

Fountaindale School

Welfare inspection report for a residential special school

Unique reference number for social care SC402858
Unique reference number for education 122947
Inspection dates 26/11/2012 to 28/11/2012
Inspector Katarina Djordjevic

School address Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18
5BA
Telephone number
Email office@fountaindale.notts.sch.uk
Headteacher Mr Mark Dengel

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 Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, 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.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk



Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools, in order to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided.^{1,2}

Information about the school

This is a co-educational, day and residential special school for physically disabled and sensory impaired young people aged from 3 to 19 years. The school is operated by Nottinghamshire County Council Children's Services. The school is situated in wooded parkland on the outskirts of Mansfield. The boarding accommodation is specially adapted to meet the physical needs of the young people and is located in the main school building. Residential care is provided two nights a week during term time for pupils aged from 11 years. There are 60 pupils on roll with up to four residents each night. The residential provision was last inspected in March 2012.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

² www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	outstanding
Outcomes for residential pupils	outstanding
Quality of residential provision and care	outstanding
Residential pupils' safety	outstanding
Leadership and management of the residential provision	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

The key findings of the residential inspection are as follows.

- The overall effectiveness of the residential provision is outstanding. This is a school where 'standing still' is not an option; there is a total commitment to improving the quality of lives of pupils. As a result, residential pupils truly benefit from their time in the residential provision.
- Residential pupils receive exceptional individualised care where they are able to learn as well as have lots of fun. Pupils really enjoy their time in the residential provision.
- A major strength of the school is the culture of promoting equality and diversity in all areas of life. Respecting and caring for each other and accepting differences are embedded in learning and day-to-day practices within the whole school. This enables pupils to feel safe and valued. This also enables them to become good role models in the wider community.
- Pupils stay in an environment where their safety and enjoyment is of paramount importance. Safeguarding, the empowerment of pupils and the pursuit of happiness are all central to the lives of pupils at the school.
- The excellent collaborative, imaginative multi-disciplinary working by all staff in the school enables residential pupils to thrive in a safe and nurturing environment. They make as much progress as is possible, given the complex needs of pupils.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent. This enables pupils to raise any concerns and worries they may have which helps to protect them from the risk of harm and abuse.

- Parents and carers are very happy with the care and support their children get. They really appreciate the tireless work of the whole staff team to try and improve the quality of their children's lives.
- Leadership and management of the residential provision is very good. Pupils benefit from care and support from a totally dedicated and highly skilled staff team. Staff work tenaciously to improve the lives of pupils; they constantly strive and succeed in providing pupils with a range of opportunities and life experiences that pupils can learn from and that they enjoy.
- The school's quality assurance and monitoring systems are robust and effective. This ensures pupil's needs are met in a safe and enjoyable environment; and it informs future developments within the school.
- All national minimum standards are met.

Outcomes for residential pupils

Pupils benefit greatly from their residential experiences which they fully enjoy. They receive an excellent level of individualised care and education. Pupils stay in an environment where staff have high hopes and aspirations for all pupils to reach their full potential. The focus is on what they can do or have the potential to do rather than their disabilities. As a result, residential pupils are able to make progress and achieve their potential based on their individual levels of understanding, abilities and disabilities. They are encouraged to become as independent as possible and are provided with the excellent practical and emotional support.

Pupils' achievements are highly celebrated no matter how great or small. This helps them to feel valued and increases their self-esteem. Pupils are proud of their achievements.

Pupils feel safe and are safe. This is because they are cared for and supported by a staff team who are totally committed to protecting them from the risk of harm. Pupils' excellent relationships with staff help to keep them safe as they are able to raise any concerns or worries they may have. Pupils also have access to an independent visitor who visits the residential unit regularly.

Pupils are provided with an excellent range of opportunities and experiences that they may not be able to otherwise access. The provision of educational, social and leisure opportunities takes into account individual's assessed needs and risks. This ensures pupils can develop in a safe environment. Pupils have fun at the same time as learning and are able to take an active part in the wider community. Two groups of pupils went to stay in London to watch the Paralympic games recently. They thoroughly enjoyed this experience.

Pupils really do benefit from living in an environment where respecting, caring for each other and accepting each other's differences is part of the day-to-day culture.

As a result, pupils of all ages, cultures, backgrounds and abilities integrate well; they thrive in a happy environment and many pupils develop friendships which continue outside of school time. Furthermore, pupils also learn about difficulties other children face and are active supporters of fundraising events to improve the lives of other children. For example, the school has close links with a school in Africa and pupils and staff organise many fundraising events. As a result, pupils contribute to the wider community in this country and in other parts of the world; and they become good role models in society.

Residential pupils have a wide range of communication needs and staff work tirelessly to ensure all pupils are able to communicate their needs and wishes as much as possible. This involves collaborative working with other disciplines such as speech and language therapists and parents/carers. Pupils' suggestions are listened to and acted upon where appropriate. They are able to make choices and decisions about their daily lives wherever possible. This ensures all pupils have equality of opportunity to exercise their rights; and helps them to feel valued and increases their self-esteem.

Quality of residential provision and care

There is a clear referral and admission process for accessing the residential provision. All residential admissions are planned and induction to residential is tailored to individual pupils' needs. Staff work very hard to ensure the admission process is as smooth as possible for new pupils. This involves working very closely with parents, carers and other relevant professionals to ensure relevant information is obtained about individuals prior to their admission. A range of assessments are undertaken by various disciplines within the school to ensure pupils' needs may be met in a safe and nurturing environment.

Empowerment of pupils and individualised care are synonymous and are embedded in the day-to-day practice. Staff truly understand and respect the rights of all pupils to be at the centre of decision-making about their care and education as much as possible. Staff are highly skilled in communicating with pupils and use a range of communication methods based on individual needs. Systems and practices enable pupils to take an active part in the running of the school including the residential provision. These include the school council, pupil surveys and having the opportunity to meet with governors who visit the residential provision to monitor the quality of care. Representatives from the school council have also been part of interview process for new staff. Consequently, pupils feel listened to and valued which helps to build up their confidence and self-esteem.

Residential pupils live with their parents and carers, who have overall responsibility for their child's health needs. However, the promotion of healthy living is given top priority by all staff. Many pupils have complex health needs; they also require help with intimate personal care. This involves a range of interventions, specialist aids and equipment. Safety, comfort and a respect for individual's privacy and dignity are at

the forefront of health and personal care for pupils. This is possible due to: the range of therapy and other medical services available; the exceptional working partnerships between the different disciplines within the school and with parents and carers; and clear health plans and risk assessments. As a result, pupils' physical and emotional health needs are met during their stays in the residential provision.

Pupils' health needs are met and further protected by the effective implementation of safe medication procedures. The medication policy has been reviewed to address minor shortfalls identified at the last inspection. The implementation of the new systems has provided greater protection for all adults involved in the handling of medication which ultimately makes it safer for pupils. Since the last inspection staff have received training in the handling of medication; they also receive training for specific medical needs and interventions and their competence in these areas is regularly assessed. This helps to protect pupils from the risk of harm.

Healthy eating is actively promoted and the provision of meals is very good. Pupils benefit from healthy meals which are varied, nutritional and based on likes, dislikes and specific dietary needs. Pupils are consulted about the menus and every effort is made to enable pupils to make choices about what they want to eat. For example, menus are produced in various forms to try and meet the different communication needs of pupils. Residential pupils are given the teatime menus to take home so they can choose their meals with the support of their parents and carers where necessary. Meal times during the evenings are a relaxed occasion where pupils and staff interact well together. Staff work sensitively, taking into account individual's needs, to support pupils with eating and drinking.

Pupils stay in accommodation which has to take their physical disabilities into account; the necessary adaptations and equipment makes it difficult to provide domestic-style accommodation. However, the accommodation is decorated, furnished and maintained to a good standard.

Residential pupils are provided with an excellent range of recreational activities which help them develop socially, emotionally and physically. Staff successfully challenge barriers that may prevent pupils from engaging in different activities. This ensures pupils have many ordinary life experiences; they have lots of fun as well as developing social interaction skills. Furthermore, they also develop self-care skills and their self-esteem, and confidence improves. Pupils engage in activities which helps them develop an awareness of different cultures and celebrate different religious festivals. This includes contributing to the wider community by fund raising for various projects and charities.

Residential pupils' safety

Safeguarding is at the forefront of practice in the school. Care and education takes into account pupil's individualised needs and risks. This enables them to develop skills and take risks in a safe and nurturing environment in preparation for adulthood.

Pupils feel safe, are very well looked after and are very well protected from the risk of harm and abuse. This is because of the commitment and understanding of staff who effectively implement a range of safeguarding policies and procedures. Furthermore, robust monitoring systems ensure pupils stay in a safe and secure environment. Residential pupils do not experience bullying; on the contrary, pupils have excellent caring relationships with each other. Parents and carers confirm that the school keeps their children safe. Residential pupils who completed questionnaires all said they felt safe, listened to and that they have someone they could talk to if they felt sad.

Residential pupils' behaviour is very good. The use of disciplinary measures such as sanctions and physical intervention is rare. Pupils' behaviour and achievements are recognised, celebrated and rewarded. Where pupils' behaviour presents challenges, behaviour management risk assessments are in place and implemented consistently. As a result, pupils are able to make progress in changing their behaviour.

Pupils are protected from the risk of harm as a result of the excellent management of health and safety which takes into account the needs of individual pupils. For example, in the event of a fire, all residential pupils have personal emergency evacuation plans; and fire evacuation procedures are produced in pictorial form.

Pupils are further protected from the risk of harm or abuse by comprehensive policies, procedures and guidance for vetting staff, volunteers and visitors.

Leadership and management of the residential provision

The leadership and management of the residential provision are outstanding. The senior leadership team is inspirational and dynamic, providing clear direction and support to all staff. This is a school where there is an outstanding commitment to 'raising the bar' in terms of improving the quality of lives of pupils and their families. As a result, pupils continue to receive an excellent level of individualised care and education which takes into account their age, gender, race, religion, culture and levels of ability and disability. This inspection identified numerous examples of improvements made since the last inspection.

The majority of staff have worked at the school for many years, many in varying roles. It is testament to the commitment of staff that they remain highly-motivated and innovative. Excellent multi-disciplinary working within the school creates a seamless service which truly benefits pupils. As a result, pupils are able to learn, develop, have fun and feel safe and secure.

Staffing levels meet the needs of the residential pupils. The flexibility of staff ensures that agency staff are not used to cover staff absences. This demonstrates the commitment of the staff team to ensure pupils receive care from staff who know them; this also helps to make pupils feel safe. The majority of residential staff either hold a relevant qualification or are working towards achieving it.

Two new waking night staff have been employed since the last inspection. The senior management team for the residential provision have taken the opportunity to review the induction programme and they have made significant changes to the programme. Feedback received from the new staff about their induction was very positive. They found the pre-visits to the school and shadowing shifts really beneficial as it gave them the opportunity to get to know pupils before they actually worked on their own. This ensures staff have sufficient knowledge about the needs of pupils which helps to keep pupils safe and promotes their wellbeing. The new staff are really happy working at the school and feel very well supported by the team.

There is an unquestionable commitment to move forward and improve the provision of care for pupils. This is evident by the continued efforts by the member of the senior management team designated to oversee the residential provision and the principal residential child care officer. For example, they have used the new national minimum standards which come into effect in January 2013 for the residential provision's self-evaluation form. The commitment is also evident in that they have gone above and beyond meeting the good practice recommendations made at the last inspection. For example, they have reviewed the whole school's medication policy and staff have received training from an external trainer.

This desire for continual improvement is further complemented by the range of effective quality assurance systems within the school and residential provision. The governing body take an active role in the running and improvement of the school. Governors carry out a range of monitoring visits and send out quality questionnaires to pupils and their parents and carers. These questionnaires demonstrate that parents and carers are very happy with the care, support and education their children receive. One parent commented about how the residential provision is run: 'I feel it is run 150%.' Another parent stated 'Staff do a brilliant job.' These systems exceed what is required although records such as quality questionnaires are not always dated. Residential pupils are also visited by the school family liaison co-ordinator which gives pupils further opportunities to give their views about their stays in the residential provision. One pupil told this visitor on a recent visit that they 'love ressie'.

National minimum standards

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

What should the school do to improve further?

- Ensure all records are signed and dated and ensure all quality questionnaires received are dated.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



26/11/2012

Inspection of Fountaindale School

I was very pleased to come to your school again and really enjoyed spending time with you. You made me feel very welcome and you have very good manners. Thank you for letting me join you for your meals and the activities. I saw how much you enjoyed the different activities and preparing for Christmas. It was also good to see you learning about other countries and how much you enjoyed the treasure hunt and singing the songs.

I noticed that you get on very well with each other. You are very caring and help each other. You told me you really enjoy staying in the residential unit. This helps you make new friends and learn some new skills which will help you when you become an adult.

Staff are very caring and you have excellent relationships with them. They listen to you and work very hard to make sure you are able to make choices. They spend a lot of time listening to what you have to say. Your suggestions are acted upon as much as possible.

Staff make sure you have lots of opportunities to do different activities. Staff give you a lot of praise for good behaviour and achievements you make. You are very proud of the progress you make during your time at the school.

You feel safe in the residential unit. Staff help you learn about different dangers and how to keep yourselves safe.

Staff encourage you to eat a healthy diet and keep active. You like the food and make suggestions about menus.

The residential unit is nicely decorated, has pleasant furniture and is kept clean and safe.

This is an outstanding school and you are very happy with the care and support you receive.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Katarina Djordjevic