

Frewen College

Inspection report for Residential Special School

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Inspector	Diane Thackrah
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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 outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

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).

There are 41 young people boarding at the time of this inspection and the majority were met with and contributed their views to this inspection.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

At this key, announced inspection all key national minimum standards were assessed. This is an outstanding school in most areas with good arrangements for economic well-being.

There are strong arrangements for promoting young people's health needs. This includes staff having a clear understanding of what these needs are, monitoring them and supporting young people to manage these needs. The catering provision is excellent. Young people benefit from a varied and healthy diet that provides a wide range of choice and meets specific dietary needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

The registered provider was asked to ensure that more staff members who work in boarding achieve National Vocational Training (NVQ) Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People or an equivalent qualification. Positive action has been taken in relation to this recommendation and two new senior boarding staff members are enrolled on boarding management training. This action helps to promote the welfare of young people.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

There are excellent arrangements for the promotion of young people's health and well-being. Young people have care plans that detail how their health care needs will be met. Staff understand these needs, provide sensitive care and support young people to manage specific health issues. Parents are consulted with about young people's health and are asked to provide the school with detailed information about young people's health. Staff receive guidance about how they should promote young people's health and staff from a variety of departments attend training which is designed to ensure that young people benefit from good health care. There is a school matron who provides health care and first aid throughout the school day and boarding staff take over this responsibility outside of school hours. Young people benefit from receiving support from an occupational therapist at the school and there are effective arrangements for securing specialist medical services as required by the young people.

Food is of excellent quality and is, generally, enjoyed by young people. Young people receive a varied and healthy diet and have a wide choice of wholesome and nutritious food at each meal times. Good arrangements exist for ensuring that the special dietary needs of young people are well know to the staff and are well catered for. One young person said 'There is always a salad bar and yogurt and vegetables. They cook and kitchen ladies are very nice and helpful'. Staff eat with young people at every meal and this helps to ensure that meals are orderly, social occasions and that young people receive any required support and encouragement at meal times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

There are excellent arrangements in place regarding behaviour management which help to ensure that young people are happy and are able to develop positive behaviour. One young person said 'The staff are always very nice and helpful'. Young people are treated as individuals and behaviour management is tailored towards their individual needs. Young people feel they are treated fairly and benefit from behaviour management that is consistent and clear. Positive behaviour is supported and rewarded. Young people are happy and enjoy positive and relaxed relationships with the staff. Sanctions are fair and physical restraint is rarely used. Young people understand that when physical restraint is used, it is done so to protect young people. Young people are treated as individuals and staff encourage self awareness and self discipline.

There are sound arrangements for the handling of complaints which ensures that any concerns will be taken seriously. Clear information is made available which helps to ensure that young people and relevant stakeholders know how to make a complaint. Child protection is taken seriously in the school and there are three trained child protection leads. All other staff members have received child protection training and

are clear about their child protection roles. Young people are protected from bullying and say they have a staff member to report bullying to. One young person said 'I would report it to matron'. Bullying is kept on the agenda and action is taken by staff to prevent bullying. Young people have developed their own bullying charter.

There are generally good arrangements for ensuring that young people's privacy is promoted and protected. Young people mostly report that staff knock and wait for a response before entering their bedrooms, however, some say staff do not always wait. Good arrangements exist which allow young people to maintain private contact with their family members. Young people do not go missing from this school without authority often. Clear guidelines are, however, in place to protect young people should this occur. There are robust systems for staff recruitment, monitoring visitors and for ensuring that young people benefit from living in a safe environment. Good fire safety arrangements exist and there are detailed risk assessments which are regularly reviewed which helps to promote young people's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The school has excellent arrangements for ensuring that young people are treated as individuals and receive individual support that is tailored to their needs. Clear written plans of care are in place that are understood by staff and kept under review. This helps to ensure that needs are well addressed. Young people say that they always have an adult to turn to for support. One young person said 'I talk to the school councillor who is nice.' Another said 'I do love boarding'. Strong systems for monitoring young people by staff helps to ensure that young people are not isolated. There are a number of people who young people may contact out of the school, should they require support. Young people know how to contact these.

There are good arrangements in place for ensuring that the school's residential provision actively supports young people's educational progress in school. School and boarding staff work very closely to ensure that young people's needs are met consistently. There are regular formal meetings to ensure that this sharing of information takes place. Boarding staff also work hard to try and ensure that school life does not overly infringe on young people's life outside of school. This helps to promote young people's well-being. Good facilities are available which promote young people's study. These include access to a wide range of books and the internet and they have suitable space for study.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

There is a boarding forum which is used to empower young people to make a positive contribution that could make a difference to their lives in boarding. Staff treat young people's ideas seriously and make changes as a result of requests where this is appropriate and possible. The views of young people are also actively sought

though an anonymous suggestions box. Young people are able to maintain contact with their families when boarding and are supported to do so in a number of ways such as phone calls and letter writing.

There is a planned and sensitive admissions process that helps young people to settle into boarding life. All new young people spend three days in the school prior to their admission to allow the school to assess whether they will be suitably placed there and to help parents and young people decide if the school is the right place for them. New admissions are also assigned a 'buddy' and given written information about the school's routines to help introduce them to the school. Young people are encouraged to be involved in a 'keep your bedroom tidy' competition and are also taken out for meals to local restaurants each weekend. This helps young people develop skills for independence which go some way to preparing young people for adulthood. The school is proactive in supporting young people to move on. The leaving process involves review meetings that consider young people's future and the school works closely with the local careers agency to help young people access employment or further education.

Excellent arrangements are in place for ensuring that young people have their needs suitably assessed and this ensures that clear written plans are in place detailing how staff should meet these needs. The school obtains information from relevant agencies regarding young people's needs and carries out its own three day assessment prior to agreeing to admit a young person.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Young people benefit from living in a pleasant and well-maintained environment. Boys and girls are accommodated in separate houses and dormitories according to their age. There is a good amount of comfortable communal space and good efforts have been made to ensure that the young people enjoy an environment that is homely. Young people are able to personalise areas of their bedrooms. A maintenance team is employed to make sure that any maintenance issues are dealt with quickly.

There are extensive grounds which include 60 acres of playing fields and listed gardens. Furthermore there is an outdoor swimming pool, tennis, netball, basket ball and five-a-side courts, an allotment and poly tunnel, a well-equipped fitness centre, a pottery, music practice rooms and a mountain bike trail is under development.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Clear, well-presented information is provided to parents, staff and young people about the school and this accurately describes what the school sets out to do. There is strong organisation and management in the school and clear lines of

accountability. There are good staffing levels which allows young people to be well supported and have their well-being protected by close monitoring. Good efforts are made to ensure that young people benefit from continuity of staff and this helps young people to feel secure.

Staff confirm that they are well supported. There are good arrangements for formal staff supervision and appraisal and this goes some way to supporting staff development. All staff members have access to written guidance and this helps to ensure that they are clear about their roles. Excellent arrangements exist for staff training which helps to ensure that young people are provided with safe care by knowledgeable staff. Two recently employed staff members are scheduled to attend training in boarding management. All levels of staff receive training that provides them with the skills to meet young people's needs and keep them safe. This includes training in understanding dyslexia, the use of epi-pens, eating disorders and induction for gap students. There is excellent communication between staff with regular meetings and this helps young people to receive continuity in their care.

Good arrangements are in place for monitoring quality and the performance of the school and this helps to ensure that any problems are put right quickly and any changes in young people's needs can be addressed. The governing board meet regularly and provide a good quality monitoring tool in the form of Regulation 33 reports.

Promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. There is a strong focus in the school of treating young people as individuals. Individual needs are well assessed and catered for. There is a PSHE program which helps to ensure that young people are able to learn about differences in culture, beliefs and background and that differences are to be enjoyed and celebrated.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Compliance with national minimum standards

The school meets all the national minimum standards, with the exception of any listed below. To ensure that the school meets the national minimum standards the school needs to...

- ensure that staff are clear about, and follow, the school's procedural guidelines on privacy (Particularly in relation to entering bedrooms) (NMS 3.2)