

More House School

Moons Hill, Frensham, Farnham, Surrey GU10 3AP

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

More House School is an independent residential special school for day and residential pupils, for boys aged eight to 19 who have literacy needs, Developmental Language Disorder and associated social communication needs.

The school has a Catholic ethos. It is situated in extensive grounds in a rural setting. More than half the pupils have an education, health and care plan funded by their local authority.

At the time of this inspection, there were 80 residential pupils at the school and 474 students on the school roll.

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 March 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The residential special school provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the school contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

Date of last inspection: 18 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Staff provide students with care and support which has a transformational impact on their lives. Students talk passionately about 'gigantic' improvements in their personal and social development. Students have frequently had difficult experiences in previous education settings. One student said, 'People didn't understand us before we came here.' Students feel deeply connected to the school, forming close bonds with staff and fellow students. For some students, this is their first experience of creating positive social connections with others.

Students' progress as a result of their time at this school is excellent. Feedback from parents and professionals is consistently positive about the life-changing progress that students make. One parent said, 'They have transformed not only our child but our whole family.'

Students experience growth in their confidence and self-esteem, which supports them towards excellent outcomes. The majority of leavers go on to further or higher education and employment. Students are proud of their success and their achievements are celebrated by the whole school community.

Students benefit immensely from bespoke support which nurtures them, helping them overcome personal challenges or frustrations. From this stable base, students grow socially and academically. Students are enthusiastic about the school. They speak highly of the opportunities and variety of available activities.

Staff use information and research to develop their practice. Strong multidisciplinary networks around each student help to develop and shape highly personalised care, creating unique strategies and approaches.

Students have consistent opportunities to voice their feelings, concerns or complaints. They have points of contact across the staff team and use these well to help highlight and resolve the issues that they are facing. The student council is comprised of passionate advocates for their fellow students. They are confident that they can influence decision-making at the school. Students feel empowered and that their voice has meaning and value.

Students benefit from effective health and well-being support. Staff create clear health plans and support students well with complex issues such as epilepsy, diabetes and anxiety. Staff engage in innovative practice to support students to feel safe and cared for. For example, the school nurse used pets to support students to reduce incidents of self-harm.

Staff place a clear emphasis on creating emotional stability. Multidisciplinary teams across the school apply consistent strategies and create space for students to feel safe to reflect on their past experiences.

Staff enjoy and value every student's uniqueness, idiosyncrasies and personality. Staff create a culture that is inclusive and celebrates individual difference. Students say that they can be themselves without fear of stigma.

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

Students feel safe and live in a supportive and positive environment.

A highly skilled safeguarding lead expertly steers safeguarding processes at the school. She provides excellent guidance and support to the whole team, ensuring that safeguarding practice at the school is effective and students' safety is always prioritised.

The safeguarding lead has nurtured positive relationships with external safeguarding partners. She also engages in professional supervision with an experienced safeguarding professional from the local authority. This ensures that the school benefits from an experienced external perspective, seeking out good practice to further enhance the quality of practice at the school.

Staff identify safeguarding concerns promptly by creating transparency across all areas of the school. Staff use recording systems confidently to ensure that they manage issues swiftly. They ensure that they make all necessary notifications to relevant parties, including the local authority safeguarding teams and parents. The safeguarding lead ensures that staff maintain clear chronologies of communications and outcomes.

Senior leaders and staff enhance safeguarding practice at the school through their willingness to reflect and learn from incidents. Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to continuous improvement in practice. This is achieved by reflecting on and identifying areas of weakness and areas for development.

Monitoring of safeguarding practice is effective due to the oversight of the headteacher, alongside close scrutiny from governors with expertise in safeguarding.

In a recent situation where the safeguarding processes at the school were tested rigorously, practice was exemplary. A parent of a pupil involved in a recent safeguarding incident praised the school's response and confirmed that the support for their child had been excellent, involving dedicated time with the school's pastoral and counselling teams.

The safeguarding lead has created a dedicated safeguarding newsletter. This is a fantastic resource for staff and parents alike, looking at emerging concerns and latest

information around safeguarding. This supports parents and students to recognise new and emerging concerns, including online safety, exploitation and safe relationships. This promotes the students' capacity to keep themselves safe.

Staff enhance safeguarding practice by linking into the school curriculum, encouraging open dialogue with students around issues important to their safety and well-being. Staff place a strong focus on the creation of positive relationships with others and students recognise the impact that this has on the environment around them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders are proud of their school. They share an ambitious vision for continuous improvement. They have confidence in the school's approach and their confidence is supported by the consistently excellent outcomes for students at the school. Leaders show an open approach to learning and adapting practice wherever it benefits students.

Leaders recognise the importance of flexibility and respect for individual difference in students and this is a key strength of the school. Leaders model these values effectively to the entire staff team. Staff trust in their leadership team. Leaders ensure that staff feel valued, and they recognise the knowledge, skills and expertise of staff.

Leaders provide excellent support both personally and professionally. Staff have frequent opportunities for continuous professional development. Staff also benefit from a culture of support that extends across the entire team. Staff spoke about advice and guidance being readily available, with an accessible leadership team who care for their well-being.

Leaders ensure that monitoring and oversight of practice is thorough and forensic. Strong governorship brings extra layers of scrutiny, holding the leadership and staff to account. Governors ensure that standards are maintained and exceeded across the school.

Leaders work hard to create effective channels of communication with parents, but a small number of parents report that this is not always successful.

A new head of care has made a strong start to their tenure. They place an emphasis on developing new models for tracking progress and outcomes for students. The ability to use analytics with this data supports the celebration of individual achievement. Staff are also able to see emerging themes and patterns across individual year groups or the boarding students as a whole.

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

Point for improvement

- School leaders should ensure that they review the effectiveness of communication with all parents and seek feedback from parents on improvements they would like to see in this area.

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: SC013927

Type of school: Residential special school

Telephone number: 01252 792303

Email address: headmasterspa@morehouseschool.co.uk

Inspectors

Peter Jackson, Social Care Inspector (lead)

Paul Taylor, Social Care Inspector

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