

Fountaindale School

Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 5BA

Inspection dates	25/02/2015	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of residential provision and care	Good	2
Residential pupils' safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- This school has been judged as good with many outstanding features. There have been no failures of national minimum standards. The school's highly inclusive ethos and underpinning philosophy are strong, ensuring residential pupils are in a supportive and nurturing community within which they are valued and safe. Residential, education and health staff work closely together to provide a holistic package for pupils. Residential pupils develop strong relationships with staff. They enjoy the residential experience.
- The school has recently reopened in newly-built premises on the same site. This provides pupils with a clean, fresh school which complies with the relevant building regulations. However, there is limited dining space which prevents staff from eating with residential pupils and makes the room very crowded.
- Safeguarding is a high priority at this school. Residential pupils feel safe and are safe. They show consideration and respect towards each other and staff. Bullying is not an issue at this school.
- The residential provision is well organised. The senior leadership team is committed and focused to continually improve the service to ensure a high quality provision for residential pupils in which they can thrive. A parent said, 'This is a friendly school.' However, discussions with residential pupils and staff are not reported on by the link governor, and the residential provision is only open for two days a week which limits the opportunities for pupils to experience what the residential provision offers.

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

This inspection was announced on the morning of the start of the inspection. The inspector visited the residential accommodation, spoke to residential pupils and staff, including key staff with responsibility for the residential provision. The inspector also observed practice in the residential provision and scrutinised school policies and records. The inspector was unable to gather information from Parent View as not enough had been completed to be viewed. However, the inspector was able to speak to some parents either face to face or on the phone.

Inspection team

Joanne Vyas

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

This is a co-educational 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. The school is situated in wooded parkland on the outskirts of Mansfield and has just moved into newly-built premises on the same site as the old school. The boarding accommodation is specially adapted to meet the physical needs of the young people and is located in the main school building but is separate from the main school. Residential care is provided two nights a week during term time for pupils aged from 14 to 19 years. Residential pupils stay for one night a week for a period of 10 weeks to promote independence skills, communication and social skills. There are 58 pupils on roll at the school with up to four residents each night.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Review dining arrangements to ensure staff and pupils can eat together to promote good modelling of mealtime etiquette
- Ensure the link governor for the residential provision reports on discussions she has with staff and residential pupils
- Give consideration to opening up the residential provision for longer periods each week to provide opportunities for more pupils to have a residential experience and practice and consolidate the new skills they learn.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Outcomes for residential pupils at this school are outstanding. Residential pupils thoroughly enjoy their planned short stays in the school's residential provision but say they would like them to be longer. Residential pupils all agree that meeting up with friends is something they all enjoy about staying in the residential provision. They also cited cooking activities, sleeping in residence and going to the pub as things they enjoy about residence. A residential pupil said, 'It's good. It's nice to have a break from home and spend time with my friends.'

Residential pupils make significant progress towards learning independence skills, communication and social skills. Residential pupils are able to use their newly acquired skills in the family home, which provides them not only with a sense of achievement but also some independence at home. A residential pupil said that her mum was surprised when she started putting her own clothes away at home as she had not done this prior to coming into the residential provision. She also felt that learning to use a microwave was very useful and now uses the microwave regularly at home.

Residential pupils benefit greatly from the stimulating activities provided. The activities are designed to teach residential pupils new skills such as using a microwave or ordering a take away meal over the phone. They also consolidate skills already learnt such as writing up their experience after the activity or practicing their maths by calculating the total number of seconds required to melt chocolate in a microwave. Data analysis completed by the senior leadership team identifies that residential pupils have made better progress compared to the rest of the school in English, information and communication technology and science but also have made better progress than the previous year in the using and applying strand of maths. Therefore, it can be clearly demonstrated that the residential provision continues to have a positive impact on pupil progress.

Residential pupils show consideration and respect for each other. For example, residential pupils will ensure everyone gets their say and wait patiently for people to finish their tasks, demonstrating tolerance and thoughtfulness towards each other. All residential pupils are given the opportunity to demonstrate their strengths and achieve. Residential pupils are therefore enabled to grow in confidence, self-esteem and develop their resilience.

Residential pupils benefit from strong relationships with staff which means they are happy and relaxed. They practise their communication skills using individually designed equipment such as tablet devices, eye gaze technology, signs and symbols. Residential pupils are competent in the use of their individually tailored communication aids.

Residential pupils have impeccable behaviour in the residential provision. They were certainly polite, well behaved and a credit to the school during this inspection. Residential pupils build positive relationships with each other and are able to be themselves. A residential pupil stated on a feedback form for the school, 'I've learnt to be myself in Ressie and don't have to be so self-conscious. Be myself more, a bit more me.' This demonstrates that residential pupils develop a strong sense of self-worth and self-belief. These are important traits which will enable residential pupils to make a successful transition into adulthood.

Residential pupils significantly contribute to the running of the provision. The pupil voice is highly valued throughout the school. Residential pupils access a wide range of communication aids which enable them to fully contribute to their care, education and the running of the school. Residential pupils are continually asked for their views or to make choices such as who they want to work with them, how they want to be supported, their meals, activities, and to where on a

display board they would like to display their art work.

Quality of residential provision and care

Good

The quality of residential provision and care is good with many outstanding features. Staff have consistently high aspirations for pupils. Residential pupils benefit from experienced and caring staff who are knowledgeable and highly skilled in delivering individually tailored support. A parent said, 'The staff are just fab.' They went on to say, 'Staff treat the children here as if they are their own children. A parent can't ask for more than that.' A member of staff described the residential provision as 'one big happy family.'

Care, education and health staff work collaboratively to provide a cohesive holistic package which ensures that the promotion of health, personal, social and academic development of the child is central to all practice. Staff know the pupils well and likewise the pupils know the staff and respond positively to them. A residential pupil said, 'It's nice to have staff you know so you feel more comfortable and you know they are going to do a good job.'

Residential pupils enjoy their meals. However, staff do not provide a suitable example to residential pupils about mealtime etiquette. Staff and residential pupils do not eat at a table together due to the limited space available in the dining room. Staff eat standing up or sitting behind residential pupils while other staff who are not eating sit with pupils so that pupils continue to receive appropriate support during their meal. However, staff converse with residential pupils during the meal, making it a sociable event. Residential pupils are sensitively supported to ensure they can eat their meal as independently as possible. Residential pupils are asked about their likes and dislikes with regards to food which helps to formulate the menu. Specialist diets are catered for and alternatives are offered if requested.

The good health of residential pupils is highly promoted. Staff receive specialist healthcare training, for example, epilepsy, suctioning, gastrostomy care and chest physiotherapy. The school has a nursing team who provides support, guidance and training to staff. Furthermore, staff do not provide specialist healthcare or administer medication until they have been trained and been observed at least on three occasions by a nurse to ensure their competence in the task. Medication is managed safely, ensuring residential pupils are given medication as has been prescribed.

The residential provision now focuses on working on independence skills such as cooking, using a microwave, budgeting, ordering a take away over the phone and shopping. Collaborative working between academic staff, the school's communication link worker and the care team means activities are well planned, resourced and executed. Activities are linked to educational targets, which are chosen with the pupil and are evaluated to identify progress and future learning needs. Residential pupils are involved in every aspect of the activities, despite their disability. Staff and pupils creatively find a way to ensure pupils are involved. For example, a residential pupil who cannot use his hands to open the microwave worked out for himself how to use the footplate on his wheelchair. Although exhausting as it requires a lot of effort from the pupil, this was inspirational to see.

The residential accommodation is brand new, having only opened in January this year. There is accommodation for four pupils in separate bedrooms, which are well equipped to meet the specialist needs of the pupils. Residential pupils can personalise their rooms and one pupil proudly showed me the poster he had designed on the computer for his room. A residential pupil said she likes the new accommodation especially the extra space in the bathrooms. She said she likes the bedrooms as they make her feel more relaxed. However, she felt the dining room can get a bit crowded. The dining room is the only communal space in the residential area and doubles up as a lounge and kitchen area. Staff make the most of the area by moving furniture in

and out to ensure residential pupils have enough space.

Residential pupils' safety

Outstanding

Residential pupils' safety is at the heart of this school and therefore outstanding. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge of safeguarding and child protection procedures. The school has a number of fully trained senior designated safeguarding officers with the Head of School taking the lead. This ensures there is always a senior trained person in the school. The school has good links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and managers attend networking meetings to share good practice among the schools of Nottinghamshire. The school take a multi-agency approach to safeguarding to provide a holistic safeguarding package for pupils.

Parents and residential pupils agree that they are safe at this school. The high staffing ratio means pupils feel safe and secure. Bullying is not an issue in residence. Pupils do not go missing from the school.

There are robust risk management systems in place which ensure activities are carried out with minimal risk to pupils. Risk management enables pupils to take reasonable risks as part of their growth and development. Activities off-site are meticulously risk assessed by staff who visit the venue, taking photographs and talking to staff in the venue. The photographs are also used to ensure pupils know what to expect when they go to the activity. For example, pupils were shown photos of a cobbled path leading to a pub which they were due to visit. This helped them to understand what to expect when they go there. This helps to reassure pupils and adds to their learning.

Residential pupils practise evacuating the building during fire drills to fully prepare them should there be a fire. They also have their own personal emergency evacuation plans to ensure staff know what to do should the fire alarm sound. There are good fire safety procedures in place. The school also has robust health and safety procedures which are ardently adhered to.

There are effective procedures in place for the safe recruitment of staff which ensures the safety of pupils. At least one person on every interview panel has training in safer recruitment and all vetting procedures are meticulously carried out. All visitors are asked to show identification and sign in and out of the school.

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

The leadership and management of the residential provision are outstanding. At the previous inspection, the residential provision was judged as adequate due to a lack of rigour around monitoring systems, inconsistent formal supervision and appraisal of staff and a lack of a register for residential pupils. The school acted quickly to resolve the identified shortfalls. The school was also asked to improve their information systems for staff such as training records. This has been satisfactorily achieved. They were also asked to consider ways in which to have a more mixed gender group of adults in the residential area. Although this has not been achieved in terms of male staff on the residential team, male staff will visit the residential provision and pupils experience positive male role models throughout the day in school.

Parents, pupils and staff feel that the residential provision should be open for longer to provide more opportunities for pupils to experience this valuable resource, enabling them to learn new skills and further develop already acquired skills. A parent said that her child benefits greatly from this experience and uses the skills he has learnt at home. Another felt it is a very good thing that his daughter can be independent for one night but would like to see the provision developed further.

The residential provision is an integral part of the school, which has clear aims that are translated into practice. The residential provision is currently led by an acting principal residential childcare worker (PRCCO) supported by the senior leadership team. The PRCCO is appropriately qualified and very experienced. She provides strong leadership and appropriate support to her staff team. Staff are passionate and committed to providing a high quality service for the benefit of residential pupils, ensuring their health, well-being and educational achievement.

Staff are caring, professional and highly competent. They attend a range of training courses throughout the year, including mandatory and more specialist training covering topics such as Makaton, gastrostomy care and epilepsy. They are well supported by each other and the senior leadership team, who have an open door policy but also provide regular formal supervision and an annual appraisal. This means that staff are provided with opportunities to reflect and improve practice, ensuring a high standard of care is provided to residential pupils.

The complaints procedure is accessible to parents and residential pupils. Parents said they feel they can call anytime and talk to the staff about any issues they have. No complaints have been made since the last inspection.

The senior leadership team has a strong commitment to improving practice and ensuring the quality of the service provided. They have a clear vision for the future of the residential provision. There is insightful and challenging self-evaluation. Governors complete regular visits to the residential provision and report to the main governing body. Although the residential link governor spends time with residential pupils and staff, her report does not include these discussions. The Principal also completes a comprehensive report on the residential provision and measures progress of the provision against the national minimum standards. The school continually strives to drive up standards to provide a high quality service for residential pupils.

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	maintained residential special school
Number of boarders on roll	7
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	14 to 19
Headteacher	Mr Mark Dengel
Date of previous boarding inspection	03/02/2014
Telephone number	01623 792671
Email address	m.dengel@fountaindale.notts.sch.uk

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