

Frewen College

Frewen Educational Trust Ltd, Frewen College, Brickwall, Rye Road, Northiam, Rye, East Sussex TN31 6NL

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Frewen College is an independent day and residential special school for children aged between seven and 19 years of age. The school provides specialist education for children with dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, sensory integration, and speech and communication difficulties. At the time of the inspection, there were 99 pupils on roll and 30 boarders. Boys reside in the main school building and girls in a separate house in the school grounds. The boarding provision was last inspected in December 2017.

Inspection dates: 3 to 5 October 2018

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 **good**

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

Date of previous inspection: 4 December 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Key findings from this inspection

This residential special school is good because:

- Leaders and managers and all staff share a commitment to support boarders to fulfil their potential and achieve their goals.
- Boarders are positive about their experience. They appreciate the support that staff provide and the family-like environment created by staff.
- Boarders form positive relationships with the staff. From this foundation, they develop a sense of safety and protection. Boarders trust the staff to respond to their individual needs.
- Effective cross-disciplinary engagement and collaboration ensure that boarders receive tailored and focused support to meet their specific needs.
- Boarders achieve positive outcomes. They move on to planned programmes of education or training when they leave the school.

The residential special school's areas for development are:

- To provide regular and effective supervision for boarding staff.
- To ensure that staff receive training that focuses on meeting the specific needs of boarders, particularly in relation to mental health and self-harm.
- To develop comprehensive plans and risk assessments to guide staff in supporting boarders' specific needs and to reduce the potential of harm.

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

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standard 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. (Residential special schools, National minimum standards 19.6)

Recommendations

- Ensure that staff receive training that focuses on meeting the specific needs of all boarders. In particular, they undertake appropriate training in mental health awareness and self-harm.
- Ensure that plans and up-to-date, comprehensive risk assessments are in place to guide staff in supporting boarders' specific needs and to reduce the potential of harm.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Boarders, who previously experienced significant difficulties at school, respond to the individualised support provided and make excellent progress. A boarder commented that boarding 'is amazing and without this school I wouldn't be in education'. Boarders appreciate the friendly, nurturing environment, saying; 'it's like a second family' and 'it feels like home'.

Boarding is an integral part of the school and helps boarders improve their educational attainment. Staff strive to inspire boarders to have a 'can-do' attitude, thus developing their self-confidence, self-esteem and independence. The staff work collaboratively with education staff and therapists to promote the progress of boarders. Support with homework is an important part of boarding routine and evening activities.

The views of boarders are important to all staff. The Boarding Council meets weekly to discuss day-to-day issues relating to their residential experience. Boarders have opportunities to put their views forward individually in a weekly session with their key worker.

Boarders' health needs are well supported by the matron. Boarders report that they can talk to her at any time about any aspect of their health. Comprehensive health plans provide clear guidance for staff in supporting boarders with specific medical needs.

Boarders achieve positive outcomes. They move on to planned programmes of education or training when they leave the school.

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

Boarders feel safe and report that they can easily talk to staff if they have any concerns. One boarder commented that 'I can trust staff and talk to them', adding that staff make time for her.

Relationships between staff and boarders are positive and are at the heart of successful behaviour strategies. Structure and clear boundaries help boarders develop a sense of safety, protection and trust. Any issues between boarders that could develop into bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively. The focus is on understanding the reasons for poor behaviour and providing support rather than sanctions.

Staff know boarders very well. They recognise the specific vulnerabilities of boarders and address these on an individual level. Staff use an effective electronic system to record any concerns about boarders. These concerns are closely monitored by the designated safeguarding lead, head of boarding and the principal in weekly

meetings. However, there are no clear plans in place to help guide staff in supporting the small minority of boarders who present with more severe emotional difficulties. Risk assessments for these boarders are not up to date and are not sufficiently detailed to ensure that staff are consistently implementing measures to reduce the potential of harm and provide effective support.

Staff receive regular training in safeguarding to enable them to identify concerns. They are diligent in reporting concerns to the trained and experienced designated safeguarding lead, who ensures that appropriate action is taken to support boarders.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The head of boarding has been in post since January 2018. She has previous experience in the role of head of house. She leads a team that has the well-being of boarders at the centre of their practice.

Leaders and managers across the school are committed to creating a culture of positivity, with the common aim of supporting students to do as well as they can. They know the boarders very well and recognise their individual needs and vulnerabilities.

Boarding staff commented that leaders and managers provide them with good support. However, staff are not receiving regular and effective supervision which focuses on boarders' experiences, needs and plans and which provides opportunities for staff to discuss the emotional impact on themselves of supporting the small minority of boarders with more severe emotional and mental health needs. Boarding staff have not received an appropriate level of training to provide the necessary understanding of significant mental health issues to inform well-planned and consistent support.

Leaders and managers are keen to continuously improve boarding provision. They have focused on ensuring that the points of improvement from the previous inspection have been addressed. The head of boarding is currently undertaking a thorough review of boarding provision to ensure that the national minimum standards are met and to identify areas for development. Independent visitor reports and reports to the governors provide scrutiny and oversight of the boarding provision.

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: SC049345

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Nick Goodman, Principal

Type of school: Residential Special School

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Inspector

Jan Hunnam, social care inspector



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