

# Frewen College

Inspection report for residential special school

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<b>Inspector</b>	Paul Taylor
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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	10 March 2009

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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**

Frewen College is a day and boarding school for boys and girls aged between seven and 17 years of age. Boarders are able to stay at the school for weekends if they choose.

The school provides a specialist education for young people with dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, Asperger's syndrome, sensory integration and speech and language difficulties.

Facilities include an outdoor swimming pool, fitness room, modern library and learning centre; football and basketball play areas and extensive grounds and parkland of a Grade 1 listed property.

The school is a registered charity run by a governing body. All the young people who attend the school have been identified as having special educational needs (SEN).

### **Summary**

At this announced inspection, key standards were assessed. The school delivers an excellent standard of care which enables and encourages the boarders to develop both academically and socially. The staff team work consistently across the whole academic and boarding curriculum and the boarders are very well supported. The staff work extremely hard to support and nurture boarders who have at times, complex and challenging needs. Individual support to the boarders is excellent and it is clear that their opinions are valued and encouraged. The staff team are committed and well managed and this results in a school which promotes the wellbeing, safety and development of the young people to a very high standard.

One recommendation was made as a result of this inspection. This relates to the school continuing to aim for the target that at least 80% of boarding staff attain the National Vocational Training (NVQ) Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People or an equivalent qualification.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

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

At the previous inspection five recommendations were made. All have been addressed appropriately. All new members of staff are subject to the necessary checks before commencing employment. There is a written prospectus in place which outlines what the school intends to deliver and for what groups of pupils it will cater. The health care plans now detail what levels of support boarders need when dealing with specific health needs. Sanctions are recorded in the appropriate book and there is a clear written policy outlining what details need to be recorded in the event that a boarder needs to be physically controlled.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Each boarder has a health plan which details information about medical history and current health needs. The plans also include advice on how each boarder should be supported in managing specific health issues.

All members of staff who administer medication have received training. A registered nurse is in overall charge of the medication, first aid and treatment within the school. The systems in place in the medical room have continued to be developed to ensure excellent consistent practice when dealing with the boarders' health and medical needs. All of the boarders have consent for medical treatment signed by parents or carers. The school has written guidance on promoting the health and welfare of the children, such as the policies for substance misuse and smoking. The school works hard to ensure that any specialist health needs are met by professionals such as psychologists, psychiatrists and speech and language therapists. Appointments with other health professionals such as dentists, doctors and opticians are arranged by the school if needed.

The food offered to the pupils is varied and healthy. The catering staff are well aware of any specific dietary needs whether these are based on religious, cultural or medical grounds. Catering staff are very well trained and motivated. Food is of an excellent quality and the catering team are responsive to boarders preferences. Boarders can give feedback on food informally by speaking to the catering staff and formally by attending the forum which discusses menus and food on a regular basis.

The approach of the school ensures that the dietary and health needs of the pupils are met to an excellent standard.

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

The provision is outstanding.

There is clear policy and guidance in place for the staff to follow in relation to ensuring that the confidentiality and privacy of the pupils is protected. Staff are aware of this and know with whom they can share sensitive information. Additionally, all confidential information is kept securely stored. Members of staff provide sensitive support to boarders who may need help with hygiene or self care such as washing and dressing. The level of discrete support is commensurate with each boarder's specific needs.

Boarders are confident to express their opinions. They have a number of avenues they can follow to express their complaints. These include members of staff, key workers, members of the senior management team and an independent visitor. Posters around the school also give the boarders information about different help lines they can telephone. When boarders have chosen to complain formally, the process is well documented and complaints resolved swiftly. It is clear that the boarders feel listened to and that their concerns are taken seriously.

The school has clear guidance in place for the staff to follow in the event that they have concerns about a pupil's welfare. All members of staff are offered regular training to ensure that they are aware of their obligations. The head teacher keeps thorough, detailed and well organised records of any child protection concerns. These include details of all agencies involved and how the issue has been resolved.

Pupils wellbeing is also promoted and protected by ensuring that they receive ongoing advice on issues such as drug abuse, personal safety and relationships.

The school has a bullying charter in place which was developed by the pupils. It is embedded into the culture of the school that bullying is not tolerated. The school has developed an approach whereby bullying is seen as a community responsibility rather than an issue to be

dealt with by members of staff. If incidents of bullying occur they are dealt with promptly and good records maintained on how the issue has been resolved or if further action is needed. High levels of supervision in boarding areas ensures that dynamics between boarders are known, and areas of conflict and tension, can be addressed.

The school has a clear policy and procedure in place for when boarders go missing. The incidents of boarders being absent without permission are very rare. Records indicate that any boarder who goes missing is supported sensitively to ensure their wellbeing and safety.

Positive behaviour is encouraged and rewarded by being acknowledged by members of staff, in school assemblies and by informing parents of positive achievements. Boarders report that the rules and sanctions imposed for negative behaviour are fair. Any sanctions imposed are recorded. All members of staff are trained in the method of physical intervention used by the school. Use of physical intervention in the boarding area is very rare, there being no incidents since the last inspection carried out in March this year. A clear procedure is in place outlining what needs to be recorded should an incident involving physical intervention occur.

There are numerous risk assessments in place with regards to ensuring the safety of the boarders. The assessments cover activities and the outdoor areas of the school. These are reviewed and renewed on a regular basis. Fire safety is ensured via regular checks on equipment and alarms. Fire drills are regularly carried out at different times of the day and night to ensure that the boarders awareness of the evacuation system remains high.

All members of staff have the necessary checks carried out on them before they commence employment. Visitors to the school are closely supervised and have to report to reception before commencing their visit.

The school's approach and systems combined with a high level of awareness shown by members of staff, ensures that the welfare and safety of the boarders is valued and promoted to an excellent standard.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Each young person has an individual education plan and statement of educational needs. These plans are regularly updated and targets are agreed at each review. Each young person meets regularly with their key worker and their progress and behaviour is assessed. The young people are supported by the staff in the boarding houses to prepare to attend and manage the school day. This is done on an individual basis and support is delivered in a sensitive manner to meet each boarder's needs. The close liaison between the boarding team and education staff enables a consistent approach to the care of the pupils.

The school has an excellent activities programme. Each evening and throughout the weekend, the boarders are able to choose between activities on the school site and activities taking place in the community. Activities are well planned and varied and it is clear that they are given opportunities to experience events and occasions which enrich and develop their progress.

The level of individual support offered to the pupils is outstanding. Each boarder's needs and idiosyncrasies are known and the staff work very closely across the curriculum to ensure that each boarder receives the support and nurturing that they need.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Boarders are given numerous opportunities to voice their opinions on how the school is run. There is a boarding forum, which meets regularly with representatives from the school staff team, to discuss various issues. The pupils have managed to influence areas such as menus and activities as part of meetings. The boarders receive written responses to their requests made during the boarders forum and these explain the reasons behind decisions made by members of staff. The boarders value the forum and report that they feel listened to and acknowledged.

Apart from being able to express their opinions in a formal setting, the boarders have numerous opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings with boarding staff, tutors and the head teacher on an ongoing and informal basis.

The admission of new pupils and the process of transition and moving on, are areas which are carefully thought through. The detail of planning of these processes involves multi disciplinary input. The pupil's strengths, weaknesses and aspirations are known by all involved in the process. The school appreciates and values parents input in this process, which is underpinned by their knowledge of their own children. It is also recognised by the school that this process can be difficult for the parents as well as the pupils. Support for them is readily available from members of staff who will advocate for them if necessary. The approach to assessment, ensuring that needs are met and responded to, and ensuring that pupils are supported, is outstanding.

The pupils are able to go home at regular intervals. They can contact families and friends using their own mobile telephones, the school's landline and by the internet.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

The members of staff responsible for the maintenance of the school premises, work hard to ensure that the quality of the premises are maintained to a good level. The school is a listed building and there is a rolling refurbishment plan to ensure that natural wear and tear is addressed. Additionally to this rolling program the maintenance team respond promptly carrying out emergency repairs.

Boarders are able to personalise their rooms and dormitory areas with posters and pictures and have sufficient storage space for their clothing and belongings.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The school has a written prospectus which describes what it intends to deliver and the underlying ethos behind the running of the school. An easily accessible and well presented web site provides very useful information on the school.

The school's staffing arrangements, both day and night, ensure the welfare of boarders is protected and promoted. Staffing levels provide appropriate supervision both on and off site and support boarders in relation to their assessed individual needs. Boarders benefit from the continuity of care provided by close working achieved between both teaching and boarding staff.

Training for the staff team is regular and varied. The staff team receives training every 'inset day' and this includes subjects such as behaviour management, child protection, first aid and drug awareness. There is a rolling program for staff to receive training equivalent to National Vocational Training (NVQ) Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. Members of staff commence this training once they have completed their probationary periods. The school has yet to achieve a ratio of 80% of boarding staff who have the qualification or an equivalent.

Staff receive regular supervision and appraisals on a formal basis. They are also able to receive on going support from senior members of staff on an informal basis. Members of staff report that senior members of staff are approachable and operate an 'open door' policy. Additionally boarding staff meet on a daily basis to discuss the boarders' needs and routines.

Senior members of staff regularly monitor, comment upon and endorse key records such as risk assessments, records of sanctions and restraints, minutes of meetings and any significant incidents and accidents. The small size of the school means that key members of staff are able to quickly respond to any issues, such as individual pupils coming to note for poor behaviour or struggling within the school. The senior leadership team meets every day to ensure that significant information is passed on to those who need to know. Additionally the school has a welfare management team which meets to specifically discuss pupils who may need extra support or who are causing concern.

The board of governors meets on a regular basis. Visits on behalf of the board are undertaken by an independent visitor. Reports written as a result of these visits include recommendations and suggestions for improvement.

Promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. The individual needs of each young person are known and promoted and difference in behaviours and routines are met sensitively. The PSHE program operated in the school also ensures that young people are able to learn about differences in culture, beliefs and background and that differences are to be enjoyed and celebrated.

The systems operated in the school together with close communication achieved between key members of staff, ensure that the care of the young people is monitored to an excellent standard.

## 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):



- continue to work towards achieving a ratio of at least 80% of the staff team who have achieved National Vocational Training (NVQ) Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People or an equivalent qualification. (NMS 31)