

Brymore Academy

Bridgwater College Trust

Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 2NB

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this boarding school

Brymore Academy is a single-sex school for boys from 11 to 17 years of age. Its purpose is to develop their knowledge of farming, horticulture, engineering and sports. The academy is a state boarding school that is part of Bridgwater College Multi Academy Trust.

Inspection dates: 26 to 28 February 2019

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 boarding school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement

Date of last inspection: 6 December 2016

Key findings from this inspection

This boarding school is good because:

- Safeguarding systems and risk assessments are implemented effectively to protect boarders and enable them to keep themselves safe.

- Boarders can take part in a wide range of activities on site and in the local community. These activities benefit boarders and help them to develop social skills and self-esteem.
- Monitoring of the boarding provision is rigorous. As a result, leaders and managers have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement.
- Consultation with boarders is a strength of the academy. Information from this consultation is used to develop the boarding provision.
- The admissions procedure is implemented effectively to support boarders' individual needs. As a result, boarders settle quickly into boarding life regardless of when they move in.

The boarding school's areas for development:

- The records of staff supervision sessions are not always of a consistently good quality.

What does the boarding school need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Ensure that records of staff supervision sessions are consistently of a good quality.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The admissions criteria are transparent, clear and implemented successfully. The admissions process is individualised and equally considers parental and boarders' views. The headteacher ensures that boarders' disabilities and/or special needs are not a barrier to attending the academy. The use of peer mentors provides an effective and well-considered approach to inducting boarders and helping them to settle.

Staff have developed strong relationships with the boarders which are built on trust, honesty and respect. Boarders said that they really like the staff who care for them and confirmed that there are a large number of staff members who they could talk to about any worries or concerns. Boarders said that they love boarding.

Boarders' medical needs are well managed. Medication is appropriately stored and administered. Boarders develop their independence skills as they are supported to self-administer their medication once they have successfully completed an assessment to do so. Boarders spoke highly of the matrons, who support them very

well when they feel poorly or homesick. Healthcare plans are in place where needed and provide clear guidance for staff, enabling them to meet boarders' health needs effectively.

The standard of accommodation is good. There is a rolling programme of refurbishment. The boarders are involved in the refurbishment process and can determine the choice of mattresses, furnishing and decor. Currently, work is being undertaken to improve some bathrooms. The accommodation is clean and tidy, well furnished and provides boarders with a comfortable, homely environment in which to live. There is a good provision of toys, games and DVDs.

Dormitory compatibility risk assessments are used effectively to identify risk and aid staff in matching boarders to share rooms. Although staff typically select who shares each dormitory, boarders do have the opportunity to change if requested and the compatibility assessment is completed.

The provision of activities on and off the school site is excellent and includes opportunities for boarders to attend local clubs and community events. The wide choice of activities caters for all interests, enabling boarders to pursue their own hobbies and to try new ones. Care is taken when timetabling activities to support the children's physical health and emotional well-being, balanced with their educational studies. Boarders benefit from the activities, developing their social skills, independence and self-esteem.

Boarders are helped well to develop an understanding of diversity. A good example of this was an opportunity for the boarders to experience a day in the life of a wheelchair user. Experiences like this help boarders to enhance their understanding of other people's needs, and help to provide a positive and inclusive environment.

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

Risk assessment processes are comprehensive and overseen by a trained health and safety professional. Risk assessment documents are robustly monitored and updated swiftly as required. As a result, boarders are kept safe and enabled to participate in the vast range of horticultural activities available at the academy.

Boarders feel safe at the academy. Excellent child protection arrangements are followed effectively and safeguard children. Safeguarding records are very detailed and provide a comprehensive chronology of the actions that leaders and managers take to protect children. Lessons that are learned are used effectively to improve practice. Staff receive a range of safeguarding training including understanding of county lines and female genital mutilation. As a result, staff have a good understanding of a wide range of safeguarding matters and use this understanding to help boarders to keep themselves safe.

Behaviour is very well managed using positive reinforcement, praise and reward.

Boarders are very proud of the range of merit badges they have achieved for positive behaviour. Staff work hard to understand the reasons behind the behaviour and then focus on repair and rebuilding relationships. The use of sanctions is appropriate and focuses on reparation. Boarders feel that the rules and sanctions are fair. As a result, they behave well and are respectful of others.

Boarders said they feel that the staff are positive role models and help them to achieve as much as they can. This relates to how the boarders learn how to manage their own behaviours, as well as supporting their peers. Boarders are making very good progress in this area.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have ensured that the national minimum standards for boarding schools are met. Leaders and managers have worked hard since the previous inspection to develop staff practice and maintain a positive culture in the academy.

Monitoring of the boarding provision is rigorous and effective. As a result, leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development. They use this understanding to create a comprehensive plan for the further development of the boarding provision.

The statement of boarding principles is suitable and closely adhered to. Boarders understand the boarding principles, reflected well in their behaviours and the respect they show to each other, staff and visitors.

Staff receive good-quality supervision and training which develops their skills and enables them to provide good-quality care. The records of supervision sessions are not of a consistently good quality. They do not consistently record the discussions held or actions required as a result of these discussions.

Staffing arrangements are good, meeting the needs of boarders and including clear contingency plans in case of emergencies. Gap year tutors are no longer used and have been replaced by permanent members of staff. This has led to an improvement in the consistency and quality of care provided.

Consultation with the boarders is exceptionally good. The wide range of consultation forums includes an effective school council, a prefect system and regular surveys. The information from consultation is used to further improve the children's boarding experiences. Boarders said these consultation systems are effective and they feel that their views are listened to, valued and acted on.

Boarders become prefects by being voted in by their peers. The opportunity to become a prefect is given to as many boarders as possible to enable them to develop responsibility and represent their peers' views. Boarders are keen to become a

perfect and very proud when they achieve this.

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.

Boarding school details

Social care unique reference number: SC042165

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Mr Mark Thomas

Type of school: Boarding school

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Inspectors

Wendy Anderson: social care inspector

Joy Howick: Her Majesty's Inspector



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