

# 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 218 students aged three to 19 years who have a statement of special educational need. In addition, it offers weekly residential provision for up to 11 students irrespective of gender who have autism spectrum disorders. While most of these students will be between 11 and 18 years of age, accommodation may be available to those aged up to 19, where appropriate.

The residential provision forms part of the main school building. The residential provision was last inspected in January 2019.

**Inspection dates:** 15 to 17 October 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 residential special school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of previous inspection:** 21 January 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children are looked after by a head of care and core staff team who have a wealth of experience and the skills to meet their individual and collective needs. The team knows the children very well and treats them with dignity and respect. The care and support that children receive is nurturing and affectionate. Interactions between staff and children are warm, sensitive and respectful. Parents' feedback on the quality of care and support their child receives is without exception good. They say that staff are kind and caring.

Since the previous inspection, two children have left the residential provision, and one child has joined. The children have benefited from being introduced and leaving the home in a considered and carefully planned way.

Children are relaxed and happy in their living environment. It is spacious, comfortable and well maintained. Since the previous inspection, significant work has been carried out to improve the homeliness of the residential accommodation. This work is ongoing.

Children have good access to and enjoy using the school's vast outdoor recreational areas. They have unrestricted access in the evenings to the school's swimming pool, art and craft room and the school hall. All children take part in a weekly fitness session that promotes their fitness and agility. In addition, children enjoy taking part in activities within the community. In the main, these are trips out to the local supermarkets, walking and visiting local attractions. However, the staff team has not considered how they can broaden children's opportunities and experiences to promote their personal interests and talents further.

Staff encourage children who have communication needs to express themselves and to make choices. Children are helped to make decisions about what they would like to eat, what activities they would like to do and how to personalise their bedrooms. The management team has recognised that the current formal consultation system is not effective. Plans are in place to develop this further.

Staff help children to make good progress. Educational, health and care targets are identified and set for each child at the start of the academic year. Some of these targets are not specific enough and some staff were not fully familiar with all of the children's targets. Consequently, this could hinder the ability of staff to maximise the children's achievements.

Children are encouraged to develop their independent skills. They assist staff with a range of household activities and chores. These include changing their beds, setting the dinner table, clearing the table after mealtimes and loading and unloading the dishwasher. A parent said, 'My son has thrived in this setting. He has learned so many skills, and he has developed in so many ways. He has learned how to ride a

bike, his self-help skills have improved, and he has become more confident.' Another parent said, 'My child is becoming more independent in his life skills. This has made home life a little easier and less stressful thanks to his 24-hour curriculum.'

Children's educational attendance is exceptionally good. The school reports that four residential children are exceeding their educational targets in mathematics and English compared to their peers. Within the last academic year, all residential children achieved three AQA certificates.

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

The arrangements to safeguard children are good. All staff receive and are up to date with safeguarding training. This includes training in 'So safe', a programme designed to teach children about their body and relationships. Staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and know what to do if they have safeguarding concerns. The manager has not made any referrals to the multi-agency safeguarding hub, although he knows how to do this should it be necessary. Child protection concerns within the school are managed exceptionally well. The senior leadership team works well and cohesively with all safeguarding agencies.

Children are kept safe. This is echoed by their parents, who say that their children are safe. There are currently no concerns in relation to children going missing from the residential provision, nor are sanctions imposed. The staff know the children well and respond effectively when children become anxious or frustrated.

Physical interventions are rare. Since the previous inspection, there have been two incidents that have resulted in physical intervention. On both occasions, the intervention was for a limited amount of time and only to keep the child safe. A new consultation system has been introduced. This has been successful in gaining the children's views after being held. However, despite this positive improvement, the head of care who was involved in the interventions has monitored and evaluated his own practice and sought the child's views about being held. This does not provide an independent review of the incident.

Care plans and risk assessments provide staff with a lot of information about children's needs, their behaviour and environmental risks, but not all. As a result, this limits the ability of staff to assess potential risks, mitigate and manage them.

All staff are up to date with fire safety training. The head of care ensures that all children and most staff take part in regular fire evacuations. The children's responses to the evacuations are recorded. Despite this good practice, not all waking night staff have engaged in a fire evacuation with children. This means they do not know how children will respond in the event of a fire overnight.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

Governance, oversight and monitoring by leaders are mostly effective. Senior leaders and the school's safeguarding governor are suitably trained and experienced to meet their safeguarding role and responsibilities. Monitoring reports are good quality and support the school to progress and develop.

The head of care provides good and effective leadership and management. He is well respected by the staff team. He has successfully created a culture that encourages all staff to have high aspirations and expectations for the children that they care for. Staff are a cohesive team who say that they support each other well.

All staff receive opportunities to speak with their line manager regularly about their practice. However, records are not kept detailing the weekly supervision meetings for the head of care. Team meetings take place regularly and are well attended. Staff confirm that they are provided with an opportunity to share and develop practice and any concerns. However, this good practice could not be verified within the minutes of these meetings.

Staff are provided with specialist training to meet the diverse needs of the children in their care. This includes specific training in managing complex health needs. Seven out of the 14 staff have completed the level 3 diploma. The remaining seven staff are due to enrol on the level 3 qualification.

The principal, head of care and staff are determined that children receive high-quality care and support. A parent said, 'The head of care and staff place the needs of the children at the centre of their practice. If we have an issue, it is dealt with immediately. The head of care is incredibly professional, supportive and is a credit to school.'

Parents' views and experiences are independently sought by the home. Feedback received is unanimously positive. Parents report that their child is safe, well looked after and enjoys their boarding experience.

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

### **Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools**

- The school ensures that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified. (NMS 6.3)
- The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate. (NMS 13.8)

### **Recommendation**

- Ensure that children are provided with opportunities to engage in activities in the community that broaden their personal interests and promote their talents.
- Ensure that all night staff take part in a fire evacuation drill to understand how the children may respond in the event of an evacuation at night.
- Ensure that records are maintained of all supervision sessions.

### **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people 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

**Executive principal:** Mrs Emily Massey

**Type of school:** Residential special school

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## **Inspector**

Sharron Escott, social care inspector



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