

Fountaindale School

Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5BA

Inspection dates 03/02/2014 to 07/02/2014

Overall effectiveness	Adequate	3
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	Adequate	3

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is adequate because

- This service is judged adequate because not all the National Minimum Standards are met. The service's development and commitment to improvement has been compromised by some poor management performance and monitoring. The service is developing but at a slower rate because historic shortfalls have had to be addressed.
- Strengths within the service include an effective, further developing and child centred care framework. Close liaison with families and effective connectivity between the residential and education settings promotes consistent care for the residential pupils. This results in excellent progress and outcomes for residential students.
- The residential provision promotes a nurturing and enabling environment for residential pupils with significantly complex needs. They develop good self-esteem and feel safe because they maintain excellent attachments with staff. Residential pupils' independence and potential is fully explored, encouraged and extended as a result of staying at the provision.
- Residential pupils are safe because they receive a dedicated response from staff. Welfare is promoted with good medical, transfer, moving and personal care plans and protocols. Safeguarding is held in high regard with a committed approach to working in partnership with safeguarding agencies and families.
- The shortfalls identified on this inspection relate to line management systems, records and monitoring and do not directly impact on the welfare and safety of the residential pupils.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the national minimum standards for residential special schools. The details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

This inspection was completed by one inspector following a three hour notice period. Two evenings were spent in the residential provision. Five pupils were resident over the two nights. All pupils were spoken with and involved in a tour of the premises and/or their bedrooms. A range of records were examined relating to the care provided. Both evening meals were observed. Discussions were held with members of the management team, care staff, site manager, nurse, link workers and Designated Safeguarding Officers. parents were contacted by telephone. Documentation examined included health and safety and recruitment records, behaviour management records, care and health plans and management/independent visitor reports.

Inspection team

Elaine Cray

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this 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 58 pupils on roll with up to four residents each night. The residential provision was last inspected in February 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Consider ways in which the residential experience can reflect a more proportionate and mixed gender group of adults and impact on positive male role modelling
- Improve the maintenance of staffing records. For example, access and monitoring of training information.
- **The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools.**
 - All staff have access to support and advice for their role. They also have regular supervision and formal annual appraisal of their performance. (NMS 19.6)
 - Most monitoring visits are carried out unannounced. They include: checks on the school's records of attendance, complaints, sanctions, use of physical interventions, risk assessments, and where they exist, individual care plans for children; assessment of the physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment of the school; and opportunities for any child or member of staff who wishes to meet the visitor (in private if they wish). (NMS 20.2)
 - The Headteacher (or school equivalent), governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for carrying on the school carries out, and records in writing, once each year: a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for boarding pupils, in relation to: its Statement of Purpose, its staffing policy, the placement plans for individual children; and an internal assessment of its compliance with these Standards. Where appropriate such a report may be incorporated within a review of the whole school. (NMS 20.4)
 - The school keeps a register showing: For each child resident at the school - the dates of admission and departure of each child, who was responsible for their placement in the school, where they were living/accommodated prior to arriving at the school, where they are living/accommodated on leaving the school, and the placing authority and legal status (if applicable); duty rosters recording the identities of the staff and other persons who actually worked at the school or with children from the school, by day and night. The above records are retained for at least 5 years from the date of the last entry. (NMS 22.4)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Outcomes for residential pupils are outstanding. They make excellent progress and pupils have an extremely positive view of the residential experience.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their residential experiences. Residential pupils benefit from staying because they have excellent relationships with staff. Their feedback about their stays at the service include, 'The staff are lovely. I really enjoyed it'. Some pupils have listed the staff as one of their favourite things on their review documentation. Their other favourite things about the residential provision include activities, mealtime, quizzes, walks, trips around the woodland and meeting their friends.

Parents have a very positive view of the residential provision. Parents say their children 'love it' and 'enjoy every aspect' of the provision. They are particularly positive about the progress their children make in terms of independence and confidence. Comments such as 'Amazingly well', 'Matured and such an improvement' and 'Independence is the key' are testament to the outstanding contribution the residential provision makes to the pupils' outcomes.

Residential pupils' self-esteem is developed and valued because their contributions and efforts are celebrated and reinforced. For example, the pupils and staff meet each evening to communicate about their day. Pupils present as very pleased when they are congratulated for their efforts in school.

Residential pupils develop a strong sense of self determination as they are supported and encouraged to make choices. Residential pupils have positive opportunities because staff take time and are extremely patient. Tasks are broken down so pupils feel fully involved and consulted in their day to day care routines.

Residential pupils develop strong identities extend their understanding of others because connections between pupils and their families are excellently reinforced. Staff enable pupils to tell each other about what they have done at the weekends and about time spent with families and friends. Residential pupils' social networking is enriched as staff take great pride in sharing the views and experiences of all the pupils attending the service.

The residential provision maintains an excellent child focus. Residential pupils develop a strong sense of self-determination and confidence because they are placed at the centre of staff practice. For example, the transition process is child centred with letters being sent to the child at their home address. Care Plans are also written in the child's voice with the heading 'All about me'.

Residential pupils are further empowered because they have a meaningful say about their placements and progress. The format for pupils to comment in the review of their care and education is meaningful and encompasses their communication processes. They grow in self-esteem and feel listened to because their contributions are valued and addressed. For example, pupils eating regimes have been changed as a result of issues they have raised as part of their review.

Residential pupils enjoy good and significantly improved good health. They are involved in and encouraged to promote their own good health with opportunities to try new foods, including healthy options. Residential pupils take great pleasure in making their own fresh fruit smoothies. Choosing favourite and trying new fruits and using a blender gives residential pupils a good opportunity to develop independence skills, make choices and try healthy food options.

Residential pupils are extremely proud of their efforts in becoming more independent. Their successes and achievement in making breakfast, packing and unpacking suitcases, choosing bedding and making their beds are as a direct result of staying at the residential provision. This excellent progress is celebrated by pupils, families and staff alike and demonstrates that residential pupils are fully supported to explore their potential and achieve.

Quality of residential provision and care

Good

The quality of the residential provision is good. Residential pupils are well looked after because their medical health, social and education needs are set out in comprehensive care plans.

Residential pupils' needs are met due to effective crossover of information. Assessment of need has full inclusion of parents and they are asked to complete information questionnaires prior to admission. Care planning is meaningful because pupils and parents can share and discuss information when they attend induction visits to the provision.

Care planning is also effective due to good connectivity between the education and residential staff. Risk assessment and management plans are initially developed in the education setting. Good liaison ensures plans and strategies are individually tailored and adjusted in order for pupils to be safe and well-cared for in the residential setting.

Good communication ensures residential pupils' complex medical and health needs are effectively managed across the education and residential settings. Detailed health care plans, good liaison with parents and community nurses facilitate consistency of care. All staff work together to ensure medical protocols are effectively implemented and monitored. Residential pupils' medical needs are safeguarded with robust medication procedures.

Residential pupils' views and wishes are well-respected and valued by the manager, leaders and staff. They are consistently involved and asked about their care. This commitment is exemplified by the residential manager's comment, 'I don't like when people talk about the child as if the child is not there – I like to involve the children in everything.'

Staff have a good understanding of different communication processes. Residential pupils express their wishes, views and make choices by using body language and gestures, speech, symbols and photos. Residential pupils can impact on their care because these processes are understood by staff, responded to and reflected in care plans.

Residential pupils receive regular visits from an independent listener to check their welfare and how they enjoy the residential experience. These visits ensure residential pupils' concerns and ideas are heard. For example, the independent listener has been able to listen to and address their queries about the new school and residential building. In addition some pupils did not like the night staff using torches at night and this has been changed. The independent listener also ensures pupils have connections with external agencies, including the Children's Rights Director.

Improvements in the care framework and structure of the residential stays positively impacts on the education and independence development for the residential pupils. The residential provision places a significant and increased emphasis on extending education and developing skills. For example, residential pupils are working on and doing well on the ASDAN independent living module. Residential pupils are fully encouraged to try a range of new and favourite activities. They are supported to enjoy gardening, crafts, dance, cooking, after school club and sports.

The residential provision is institutional in appearance because it is an extension of the school setting. However, attempts have been made to personalise smaller communal areas. Residential

pupils are comfortable and supported with suitable adaptations.

Residential pupils are able to personalise their bedrooms with individual noticeboards. Pupils choose symbols, photos and pictures to make a collage of their favourite things, activities and people. This visual and interactive process ensures the individuality of each pupil is represented in the residential provision.

Residential pupils' safety

Good

The safety of residential pupils is good. Their security and safety is held in high priority.

All pupils are protected and safeguarded with effective recruitment, selection and checking of staff working at the school.

Safeguarding procedures are effectively managed by well-trained managers and staff. Residential pupils are safe because staff have a good knowledge of the safeguarding procedures and reporting processes. Concerns are effectively highlighted and reported to safeguarding managers within the school. Leaders and managers maintain good working partnerships with local safeguarding agencies, parents and social workers.

Residential pupils are kept safe with effective risk assessment and management plans that are regularly reviewed. Pupils' complexity of need is safeguarded with clear strategies and procedures to respond to personal care, transfer and moving and medical protocols. The risk management strategies and protocols are implemented by well trained staff.

Behaviour is well-managed because staff have a good understanding of the pupils' communication processes and physical challenges. Pupils' behaviour is understood as an expression of their communication and disability needs. Pupils are less anxious because interactions and expectations are meaningfully communicated. Residential pupils develop increasing self-worth and confidence because their efforts and achievements are consistently reinforced and celebrated by staff.

Residential pupils live in a safe environment due to robust health and safety checks and planning. Fire safety is well managed with regular and required tests, checks and practice. Good practice is promoted as staff take on recommendations from the fire service to include more detailed recording of monthly checks.

Leadership and management of the residential provision **Adequate**

The leadership and management of the residential provision is adequate. The service is procedurally sound and is striving to improve. However, shortfalls in recording and overall monitoring have compromised the otherwise positive development of the residential service.

The commitment to development of the service is exemplified by a governor's comments, 'The school does want to develop. It is upward based. We have to develop to meet the needs of the children and young people and we are also trying to reach more young people.'

The operation of the residential service has indeed improved and developed over recent months. More pupils are now able to access the service due to a turnover of six weekly blocks of one night stays. There is a clearer connection between the residential and education provision in order for pupils to extend their learning and focus on developing independence skills.

The changes in service have been welcomed by pupils and families. They have been kept up to

date with the changes with an information leaflet.

Residential pupils and their families are aware of the school's written complaints' procedures. Parents are comfortable and assured in raising concerns. The residential provision is open to improvement and responds well to feedback from pupils and their families.

Residential pupils' care and safety is facilitated with good levels of staffing. The residential staff team is all-female and does not reflect the mixed gender group of residential pupils. Residential pupils are looked after by well-trained and very dedicated staff. However, tracking and evaluating the staffing arrangements at the provision is compromised. There is a lack of clarity to some records and inconsistent staff supervision.

While supervision is in place since the change in direct management of the residential provision; residential staff have only received one formal supervision since the last inspection in February 2013. Residential staff have not completed an annual appraisal of their performance. This shortfall indicates a lack of a strategic approach to checking and maintaining the National Minimum Standards.

The operation and leadership of the school is organised via a structure of different management group meetings. There are clear development plans for the school and the residential provision features strongly as part of the school improvement plan. Positively the new staff supervision model and practice monitors performance, development and promotes good connectivity to the residential and school improvement plans.

Improvements in the care planning records have been strategically improved. This has resulted in a more effective and child centred approach to record keeping. However, systems for the collation and storage of staffing and monitoring information, such as staff rotas, supervision records, training records and monitoring reports are inconsistently managed.

Managers and leaders have a self-evaluation process and this is carried out against the National Minimum Standards. The leaders and managers, including the board of governors, also have a clear and positive vision for improvement.

This commitment can be demonstrated by the attempts that have been made to improve the independent visits and reports as carried out under National Minimum Standard 20. Positively a new recording format provides a comprehensive process for the visits. However, some reports lack detail and evaluation. The impact of the reporting process is also compromised due to lack of rigour and consistency. While reports acknowledge the more recent improvements and developments, they have not identified the shortfalls as identified by this inspection. These inconsistencies are further exacerbated because the shortfalls have not been identified by the management team's own monitoring processes.

A major asset to the service is the dedicated and highly committed residential leadership and staff team. While shortfalls have been identified as a result of this inspection, there is no direct negative impact on the residential pupils. Their welfare and safety is promoted due to an effective care and safeguarding framework.

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	122947
Social care unique reference number	SC402858
DfE registration number	891/7009

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	
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	11 to 18
Headteacher	Mr Mark Dengel
Date of previous boarding inspection	12/02/2013
Telephone number	01623 792671
Email address	m.dengel@fountaindale.notts.sch.uk

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