

Fosse Way School

Fosse Way School, Longfellow Road, Radstock BA3 3AL

Inspection dates	15/03/2017 to 17/03/2017	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good	2
The quality of care and support	Outstanding	1
How well children and young people are protected	Good	2
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good	2

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- The staff team are well led by a principal and head of care who place the needs of the young people at the forefront of the service. The staff have high aspirations for the young people. Staff morale is good; they refer to themselves as a team and, together, provide a positive and upbeat atmosphere in the home.
- The staff team is enthusiastic and delivers dedicated, nurturing and highly supportive care to the young people. Staff know young people well; they are experienced and skilled in recognising young people's individual needs and ensure their well-being.
- Young people are effectively safeguarded by staff. Staff are not risk-averse and this approach helps young people to experience many opportunities and to develop.
- Young people enjoy staying at the residential provision. They have developed good relationships with staff, based on respect and trust. They have access to a wide range of activities in the school and the local community. Parents have a very positive view of the residential provision.
- The young people have a high profile in the local community and are greatly valued.
- The head of care and the staff team work collaboratively with the school's enterprise centre to secure meaningful work placements for young people once they reach 16 years of age. The staff team is involved in person-centred planning that identifies strengths and prepares young people to be independent.
- Governors regularly visit the home and monitor the care provided. Records of these visits identify areas that require improvement in relation to the records and the residential environment.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools.

- 12.3 Staff receive appropriate training and support to recognise and deal with incidences of challenging behaviour or bullying. This training should include assistance in managing staff members' responses and feelings arising from working with children who have emotional difficulties, which result in challenging behaviour. Staff training is regularly refreshed.
- 12.6 A written record is kept of major sanctions and the use of any reasonable force. Records include the information in Appendix 2 (use of reasonable force). The record is made within 24 hours and is legible. Children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records. The school regularly reviews any instances of the use of reasonable force and examines trends or issues to enable staff to reflect and learn in a way that will inform future practice.
- 20.2 Most monitoring visits are carried out unannounced. They include: checks on the school's records of attendance, complaints, sanctions, use of reasonable force, risk assessments, and, where they exist, individual care plans for children; evaluation of the effectiveness of the care provided to children and whether they are safeguarded; 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).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all national minimum standards are met.
- Ensure that all records are dated and with a signature by the author.
- Explore additional ways to communicate with young people in order to seek their views, opinions and wishes.

Information about this inspection

The school was given two hours' notice of this inspection. The inspectors reviewed the school's policies, procedures, records and associated documents. All of the residential accommodation was inspected. The inspectors observed the interactions between the young people and between young people and staff during the evenings. The inspectors spoke with a visiting parent to gather their view on the residential provision. Meetings took place with staff regarding their roles and areas of responsibility.

Inspection team

Sharron Escott
Steve Lowe

Lead social care inspector
Team inspector

Full report

Information about this school

The school is an academy special school. It provides education for 206 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 disorder 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 aged up to 19. The residential provision forms part of the main school building. The residential provision was last inspected in January 2016.

Inspection judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good

Young people receive excellent quality individualised care from a motivated and dedicated head of care and staff team. A parent agreed and said, 'My child has a much better quality of life because he boards. He has a good social life, and he is able to go to the supermarket, he is learning to cook and he exercises regularly. He really enjoys boarding.'

The activities provided to young people contribute to their emotional well-being by affording them positive and enjoyable experiences. They are involved in a varied range of opportunities to engage with other young people, both in the school and when in the community.

Transitional arrangements for young people are, in the main, well managed. The head of care and the staff team understand that transitions are an area which causes the young people a great deal of stress and anxiety. Staff help young people to manage these times well. For example, the most recent admission had been planned in detail with the full involvement of the young person's family. A last-minute change led to the young person arriving sooner than anticipated; this was handled sensitively and successfully.

The methods that staff use to communicate with young people require further development. There is a lack of creativity in the approaches used to help the young people to communicate and to identify their views and feelings. The use of picture exchange systems (PECs) and 'schedules' are currently only used to support young people during meals times, outside of school hours. The head of care and the staff team recognise that, in order to develop the quality of communication further, they need to consider learning new strategies to secure and promote the views, wishes and feelings of the young people. There is already good support from teaching staff in this area which can be utilised.

The residential environment is becoming more homely and welcoming. The young people personalise their bedrooms to their taste. Most rooms are painted in neutral colours, with few photographs of the current young people and little evidence of activities and achievements that they have engaged in; this is a missed opportunity to openly celebrate the young people's experiences.

The quality of care and support

Outstanding

The school's enterprise centre creates excellent opportunities in the local and wider community for young people to secure work placements and paid employment. It also operates a social enterprise business. The staff team helps to identify and develop person-centred plans that prepare young people exceptionally well for these opportunities. Young people are successful because the staff team actively promotes their involvement in challenging situations. The staff team plays an important role in supporting the work of other professionals in the school. This is delivered through a broad range of community-based activities that put learning from school into practice in 'real' situations. This leads to the young people becoming active and highly valued

members of the local community. The high level of success stands out from that achieved by young people living in similar settings.

The young people have resided here for some time. They have established positive relationships with staff and each other. There is a good range of activities on offer, which children and young people can engage in. These include local community groups, leisure activities, as well as planned activities in the school grounds and swimming.

Young people receive excellent care and support from a highly dedicated, experienced and competent staff team. The head of care and the staff team place young people's needs at the centre of their practice. They have an exceptional understanding of the young people's individual needs, and deliver care and support that promotes their privacy and dignity. It is evident that young people trust staff, and there are positive and nurturing relationships. Young people are extremely comfortable and happy in the presence of the staff.

Parents speak highly of the quality of care that their children receive. One parent said, 'My son is very happy, staff write in his link book so we know what he had done and if there are any concerns. I receive photos of activities he has engaged in, he particularly likes bowling and dog walking once a month.'

The staff are not risk averse and allow young people to experience and enjoy a range of meaningful and enjoyable activities.

The school effectively safeguards young people. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding processes and protocols. The young people's safety and well-being are a priority. The environment is safe and well maintained. Parents consider that their child is safe when they are staying in the home.

How well children and young people are protected

Good

The head of care and the staff team are supervised regularly. Supervision records demonstrate that staff members are routinely involved in discussions about how to keep young people safe. The head of care responds swiftly when there has been a risk to a young person's welfare. For example, an error occurred in the dispensing of medicine, which did not result in any harm to young people. The manager responded quickly to this concern and there are clear records of this being followed up in supervision with all of the staff team.

The home provides a safe and secure physical environment for the young people. Fire safety and other regular checks are managed well in order to ensure that the young people are protected from unnecessary risks.

The staff team receives regular training on a range of subjects that relate to safeguarding. An online training course on internet safety has been completed by some staff, but not all. 'Prevent' training is scheduled for the near future. The school runs a highly regarded training programme that covers up-to-date research on autistic spectrum disorder and techniques to maximise the potential of young people. This training is not routinely accessed by the staff team in the boarding provision.

There are no recorded complaints since the last inspection and there have been no instances of young people going missing. Appropriate safeguards and monitoring is in

place for one young person who is identified as being at risk of child sexual abuse and exploitation. There have been three incidents requiring physical intervention since the previous inspection. The head of care's monitoring of these records has not identified deficiencies. In addition, the views of the young person and member of staff following interventions have not been sought and recorded.

There is a robust recruitment and vetting policy and procedure in place, which protect young people from adults who may wish to harm them. These processes are consistently applied across all employees, and staff personnel files contain comprehensive evidence of this.

Leaders and managers ensure that young people are safe and protected. The school's safeguarding procedures are comprehensive, and are in line with statutory guidance. All staff have received safeguarding training and have a robust understanding of safeguarding protocols and processes. The designated safeguarding lead, the head of care, and the governor, who is the lead for safeguarding, have received the appropriate level of training. In school, there has been one referral to the designated officer since the last inspection.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Good

The head of care is a good role model for staff. He is committed and motivated. His approach and ability to form respectful relationships with the care staff, young people and parents has contributed to ensuring a positive atmosphere within the residential provision. The members of staff say that they have the confidence to approach the head of care with any concerns they may have because he is available, approachable and flexible.

All but one member of care staff have worked at the home for a considerable amount of time. The one new member of staff said that he has been well supported and he has completed his induction programme. Safeguarding and other essential training is mandatory for all staff. This provides staff with additional skills to identify risks in caring for and supporting young people.

The manager and staff work hard to promote and maintain really effective, positive relationships with parents. Parents are welcomed into the home and are regularly updated with their child's progress and engagement through the link communication book and emails. Parents say they value and appreciate how well their child is looked after. They say they are well informed and do not have any concerns or worries about their child's safety or welfare.

The safeguarding governor carries out regular independent monitoring visits of the boarding provision. Records of these visits do not robustly demonstrate that the use of reasonable force, risk assessments and individual care plans have been reviewed. The reports lack challenge and do not consistently identify any action that needs to be taken for improvements to be made.

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 the '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 exceed the standard of good and result 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

<School URN>

Social care unique reference number

SC041476

DfE registration number

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

7

Gender of boarders

Boys

Age range of boarders

14 to18

Headteacher

Date of previous boarding inspection

27/01/2016

Telephone number

01761 412 198

Email address

office@fossewayschool.com

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