounced.

## What must be done to secure future improvement?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure young people in the residential unit know how to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living in the school.
- ensure that each young person in the residential unit has access to one person, independent of the school and/or placing authority, whom they may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school.
- ensure that each young person in the residential unit is provided with frequent and suitable means, using a preferred method of communication, to make their wishes and feelings known regarding their care and treatment at the school.

- ensure, by locking the boiler cupboard located in the residential unit, that there are no significant unnecessary hazards to the health of young people.
- ensure, by carpeting bedrooms, that residential accommodation is appropriately furnished, creating a pleasant and as far as practicable, a homely residential environment.
- ensure that the Statement of Purpose is reviewed and updated (where necessary) at least annually.
- ensure that a representative of the governing body visits the school once every half term (6 visits/academic year) and completes a written report on the conduct of the school.

## Annex

## Annex A

### National Minimum Standards for residential special school

#### Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted (NMS 14)
- children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs (NMS 15)

**Ofsted considers 14 the key standard to be inspected.**

#### Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled (NMS 3)
- children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration (NMS 4)
- the welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse (NMS 5)
- children are protected from bullying (NMS 6)
- all significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified to the appropriate authorities by the head of the school or designated person (NMS 7)
- children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return (NMS 8)
- children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour (NMS 10)
- children live in schools that provide physical safety and security (NMS 26)
- there is careful selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers (NMS 27)

**Ofsted considers 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- the school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school (NMS 12)
- children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities within the school and in the local community (NMS 13)
- children receive individual support when they need it (NMS 22)

**Ofsted considers 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run; no child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views (NMS 2)
- children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect (NMS 9)
- children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes (NMS 11)

- children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school (NMS 17)
- in accordance with their wishes children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while at school (NMS 20)

**Ofsted considers 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.**

## **Achieving economic well-being**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children can wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money (NMS 16)
- children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living (NMS 21)
- children live in well designed and pleasant premises, which provide sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs
- children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use (NMS 24)
- children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity (NMS 25)

**Ofsted considers the key standard to be inspected.**

## **Organisation**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils (NMS 1)
- children's needs, development and progress are recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions (NMS 18)
- there are adequate records of the staff and child groups of the school (NMS 19)
- children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently (NMS 28)
- children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs (NMS 29)
- children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare (NMS 30)
- children receive the care and services they need from competent staff (NMS 31)
- children and staff enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools (NMS 32)
- the governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school (NMS 33)

**Ofsted considers 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.**