

Fosse Way School

Fosse Way School, Longfellow Road, Radstock BA3 3AL

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

The school is an academy special school. It provides education for 217 students aged 3 to 19 years who have a statement of special educational need. In addition, it offers weekly residential provision for up to 11 students of either gender who have autistic spectrum disorders. While the majority of these students 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 March 2017.

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 November 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The residential special school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of previous inspection: 15 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school is good because:

- Residential students develop their social and communication skills, independence skills well, they enjoy their leisure time.
- The residential service is a good provision for students. The staff team knows the students well and provides them with stability.
- The safeguarding arrangements for students are effective.
- Leaders and managers are determined to develop the service further.
- Leaders and managers research practices before making changes to students' provision.
- All of the recommendations from the last inspection have been successfully addressed.
- No national minimum standards were identified as not met at this inspection.

The residential special school's areas for development are:

- Residential students do not receive learning and development activities about sexual health, relationship advice or internet safety from the residential staff.
- Residential student care plans do not give a comprehensive description of the support that students require from staff during personal/intimate care.
- Residential students are not given enough help to understand how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and to make informed decisions about their health; this is with particular regard to smoking.

What does the residential special school need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Ensure that residential staff promote residential students' sexual health and relationship guidance and that this work is set out in students' care plans.
- Ensure that residential staff promote residential students' learning of internet safety and that this work is set out in students' care plans.
- Ensure that care plans comprehensively describe the support that students require with personal/intimate care and how this is to be provided by staff.
- Staff in the residential setting and Fosse Way School work together to share and learn from the very best practice.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Residential students receive good individualised care and support from staff who they know well. The care that the students receive has a positive effect on their academic progress and personal experiences. Seven students currently stay in the residential provision. All of their families provided extremely positive feedback during this inspection. They would all recommend the residential provision to other families and can all provide many examples of how their child has benefited, most notably in developing independence skills that had not been tried at home. Families are also pleased with the activities that their child can join in with and the positive effect this has on their child's social skills. In some cases, children try new skills and activities in the residential provision, which helps to alleviate pressure on families and contributes to improving their time together.

Residential students make good progress in developing their emotional and social well-being. Most residential students perform above the average of their tutor groups in Mathematics, English and science. Most residential students in post-16 education are making better progress in core skills and skills for living than day students. The majority of residential students have a higher attendance rate than the school average.

Residential students gain qualifications including entry level exams and ASDAN short courses. In the post-16 provision, students have good opportunities for work placements that can lead to permanent employment. Residential students have the opportunity to attend lessons at a Norton Hill School, a local mainstream school with additional support in place that helps them to succeed in that environment.

Residential students are involved in an innovative programme to help develop their social and emotional skills. Tutors set targets to work with students in the classroom that are also carried out by residential staff during the evenings. Students have also identified their own aspirational aim, so that they can work towards this alongside the goals the school has set for them.

Staff are good at helping residential students to develop their communication skills. Students are supported to communicate their needs. A number of residential students have made excellent progress to develop their communication skills using methods taught to them at school and reinforced by residential staff during the evenings. As a result students have recently won a school award in recognition of their exceptional progress in all areas of learning. Staff are calm and understanding with the students and use 'scheduling boards' to help students change from one activity or environment to the next.

Residential staff do not specifically provide students with support to help them to learn about developing safe and healthy sexual relationships. Neither do residential staff educate all students about internet safety or using a mobile phone safely. These matters are covered during school lessons or by accessing additional support services. However, an area for improvement identified at this inspection is for the

residential provision to support students' learning in these areas, to help them to prepare for adult life.

When residential students start to smoke, leaders and managers use the school's exclusion policy to deal with this behaviour; however, the approach has not always been effective. Further work is required to help students to understand the health implications of smoking and its legality in public.

The residential provision is well resourced, clean and maintained to a good standard. Residential students can choose items and decorations for their bedrooms. They are given time to relax after school and then join in evening activities together. Residential students' independence skills develop by opportunities to practise life skills. Residential students are regularly consulted for their views on activities, meals, their bedrooms and the residential provision. As a result of attending this service, many of the students have increased the variety of food that they now enjoy.

Students confirm the provision is 'okay'. It helps them to learn about cooking and cleaning. All parents report that their children enjoy attending the provision and look forward to coming. Students have personalised memory boxes in which to keep mementoes of their time here, and there are many lovely photos on display throughout the provision that show staff and students enjoying activities together.

Both the residential provision and school setting have strong features of outstanding practice that are worthy of sharing between both settings. Residential students perform better academically and attend school more regularly than their non-residential peers. However, they do not receive sufficient guidance on sexual relationships, internet safety and health education. These aspects are delivered effectively in the school. Both strengths could be more effectively shared between settings so the very best practice is spread more widely and staff can learn from each other.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

There have been no restraints used in the residential provision since the previous inspection. Where incidents of restraint occur, they are appropriate. Historically staff were not being de-briefed following an incident where they had restrained students. De-brief discussions for staff are now taking place.

The residential education manager is now responsible for the monitoring and overview of serious incidents throughout the whole school. This monitoring has improved since he took on the role. He has made sure that staff speak with the students who have been restrained and, since September 2017, staff take part in a debrief discussion. Students who require extra support are identified by the monitoring and, as a result, additional strategies to help the students are put in place. Staff understand that students' behaviour is an expression of how they are feeling. Staff develop students' communication skills which, in turn, alleviates their frustrations and decreases behaviour that challenges adults.

The school follows statutory guidance and has effective arrangements in place to

refer concerns about a student's welfare to the local authority. There are no recorded incidents of residential students going missing from the provision. Good staffing levels and adequate security measures ensure that staff know where the students are at all times.

Health and safety arrangements of the premises are effectively managed. Residential students are helped to learn about the safe evacuation of the building by walking through fire drills and social stories. The storage arrangements for medication are safe.

Residential students' placement plans do not provide sufficient detail for staff about the support young people need during intimate care routines. Staff who currently work in the residential services know the student's needs well. Placement plans could be improved so that staffs knowledge of the care student's need is more clearly defined. The residential manager arranges good additional support in response to students who have harmed themselves or gone missing in the past. Staff will help students to access the children and adolescent mental health service, another local authority resource and/or a counsellor when needed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The experienced manager uses their expertise to lead the residential setting exceptionally well. The manager and staff team are dedicated to their roles and strive to develop an outstanding residential service for the students. Leaders and managers produced a very thorough action plan following the previous inspection. They have carefully considered all of the points raised in an effort to learn and develop the residential provision further.

The residential education manager has visited other services that provide care and accommodation for children to learn from them. He used the visits effectively to produce an action plan for staff to discuss and implement. The manager holds regular team meetings to update staff's training, support their development and plan improvements to the residential provision. Staff receive regular professional supervision and annual appraisals.

There are excellent examples of leaders and managers using research to inform practice at this provision. Leaders and managers explored the positive and negative consequences of restorative practices with children who have autistic spectrum disorder, as well as the use of dietary supplements to help the children's sleep patterns. As a result of their review, leaders and managers have chosen to use natural consequences with the students, which are fair and easily linked to the event that has just taken place. Also, parents, students and staff were brought together for a cooking workshop to learn about healthy eating and the importance of having a balanced diet rather than using supplements.

The residential education manager undertakes an excellent range of continuous professional development and training opportunities. He is currently studying towards the level 5 diploma in residential childcare, while also completing a Master's degree in applied behaviour analysis. As well as this, he attends conferences and lectures to

support his understanding of working with children who have autistic spectrum disorder and/or a learning disability. He uses his experience to support his role as the school's trainer for behaviour intervention.

The residential provision is prominent on the school's website and is an integral part of the school. Information about the school on the website includes photos of students enjoying the opportunities in the residential provision, such as making Halloween masks, flying kites and carving pumpkins. Supporting documents are available for students, families and agencies to learn about the residential provision. The residential education manager ensures that the provision is run in accordance with its statement of purpose. As such, staff support the residential students to develop social and communication skills, independence skills and to enjoy their leisure time.

Staff receive training that supports them effectively in their role. The manager has ensured that all staff now have training to support children who have autistic spectrum disorders and that all staff's behaviour intervention training has been recently refreshed. Staff are qualified in first aid and are trained to administer emergency medication in response a student who may have a seizure. Staff also regularly complete safeguarding courses in responding to bullying and keeping children safe online.

Governors' monitoring takes place termly and now covers the necessary areas. However, this monitoring could be made even more challenging. Governors rely on the residential education manager's identified developmental areas and his response to the last Ofsted inspection, rather than providing their own challenge to improve the provision. An area of development that governors have identified is for the provision to better advertise and market itself, so as to increase the number of students attending.

The residential education manager addressed areas of improvement that were highlighted throughout the inspection. As such, improvements were made to the medication recording system and lists of students' medical needs were taken down from display. The manager will consult with students to find out their preferred choice of location for receiving their medication.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the school knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out

under the Children Act 1989 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the national minimum standards.

Residential special school details

Social care unique reference number: SC041476

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Emily Massey

Type of school: Residential Special School

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Inspector

Guy Mammatt, social care inspector (lead)



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