

Fosse Way School

Fosse Way School, Longfellow Road, RADSTOCK, BA3 3AL

Inspection dates

27/01/2016 to 29/01/2016

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Outstanding **1**

The quality of care and support

Outstanding 1

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding 1

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Outstanding 1

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is outstanding because

- The care team is highly motivated and provide excellent individualised care to young people who board.
- Leaders and managers have developed the service to provide highly creative work opportunities and leisure activities for the young people. This excellent approach has made the school an exemplar in the field of care
- Young people enjoy boarding. They thrive in an inclusive, dynamic environment where staff help them to achieve and overcome adversity.
- Young people are actively involved in their local and wider community. As a result, they learn to value and be valued by people other than their families. Their involvement as an effective member of the community breaks down barriers.
- Young people who board attain higher academic progress than their peers who do not board.
- Exceptional processes are in place to ensure young people settle quickly and get the most out of their boarding experience. These processes are the first step in the excellent individual plans the staff team develops to meet both the young people's identified and emerging needs.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue with the programme to replace the current bedroom doors of young people with ones without viewing panels.

Information about this inspection

The school was given two hours' notice of this inspection. The inspector reviewed the school's policies, procedures, records and associated documents. All of the residential accommodation was inspected. Meals were taken with the young people during boarding time. The inspector observed the interactions between the young people and between young people and staff during the evenings. These observations included taking part in activities with young people and staff. The inspector spoke to several of the young people's parents to gather their views on the boarding provision. Meetings took place with staff regarding their roles and areas of responsibility.

Inspection team

Wendy Anderson

Lead social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

The school is an academy special school, situated near the local town. It provides education for 198 young people aged 3 to 19 years who have a statement of special educational need. In addition, it offers weekly residential provision for up to 11 pupils of either gender who have autistic spectrum needs. While the majority of these pupils will be between 11 and 18 years of age, where appropriate, accommodation may be made available to those up to 19 years of age. The residential provision forms part of the main school building. The residential provision was last inspected in March 2015.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Outstanding

Young people who board at the school benefit from living in a highly inclusive, nurturing and supportive environment. All of their identified and emerging needs are met promptly and effectively. They are enabled to reach their full potential and have higher academic success than their non-resident peers.

Young people really enjoy boarding and have excellent relationships with care staff. Parents report that their children show no anxiety about boarding and, at the start of the week, they are keen to get there. One young person said, 'There are always lots of different things to do; no two days are the same'. Another young person, when asked how they feel about boarding, gave it a big 'double thumbs up'.

Young people are supported to make choices about the environment in which they stay. They are proud of their boarding house and their bedrooms which they are able to personalise. Each young person chooses the colour of their room. They are involved in decision making about new furnishings. This fosters a sense of belonging.

The inspector spoke to a number of parents, all of whom were very impressed with the standard of care and the new opportunities available to their children. These relate to young people's increased access to the local and wider community, such as using leisure facilities and going out for meals. Through this work, young people have developed self-management skills. In turn, this development has enabled some parents to have the confidence to try similar activities with their child at home; previously they were unable to do this. One family said that this has had a positive impact on their family's life; with another saying they feel they now have more quality time together as a family.

Young people are provided with excellent support so that they can enjoy activities in the local community. For some of them, at the point of admission, their community access has been very limited. Staff work well with parents to bring about many improvements and to open up new opportunities for young people. One parent said, 'I never thought I would see my child shopping, asking the assistance for help where needed and preparing meals, but they can now, thanks to the staff'.

The staff team demonstrates drive and an uncompromising dedication to achieve the best possible outcome for every young person in their care. There is a strong sense of commitment to continuous improvement of the service provided. Staff have acted as advocates for young people and their families to help them secure a place in boarding. They have supported young people when they leave school by pursuing the best possible follow-on placements. Staff said, 'there is no way we will ever just settle. Our young people deserve the best and it is part of our duty to make this possible'.

The school provides a 24-hour curriculum for the young people who board. This is achieved by extremely effective working between the boarding and the education side of the school but also with families and fellow professionals. Consequently, exceptionally productive working practices and highly effective shared planning means that young

people's time is well structured through the setting of personal targets across care and education. Young people benefit from strong consistent messages and care practices. Young people require this level of structure, as change and uncertainty raises their anxieties.

The highly productive relationships the staff build with the young people and their families is the foundation for all the work that they undertake. They work effectively with families to support them. In some cases, parents are supported to develop their understanding of their child's needs and capabilities. Parents said they are constantly surprised by their child's achievements, not only had their skills grown but also their confidence and enjoyment of new experiences.

The quality of care and support

Outstanding

The pastoral care arrangements are excellent. The care staff clearly understand each young person's needs and know them really well; this makes staff highly responsive, effective carers. Care giving is supported by very detailed individualised plans, created in conjunction with young people and their families. These plans are frequently reviewed and updated to ensure that all aspects of young people's daily lives and needs are captured in writing; this in turn supports the high quality of care that is delivered.

The staff team is skilled in helping young people feel settled and relaxed when they start to board. The staff team uses a well thought through individualised process to introduce each young person to boarding. This is carried out at a pace that suits the young person and their families. Care staff understand the importance of an inclusive approach. They recognise the importance of involving parents, and do so at every opportunity; they use information provided by parents to formulate the initial care plan. Parents spoken with about the induction process praised the staff team for their management of this very sensitive period. On occasions, staff go 'above and beyond' to ensure that young people settle well, for example, working during summer holiday to support both the parents and the young person. A parent said, 'The staff team's sensitive, gentle and caring approach has allayed any fears we had about our child coming to board at the school'.

Staff build trusting relationships with young people and their parents based on dignity and respect. Parents reported to the inspector that they found staff to be very responsive to any questions they may have or to just 'talk things through'. The school has developed a variety of systems to keep parents informed. As well as frequent phone contact and emails, there are home/school books and termly newsletters which have a specific boarding section. Parents said that they found all of these very helpful and interesting.

Young people who board benefit from an excellent range of out of school activities. In addition, they are involved in enhancing their local community. They plant and maintain flower beds around the local area. Young people also take part in charity fund raising. This work is linked to the excellent range of activities that the young people enjoy which are not only fun but purposeful. Parents commented that their children are now able to gain access to community facilities more than they had imagined possible. One parent said, 'We now go out for meals as a family which I never imagined possible'. Young

people enjoy the activities available to them which also include accessing local clubs as well as using the excellent on site facilities. Some young people who board are currently involved in a drama production which is part of a nationwide competition. Recently, the school purchased a barbeque lodge for the grounds. This provides space for young people to enjoy barbeques all year round, whatever the weather. At Christmas, the barbeque lodge was used as Santa's grotto, about which the young people were very excited.

Working practices are developed across the whole school and all plans are shared between care and education staff. These working practices have been enhanced by the new Evidence For Learning recording system developed by the school. All staff routinely record, including photographs, evidence of the work they are undertaking with young people. This system provides excellent information about young people's progress across all aspects of their lives. It also demonstrates the effectiveness of the 24-hour curriculum. The achievements of young people who board are higher than their peers who do not board.

Young people's health care is well managed. Clear procedures for the administration, storage and recording of medicines ensure that young people safely receive their medication. These records and procedures are carefully monitored to ensure staff practice is of the highest standard. Due to young people boarding Monday to Friday, they remain registered with their own doctor. However, the school has effective arrangements to respond quickly to any medical needs during boarding time. Young people's records contain comprehensive information on their medical needs and history; these include reports from specialists.

Staff demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the needs of young people with complex health needs. Staff work effectively with health professionals to ensure young people are well cared for. Young people are able to gain access to specialist services rapidly through the school where needed. The school has recently appointed a counsellor, school nurse and a paediatrician. In addition, staff work to develop young people's understanding of a healthy lifestyle and the importance of exercise. Young people benefit from being able to use the school swimming pool and extensive external space. This work is also linked to the cooking young people do with staff as an activity, helping young people to learn about and make healthy choices. This approach is supported by the food choices at meal times. Parents commented that their children eat a much wider range of foods than they did prior to coming to the school.

Boarding accommodation is of a high standard. The staff team has worked hard to make it homely and welcoming. Young people are involved in choosing furnishings and decor in the boarding house especially in their bedrooms. At the time of the inspection, the school was in the process of replacing the bedroom doors. The current doors have viewing panels but these were covered by a curtain on the inside of the door. These are now being replaced with doors similar to those in a family home, thus improving the environment and privacy for the young people. The quality of the accommodation remains high as there is an effective maintenance system in place.

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding

Safeguarding arrangements at the school are excellent, providing young people with a safe environment in which to develop and thrive. Young people's safety is central to all work the staff undertake. The staff have an exceptional understanding of the additional vulnerabilities of the young people they care for. Regular and effective training ensures that the staff team keeps up to date with current care practice. Staff receive training on child sexual exploitation, Prevent strategies and cyber safety.

Staff adhere to comprehensive safeguarding, child protection policies and procedures in order to protect young people. These have been developed in line with the local authority's procedures and developments in child protection practice. The school's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is appropriately trained to an advanced level, as are a significant number of the school senior staff and management team. There is an appointed Governor with safeguarding responsibilities who is scheduled to attend the next phase of training by the local authority. The DSO has developed effective working relationships with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who was very positive about the work undertaken by the DSO. The DSO attends the LADO quarterly meetings to make sure that the school's practice in this area remains of a high standard. Clear and comprehensive records are maintained of all safeguarding matters. These are shared with the safeguarding professional from outside the school and are stored securely. As a result, child protection concerns are effectively dealt with and lead to young people being kept safe.

Staff work effectively with young people to develop their understanding of risk and strategies to keep themselves safe. Part of this work is done at a life skill centre where young people, with staff support, are able to learn in a safe environment about road, rail and personal safety. This work is then enhanced by what staff do both in the boarding house and when out on activities with young people. They also work on developing young people's skills at keeping themselves safe online. Staff acknowledge that this is a critical safeguarding issue for young people as a number of the young people are very trusting of adults and can be easily influenced, thus potentially being drawn into risky situations.

Since the previous inspection one young person went missing from boarding. This young person did not return from a school they were attending in the local area. Although this was an exceptional incident, the staff acted swiftly and implemented their missing from school procedures. These procedures are linked to young people's individual risk assessments. As a result of this incident, risk assessments and care plans were reviewed and new strategies implemented to prevent a reoccurrence. Staff also undertook additional one to one work with the young person. All of this work has been carried out along with staff at the young person's school. This work demonstrates that although the incidents of this nature are rare, staff react swiftly and efficiently to protect young people.

Behaviour is well managed. Young people respond well to positive reinforcement combined with sound trusting relationships with staff. Each young person has an individualised written plan which sets out clear strategies to ensure that behaviour is managed sensitively. The plans are individualised and detailed. They are used in school

and in the boarding provision to ensure a consistent approach which is clearly understood by young people.

Physical restraint is rarely used. However, all staff are trained to use safe restraint interventions. The record of restraint contains a good level of detail. This detail ensures that managers who oversee the records can make swift assessments about the use of restraint and take prompt action should any shortfall be identified. Staff have recently been trained in recording restraints which has included the need for clarity and to remove the use of generalised terms. This has enhanced the ability to gather more detailed information about the event surrounding an incident and in turn to use this as learning to prevent future occurrences.

Recruitment practice is rigorous. Staff have all the required checks, in line with safer recruitment practices before they start work at the school. The school has developed a standardised set of pertinent questions to be asked when verifying people's references. This ensures consistency, enhances the safer recruitment procedure and still allows for specific questions about individuals to be asked.

Young people are protected from harm by systematic risk assessment and risk management processes. These are frequently reviewed and amended as required. Risk assessments are linked to health and safety measures within the school which are also very well managed.

Fire safety strategies are well thought out and serve to protect everyone in the boarding accommodation. Each young person in boarding has an individual fire evacuation plan. These plans have been individually created because some young people become distressed and anxious on hearing loud noises or when their routine is disrupted. Care staff work carefully and considerately with young people to help them to develop coping strategies. As a result, young people know what they are expected to do should the fire alarm sound.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Outstanding

The boarding provision is exceptionally well led and managed. The leadership team is experienced and inspirational. All have very high expectations of themselves and have a very strong drive to keep improving the service they provide for the young people. They are innovative and creative in their approaches. This has led to them sustaining and improving the quality of the care and the opportunities they provide for young people. An example of this is the enterprise project developed by the school. Young people have won a contract to provide several businesses with identity cards for their staff. Young people have been at the forefront of gaining this contract including making the initial contact, demonstrating what they can provide, negotiating prices, making the products and then delivering the final product. Since the previous inspection, the school has become a Microsoft Associate Showcase School.

Recently, there have been some changes within the staff team but staff and the head of boarding have worked hard to minimise any impact on the young people by working additional shifts. Some new staff have been recruited from the education side of the school which has reduced anxiety for young people as they are already known to them.

Morale across the staff team is high. The team are very enthusiastic about their work and are so proud of the young people they look after.

Staff supervision is used effectively and creatively. During supervision sessions, staff are encouraged to put forward ideas for improving the boarding service as well as reflecting on their practice. This information is then used to determine what training the staff member requires and areas of interest they have that could be used to further develop what the boarding provision offers to the young people. The system for annual appraisals has been reviewed and improved. It now contains a substantial dedicated boarding section.

The school prospectus and booklets for parents and young people are excellent. They provide young people and families with informative, colourful information on what the school has to offer. This information is also available in a variety of formats to meet young people's needs. This is further enhanced by an informative and easy to navigate website.

Systems to monitor the quality of the service provided are used to good effect. Information gathered from monitoring is used to improve the care delivered to young people. The future development of the service is well planned and forward thinking. For example, leaders mapped the performance of boarding against the new national minimum standards and created an action plan to ensure that performance exceeded the standards. It is this drive, planning and determination to do better for young people which enable the school to maintain its outstanding judgement.

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework*.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	137493
Social care unique reference number	SC041476
DfE registration number	800/7035

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	Residential Special School
Number of boarders on roll	11
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	3 to19
Headteacher	Mr Justin Philcox
Date of previous boarding inspection	06/03/2015
Telephone number	01761 412 198
Email address	office@fossewayschool.com

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/ofsted." If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

if you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

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 St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.co.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016

