

Farney Close School

Farney Close School, Bolney Court, Crossways, Bolney, HAYWARDS HEATH, West Sussex, RH17 5RD

Inspection dates	21/03/2013	
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of residential provision and care	Outstanding	1
Residential pupils' safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is outstanding because

- Residential pupils develop meaningful and trusting relationships with staff. Interaction is relaxed and warm. Staff enable residential pupils to move away from dependency on them to a point where they are self sufficient and prepared for independence, at a level commensurate with their ability, by the time they leave the school.
- Residential pupils are able to take part in an excellent range of enriching and stimulating activities. They are able to make daily choices from a large list of outings and activities operated both on and off the school site.
- The school successfully promotes residential pupils safety to an excellent standard. All risks are considered in depth without limiting opportunities for pupils to participate fully in the things they enjoy.
- Residential pupils health care is protected and promoted rigorously. In particular, their emotional and psychological health is nurtured in order to enable them to cope with areas of life and behaviour which they find challenging and upsetting.
- The school benefits from a knowledgeable and experienced management team with a clear understanding of the strengths and development needs of the organisation. There is a strong commitment to staff development and all staff are supported very well to enable them to deliver an excellent standard of care.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools

Information about this inspection

The school were notified of the inspection four hours before it commenced. Time was spent in the boarding houses over two of the three days of the inspection. Lunchtime and evening meals were attended as well as activities. Meetings took place with young people, the headteacher, head of care, care staff, counsellor, catering manager, deputy head, and a governor. Residential pupils' views were sought through time spent with the school council as well as meeting residential pupils during activities, break time and during meal times. Parents views were gained through questionnaires that they had completed for the school. A number of key records were also examined throughout the course of the inspection.

Inspection team

Paul Taylor

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

This is an independent residential special school for young people aged 11 to 18 years, who experience social emotional and behavioural difficulties. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A board of directors, a board of governors and a board of trustees oversee the running of the school. The school is approved to accommodate a maximum of 72 residential pupils, both male and female. All pupils board on a weekly basis and return home at weekends.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- consider gaining parents and carers comments and views on residential pupils' care plans, especially with regards to their on-going targets and progress.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Outcomes for residential pupils are outstanding. They are able to develop meaningful, consistent and safe relationships with the adults caring for them. They learn to be tolerant of each other and offer peer support when this is needed. Their self esteem and confidence grows significantly and in some cases has developed to a remarkable level, especially when bearing in mind their starting points. One parent commented, 'my son has made immense social progress'.

Residential pupils are seen to behave well and with consideration for others. They learn to manage difficulties relating to their behaviour and develop coping, tolerance and social skills. One residential pupil commented, 'I was kicked out of three schools before coming here and I've been here for two years now' .

Feedback from residential pupils about living at the school is overwhelmingly positive. The whole school curriculum enables them to feel safe, nurtured and valued. One residential pupil said, 'it's helped me so much.'

Residential pupils influence the day to day running of their houses and the whole community via the school council and by meeting with members of staff on an individual basis. The school council is valued and residential pupils really do believe it can make a difference, especially with regards to issues such as activities and food.

Residential pupils report that they are encouraged to live active and healthy lives. They receive excellent health care and benefit in particular from having their emotional and psychological health promoted and protected to an excellent standard.

Residential pupils are very well prepared for independence and college with thorough individual plans and regular audits of life and social skills. These implemented at a rate commensurate with their knowledge, understanding and individual ability.

Quality of residential provision and care

Outstanding

The quality of the residential provision is outstanding. Pastoral support offered to residential pupils is extremely supportive and nurturing. The team structure is organised so that all staff are closely involved with residential pupils at all times throughout the day and evening. They benefit from consistent support, care and guidance in all areas of school life. Professional advice is available for any immediate or on-going matters. Such a holistic approach leads to residential pupils receiving an outstanding level of care and maximum opportunity to develop their skills and confidence. Education staff fully understand the individual needs of each student and the boarding experience strongly underpins their educational and social development.

Care plans outline any specific needs of residential pupils. They are reviewed on a half termly basis and record any progress made or areas which a residential pupil needs to develop. Members of staff are conscientious in ensuring that each residential pupil endorses their plan and understands their individual targets. The approach enables and empowers residential pupils to feel that they have meaningful input and are an active part of the process. Parents and carers do not currently see the residential pupils' half termly revised targets and progress and so do not comment on them or endorse them.

The staff team ensure that there are an excellent and varied range of activities available to the residential pupils. This includes off site activities. Some members of staff train in specific disciplines, such as bush craft and mountain biking to ensure that the residential pupils' well

being and safety is protected at the same time as ensuring that they have access to exciting and challenging activities.

Residential pupils health is promoted to an excellent standard. Any specific needs are known to members of staff and arrangements to meet them are known and implemented to a high standard. Specifically, close multi disciplinary working involving professionals such as therapists, teachers, care staff and psychologists or psychiatrists, ensures that emotional and psychological well being is protected and nurtured to a very high standard. Robust monitoring and auditing of medication ensures that all residential pupils receive the medication that they need.

Residential houses are clean, comfortable and very well maintained. All residential pupils are able to personalise their own rooms and this ensures that they have an investment in their own living areas. On-going refurbishment programmes ensure that the living areas are updated and improved to maintain high standards. Both staff and residential pupils report that any maintenance issues are addressed promptly and efficiently.

All residential pupils are able to contact their family and loved ones via telephones in their houses or the main school building. Additionally, parents and carers are able to telephone their children after school hours.

Residential pupils' safety

Outstanding

The arrangements for residential pupils safety are outstanding. Effective management and adherence to robust policies ensure all are protected and supported. The culture embedded in the school ensures that the residential pupils benefit from a robust and rigorous approach which treats their emotional and physical safety as paramount. There is excellent provision for ensuring that they are protected from the risks of harm without limiting their opportunities to engage fully in school life and the enriching and stimulating activities. The vulnerabilities of the residential pupils are understood by all members of staff and this ensures that the approach to ensuring their safety is conscientious and rigorous.

The school operates a thorough recruitment process and only employs members of staff after comprehensive checks have been carried out. All members of staff, of whatever level, are trained in child protection procedures and awareness. All are aware of what to do and who to approach in the event that they have concerns about a residential pupil's safety or well being. Records show that any incidents are notified promptly and efficiently to the relevant agencies and are robustly monitored to ensure the safest outcome for the residential pupil concerned.

Residential pupils report feeling safe in their boarding areas and feel that the staff team are concerned about their safety and well being. 'They try and keep us as safe as possible' was a comment made by a residential pupil.

Bullying is rigorously monitored and managed. Very close supervision and staff awareness combined with an established culture where bullying is condemned, ensures that bullying incidents are minimised and addressed. Regular analysis, proactive strategies and a keenness to listen to residential pupils views on the subject ensures that bullying is not seen as an issue. Behaviour management plans are in place for those residential pupils who need extra support. These are developed using input from different disciplines such as teaching staff, therapists, care staff and psychiatrists. Incidents of restraint in the residential areas are rare. Excellent monitoring and analysis of trends and behaviours enables the school to develop strategies to minimise restraints. All members of staff and the residential pupils involved in restraints have an opportunity to debrief and to discuss each incident and to implement any points learnt as a result of this.

Positive behaviour is rewarded and celebrated. Residential pupils earn extra activities and pocket

money for achieving well and their success is celebrated during school assemblies. 'Coming here has changed me, I've learnt to control my temper and stay in class' was a comment made by one residential pupil. Each residential pupil has a care plan which identifies targets to be achieved and these are reviewed every half term. These enable them to concentrate on areas in which they can improve their behaviour, for example, cutting down on swearing or learning to listen to someone else's point of view. This approach ensures that behaviour improvement is part of a planned and consistent strategy.

There are clear protocols in place should a residential pupil be absent without permission. These are compatible with local police protocols regarding children who are missing. The protocols are implemented effectively and ensure that residential pupils away from the premises without permission, for whatever length of time, have their safety protected.

Regular health and safety checks are completed, including fire drills and fire alarm checks. A recent inspection by the fire brigade confirmed that they have no concerns with fire safety in the residential areas. Comprehensive risk assessments are completed on activities both on site and away from the school which are effective in highlighting the risks, how they can be reduced further, and the actions staff must take to ensure safety. Such an approach allows residential pupils to safely enjoy numerous and stimulating outings and activities.

Leadership and management of the residential provision Outstanding

Leadership and management of the school is outstanding. A very experienced senior management team offers excellent oversight and monitoring of the school. High expectations of staff performance and conduct, combined with ambition for the residential pupils to achieve to their fullest potential, ensures that practice and care is of an excellent standard.

The residential staff team are highly committed to providing the best level of care and personal support to residential pupils. An open door policy is well established within the school with staff feeling valued and extremely well supported. All staff are provided with regular supervision and appraisals and are offered a varied training programme. These practices ensure that the on-going performance of staff is regularly monitored and that staff are suitably trained to meet their roles. Residential staff spoke very positively about training opportunities available to them.

Effective systems are well established within the school to ensure excellent communication is maintained between the residential, teaching and therapy teams. A range of meetings, in addition to, daily handover meetings are also held which ensures that staff keep up to date with regard to all issues pertaining to the school and residential pupils. These also promote continuity and consistency of care. The school maintains effective communication with parents.

There are enough staff on site to ensure that residential pupils have the supervision and support they need.

Residential pupils benefit from living with clear routines and boundaries. Diverse needs are catered for sensitively and this results in fair and equal treatment for all. Residential pupils develop an understanding and empathy for others, for example by engaging in work experience with adults with learning difficulties or with children with learning and physical disabilities. Difference is seen as an opportunity to learn from each other.

Residential pupils views are actively sought via a number of avenues. These include the school council, an independent visitor, meetings with governors, easy access to members of the senior management team, therapists and key workers. There is an easily accessed complaints procedure the school ensures outcomes are clearly recorded. Complaints are scrutinised by both senior members of staff and the governing body to ensure they have been addressed.

The Headteacher reports on the running of the school and residential accommodation on an annual basis. This allows the governors to assess how well the school is running and what developments and changes have been identified. For example, the school is planning to further develop the provision for the sixth form and has identified refurbishment and re building schemes on the school site.

All areas of performance are subject to review and action plans put in place to ensure that there is a continual strive for improvement. This ensures that there is no risk of complacency and that the school continues to provide high quality care.

All information is appropriately and safely stored to ensure that confidentiality of records is maintained. Records are thorough and give a good account of each student's time, experience and progress made at the school.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	126139
Social care unique reference number	SC014513
DfE registration number	938/6217

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.

Type of school	
Number of boarders on roll	53
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	11 to 18
Headteacher	Mr B C Robinson
Date of previous boarding inspection	01/02/2012
Telephone number	01444 881811

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