

# Farney Close School

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

<b>Inspection dates</b>	13/01/2014 to 15/01/2014	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of residential provision and care	Good	2
Residential pupils' safety	Good	2
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Good	2

## Summary of key findings

### The residential provision is good because

- Pupils make significant progress in an environment where staff recognise their individual strengths and vulnerabilities. Pupils achieve excellent outcomes in developing their independence and social skills, their confidence and self-esteem.
- Positive, nurturing relationships with experienced and committed staff enable pupils to trust adults who care for them and benefit from their support and guidance. Pupils feel safe at the school and safeguarding arrangements within the residential provision are good.
- Pupils are extremely positive about their residential experience. The 24 hour curriculum provides stimulating activities which extend and enrich their social experiences and provide opportunities for them to develop new skills and interests.
- An experienced management team provides strong support for staff and continues to develop provision to promote positive outcomes for pupils.
- Areas the school needs to address include ensuring the administration of medication meets best practice guidelines to safeguard pupils and ensuring that records of measures of control are fully completed. The school has not yet sent care plans to parents and carers to gain their views as noted as a point for improvement at the previous inspection though the school intends to implement this at half-term.

### 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 lead inspector contacted the school at 9.15 on the morning of the inspection giving them notice that the inspection would commence at 12.30pm on that day. Inspection activities included meetings with the headteacher, head of care, deputy headteacher, residential staff, pupils, school counsellor, catering manager, speech and language therapist, visits to residential houses, observation of activities, two meals with pupils and reading documents and files.

## Inspection team

Janet Hunnam	Lead social care inspector
Maire Atherton	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. At the time of the inspection there were 60 residential pupils on roll.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- ensure the system for the administration of medication meets the standards of best practice
- ensure all records of measures of control are completed in full
- consult with parents and carers to gain their views on residential pupils' care plans, particularly in relation to their on-going targets and progress

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for residential pupils

### Outstanding

Outcomes for residential pupils are outstanding. Pupils enjoy their residential experience and speak positively about their relationships with staff. A pupil commented that 'Staff know us pretty well.' Pupils develop trusting relationships with staff and report they can approach any member of staff if they have any concerns. Consequently, they respond well to consistent positive reinforcement, firm boundaries and a highly nurturing environment resulting in high standards of behaviour during residential time. The warm, inclusive atmosphere supports pupils to progress socially and develop their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils commented that their Link Worker is 'Like a second mum' and that 'It is like a family here.' Another pupil commented that 'I used to be really bad but I have improved a lot and staff have really helped me.' Pupils positively engage with each other building friendships and developing an understanding and acceptance of each other, which contributes to greater self-awareness and emotional resilience.

Residential pupils enjoy a wide range of stimulating experiences and opportunities. They are able to make choices on a daily basis regarding the evening activities to suit their individual interests and preferences. Pupils choose from on-site and off-site options such as bowling, cinema, go-karting, cookery, bush craft and a variety of sporting activities. These activities encourage a healthy and creative use of pupils' leisure time and extend their social experiences. Pupils are extremely positive about the activity programme at the school and rated it as 'ten out of ten'.

The voice of residential pupils is strong. They put forward their views through the monthly pupil forum, house meetings, pupil questionnaires and individual consultation with staff. These consultation opportunities allow pupils to make suggestions and influence change in the daily running of their boarding houses and the community. Pupils are clear that staff consider their views and senior staff respond constructively to their suggestions.

Pupils benefit from having their emotional and physical health promoted to an excellent standard. All aspects of their health are supported with clear oversight from staff in relation to their health needs and input from specialist health professionals where needed.

There is a strong focus on preparing pupils for the next stage of their life. Pupils in the sixth form live in independence houses where they all have programmes to develop their skills in taking responsibility for themselves in all areas of their lives. These programmes enable pupils to build their confidence in their own abilities and enhance their future life chances

### Quality of residential provision and care

### Good

The quality of care for residential pupils is good. Committed and motivated residential staff provide consistent and high quality individualised support for pupils. Academic and residential staff work closely together to ensure that all staff are aware of the current needs of pupils and effective strategies are in place to support pupils and promote positive outcomes. Well-planned induction programmes for new pupils enable them to successfully settle in to residential life and ensure they receive the level of support necessary through the transition period.

The school is developing the care planning process to focus on ensuring the progress of pupils is recorded and short-term goals promote positive outcomes for individual pupils. This revised process is not yet embedded and care plans have not yet been sent to parents and carers to gain their views as noted as a point for improvement at the previous inspection. However, the school intends to send these plans to parents and carers at the forthcoming half-term.

Staff ensure pupils have access to a wide range of stimulating and interesting activities within the

school and the wider community. Pupils participate in activities of their choice and thoroughly enjoy the range on offer. Through these activities, pupils develop their self-confidence and awareness and use their leisure time positively and productively.

A member of staff is responsible for the oversight of health matters and medication. Effective liaison with parents and carers ensure pupils' health needs are identified, met and all required consents are obtained. Pupils have access to specialist health care when needed and multi-disciplinary working within the school ensures pupils receive the support they need to meet their specific needs, for example, speech and language therapy, art and music therapy and counselling. Pupils receive the medication they need but the system for administering medication by secondary dispensing into pots does not meet the current standards of best practice.

Catering arrangements at the school are good offering pupils variety and choice. Pupils discuss menus at their forum meetings with senior staff and the catering manager. This enables senior staff to consider their views in menu planning. Overall meals are well presented, plentiful and of good quality. Specific dietary requirements are identified and met. Meals are well-ordered social occasions with close staff support and supervision.

Pupils live in spacious, comfortable and homely accommodation, which is well maintained and furnished to a high standard. An on-going programme of refurbishment ensures pupils live in surroundings that are well equipped and suited to their needs. The school is situated in spacious grounds that are a valuable resource for pupils' activities. The whole site is maintained to an excellent standard.

Staff establish strong communication with parents and carers to share relevant information to support pupils effectively and keep families fully informed of pupils' progress and well-being. A new telephone system ensures pupils and their families can easily keep in contact.

## **Residential pupils' safety**

**Good**

The arrangements in place to ensure residential pupils are safe and protected from are good. Pupils report they feel safe. Safeguarding pupils is a priority within the school. Recruitment procedures are robust ensuring that only adults who have been checked as being appropriate to work with children are employed. Clear policies and procedures reflect the vulnerabilities of pupils and these, together with up-to-date training fully support staff to provide effective safeguarding measures. Staff receive appropriate child protection training. The headteacher and head of care take the lead as designated officers for child protection. Staff are confident in their safeguarding role and alert in recognising causes for concern and taking appropriate action to protect pupils.

The school takes bullying seriously and pupils report that staff are vigilant and respond promptly to any incidents. Annual pupil questionnaires specifically focused on bullying enable staff to analyse patterns and trends and take appropriate action. The pupil forum meeting discusses bullying at every meeting and a pupil representative was quoted in the forum meeting minutes saying that 'staff are on top of bullying'. Staff receive training to raise their awareness of bullying and they take a proactive approach in dealing with all incidents and concerns. A recent anti-bullying week specifically focused on cyber bullying as awareness training for pupils.

There is a comprehensive procedure in place to protect pupils if they leave the school without permission. Pupils do not go missing frequently and staff take appropriate action to ensure that pupils who have left the premises without permission have their safety protected.

Positive behaviour is encouraged and rewarded. Pupils are aware of the school's behavioural expectations and boundaries. They earn extra activities and pocket money for their achievements and their success is celebrated. Staff have training in managing challenging behaviour and are

skilled in de-escalating potentially difficult situations. Incidents requiring physical intervention during residential time are infrequent demonstrating that pupils are learning to self-regulate their behaviour and are responding positively to staff support. Records of incidents of physical intervention, however, do not clearly demonstrate that staff are monitoring the physical state of pupils during a restraint or that pupils have been fully involved in commenting on the incident. Staff use sanctions appropriately to address inappropriate behaviour but records are not completed fully in relation to considering the effectiveness of the measure and pupils do not sign the records.

Pupils benefit from rigorous monitoring of health and safety at the school. A range of health and safety checks and fire safety checks take place regularly including fire drills for residential pupils. Risk assessments are robust and regularly reviewed and updated. These do not limit pupils from engaging fully in activities and leisure pursuits. The school provides a safe environment and site security is well managed and unobtrusive.

### **Leadership and management of the residential provision Good**

Leadership and management of the residential provision is good. An experienced management team lead a committed staff team to provide consistent, individualised care across a 24 hour curriculum to benefit pupils. The head of care works closely with the deputy headteacher to ensure the residential provision is fully integrated into the school and is central in furthering pupils' academic, personal, social and emotional development.

High staffing levels enable pupils to benefit from close supervision. Staff receive regular supervision and training to ensure they have the skills and competencies to fulfil their roles effectively and provide high standards of care for pupils. New staff undergo a comprehensive induction programme. An 'open door' policy allows staff and pupils access to senior staff providing them with continuous support as required.

The residential provision is monitored both internally and externally to maintain high standards and influence forward-looking developments to benefit pupils. These developments include expansion of the provision for advancing pupils' independence skills and the on-going refurbishment of pupil accommodation to update the houses and provide single bedroom accommodation. Senior managers value the views of pupils and use feedback from questionnaires, the pupil forum and informal consultation to inform on-going development and improvements of the residential provision. Feedback from parents and carers is also highly valued and managers are responsive to their views. More frequent reporting to parents and carers has been introduced as a result of their comments in the parent survey.

The school has an effective complaints procedure, which is known to pupils. Senior managers thoroughly investigate and record formal complaints. Information regarding complaints is readily available for pupils along with details of an independent person to contact if pupils feel they cannot talk to staff. However, the trusting relationships established between staff and pupils enable pupils to approach staff confidently with their concerns knowing that staff will deal with issues promptly and effectively without resort to formal procedures.

All staff know pupils extremely well as individuals enabling them to identify and meet pupils' complex needs. Staff are aware of the specific vulnerabilities of pupils and strive to ensure all pupils feel valued and respected.

Records held by the school are current, appropriate and stored securely to ensure confidentiality.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	126139
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC014513
<b>DfE registration number</b>	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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Independent
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	60
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	Mixed
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	11 to 18
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr B C Robinson
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	21/03/2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01444 881811



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