

Frewen College

Frewen Educational Trust Limited, 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 students aged between seven and 19 years. The school provides specialist education for students with dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, sensory integration or speech and communication difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, there were 136 students on roll, including 29 residential students. Boys live in the main school building and girls live in a separate house in the school grounds.

The inspector only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Inspection dates: 31 January to 2 February 2023

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: 23 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Students are looked after by staff who are committed to teaching them how to build and maintain positive relationships. This makes students feel secure and cared for, which enables them to make good progress. Several students told the inspector that the best thing about being a boarder at the school is that it feels like being part of a family.

There is meaningful joint working between the boarding and education teams. Boarding staff support students to engage in education, and students make good progress from their starting points. Students' educational goals are understood by the boarding staff, who help students to achieve them. When students are preparing to leave the school, they are supported to select education or work placements which provide the greatest chance of success.

The processes which are followed when students move into the boarding provision are thorough and thoughtful. Managers and staff work closely with students' families and other professionals and carry out a well-informed assessment of each student's suitability for the school. One student suffered with severe homesickness when he first arrived. A responsive and individualised approach has enabled him to make remarkable progress in relation to his social and emotional well-being.

There is a focus on making sure that students are prepared for living more independently in the future. In one example, a student has received sensitive support which has led to him being able to travel to his home, which is some distance from the school, independently. This has improved his self-esteem and confidence and has had a positive impact on his ability to spend quality time with his family. Another student told the inspector that he appreciates the change in rules relating to free time because he has been able to take more responsibility for planning his day.

Students are being cared for by staff who are attentive and familiar with each student's personality and needs. However, the careful support provided for students is undermined by written care plans which do not fully describe how to care for students and keep them safe. In practice, staff know the students well, and this is not having a negative impact on the quality of care. Additionally, other documents, such as individual education plans, provide clear descriptions of students' strengths and vulnerabilities.

Managers invest time and effort into keeping the boarding areas well maintained and ensuring that they are as comfortable and homely as possible. Managers have recognised that the decor is tired and in need of updating in some areas of the boarding provision. Plans for redecoration are in place. Not all students have access to secure storage for personal possessions they wish to keep private, and several students told the inspector that this bothers them.

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

Students' safety and well-being are a priority. The designated safeguarding lead and other members of the senior leadership team are passionate in their efforts to ensure the safety of the students. Governors with responsibility for safeguarding and boarding provide good oversight and scrutiny to ensure that students' safety and well-being are maintained.

Staff make good use of daily logs, which have been introduced to ensure that there is effective information-sharing between the boarding and education staff teams. The system for recording safeguarding concerns is also used to very good effect. As a result, staff have up-to-date knowledge of students' current risks and can make sound decisions to address safeguarding concerns.

Positive behaviour is promoted through helping students develop self-control and resilience. As a result, incidents which require physical restraint are very rare.

Processes for managing health and safety matters and maintenance tasks are excellent. Consequently, repairs are addressed in a timely manner and the physical environment is safe and secure.

Safe recruitment practices are understood and implemented by the manager and staff responsible for this area of practice. All necessary checks are carried out to ensure that students are protected from unsuitable people working in the school.

Health and well-being professionals are focused on improving physical and mental health outcomes for students. They provide expert input into students' healthcare plans. Managers and staff proactively advocate for students to ensure that they access support from external health professionals when this is required.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, a new head of boarding and a new vice principal, who has overall responsibility for the boarding provision, have been appointed. They have ambitious, focused plans in place to address the areas for development they have identified.

Boarding staff speak highly of the support that they receive from managers. Staff feel valued and respected, which enables them to provide high-quality care for students.

Leaders and managers demonstrate that there is an embedded culture of welcoming feedback from external sources. Criticisms and comments about the service are seen as an opportunity to learn, reflect and improve.

Students' relationships with each other are based on mutual respect and a shared understanding that everyone needs the freedom to follow their daily routines in their own way. Managers have plans in place to ensure that this inclusive culture, which

promotes equality and diversity, supports students to confidently explore all aspects of their developing sense of identity.

Students' views influence decisions about the way that they are looked after. Managers have plans in place to reinstate the boarding council to ensure that students can contribute their views about the operation of the boarding provision. In the meantime, some students are not confident that their voices are being heard when they provide their views and raise concerns. Systems for ensuring that students understand what has been done to address their concerns need to be strengthened.

The system for recording staff training attendance does not currently demonstrate that staff have received training that is relevant to all the needs of the students who they are looking after. Staff are being offered a range of training courses to give them the knowledge and skills they need, but this is undermined by a shortfall in training records.

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

Points for improvement

- School leaders should ensure that boarders have secure storage for their personal possessions.
- School leaders should ensure that boarders receive feedback on their views about the running of the boarding provision.
- School leaders should ensure that the system for recording staff training accurately reflects the training which boarding staff have received.

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: SC049345

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Nick Goodman

Type of school: Residential special school

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Inspector

Helen Simmons, Social Care Inspector

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