

# Bure Park Specialist Academy

Beresford Road, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR30 4AB

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this residential special school**

Bure Park Specialist Academy caters for pupils who experience social, emotional and mental health difficulties. The school is a day and residential special school located in a residential area of Great Yarmouth.

There are 63 pupils on roll, 19 of whom board for up to four nights a week. The residential provision comprises three purpose-built houses situated in the school grounds.

The head of care has been in post since April 2021 and has a relevant qualification.

This inspection was carried out at the same time as an inspection of the school.

### **Inspection dates: 28 to 30 November 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      outstanding

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

**Date of previous inspection:** 23 May 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

## Inspection judgements

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

Confident, dynamic and aspirational school leaders and managers inspire a skilful and knowledgeable staff team to provide high-quality support and experiences for children in residence.

Children have an enjoyable and fulfilling time in residence. Relationships between children and staff are strong and are based on mutual regard and respect. Staff are extremely positive role models and are skilled in providing high levels of nurture and warmth while also implementing appropriate boundaries which children respond well to. This provides children with a secure base for which they can begin to learn and make progress.

Children receive good-quality education at school. Children who stay in residence substantially improve their educational engagement and school attendance from their starting points. Staff from the residential provision work closely with school staff to provide a unified approach to children's learning outcomes. This includes children having dedicated time in residence to read. For some children, this has greatly inspired their love of literature.

School leaders and managers have improved systems to monitor and capture children's wider progress in their personal development and life skills. There are now increased opportunities for independence building within day-to-day activities in residence which are matched to children's developmental milestones.

A diverse range of planned therapeutic interventions help children to understand their past and explore their emotions. A school-wide approach to support, which includes one-to-one sessions, play, movement and speech and language therapies, is provided to children. Bespoke resources are available for children to use in line with the underpinning model of interventions adopted by the school. Parents also receive sessions to better understand these approaches. This is a strength of the school and results in children making great strides towards improving their resilience and self-determination.

Children hugely appreciate a wide range of activities that enrich their school day. Staff provide creative craft experiences, using different tactile mediums which foster children's imagination. There is a wide range of sporting activities and recreational pursuits that are enjoyed by children. These opportunities cater for children's interests, improve children's well-being and provide children with experiences they have not had previously.

Overall, feedback from families is very positive feedback. Families report strong communication with the staff and recognise the considerable progress children make at the school. School leaders and managers are receptive to and are responsive to constructive comments that are made by some families.

Children take part in house meetings during their time in residence, to reflect on the school day and to plan activities. Children make progress in expressing their feelings due to the support they receive from staff. However, a point for improvement is for staff to establish a more effective system to capture children's wider views about their direct experiences in residence. This could identify learning for school leaders and managers and inform future developments of the provision.

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

There is a strong safeguarding culture in residence and in the wider school. Children say they feel safe. Staff have an in-depth understanding of children's needs and previous experiences. School leaders and managers have provided comprehensive training to staff in line with new statutory guidance. Staff are well informed to respond to risk indicators for children.

Staff have excellent working partnerships with other professionals, such as the police and social workers. Collaborative working with the police has resulted in a recent bespoke presentation being delivered to children. This gave children an enhanced understanding of the risks in the wider community and helped them to reflect positively on their behaviour.

When risks for children emerged in relation to their increased vulnerability to exploitation, school leaders were proactive and worked successfully with other professionals to support the children to be safer.

Designated safeguarding leads are appropriately trained. A new senior designated lead has recently been appointed. Child protection concerns are responded to promptly. Staff procedures to record, monitor and escalate safeguarding concerns are effective. This ensures that children are provided with the right support at the right time to oversee their welfare and safety.

Children's behaviour is good. They are highly invested in bespoke incentive schemes that reinforce positive behaviour. Staff successfully use de-escalation strategies in line with well-formed harm-reduction plans. Consequences are used proportionately. The use of physical intervention is a last resort. School leaders and managers implement thorough systems of analysis in relation to children's emotions and behaviour. Managers use the learning from this analysis to successfully inform future behavioural support strategies for children.

School leaders have ensured that all suspicions of harm involving children have been dealt with appropriately. Most of these concerns have been responded to swiftly. This has ensured that suitable safeguards are in place for children. School leaders have plans to further improve the systems to capture the records of actions taken in response to these concerns, to assist with future monitoring.

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

A qualified and highly experienced head of care manages the staff team confidently to provide children with excellent experiences in residence. The head of care is well supported by school leaders. Collectively, school leaders and managers provide aspirational leadership that has enabled a positive culture of achievement and progress for children in a relatively short space of time.

Management arrangements have significantly strengthened in residence since the last inspection. A new deputy head of care is in post alongside two assistant heads of care. These roles are well supported and defined. Children and staff have benefited from the expertise and effectiveness of this improved management team.

School leaders and managers have adapted several areas of research in relation to the early years development of children. This has led to the successful implementation of well-planned and targeted play sessions for children in residence. This innovative support has helped children to close any gaps in their learning from their early childhood.

School leaders and managers ensure that there is a strong emphasis on staff's well-being. Mental health first aiders are available to staff and children. The head of care has recently improved frameworks for staff supervision and appraisals. Staff feel very well supported by managers and have ample opportunities to reflect on their practice and continuous development.

School leaders and managers have high expectations of their staff to change and improve the lives of the children. An ongoing programme of professional development is in place for staff. This includes high-quality training which enhances staff's skills to meet children's individual needs.

School leaders and trustees have effective oversight of the residential provision. External monitoring by independent visitors is thorough and strengthens quality assurance systems. There is a clear development plan in place for residence and the wider school. The head of care participates in and influences a residential special schools strategy group, which ensures that they are informed of any emerging best practices.

School leaders have ensured that all national minimum standards have been met.

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

### **Point for improvement**

- School leaders should ensure that consultation with children is systematically recorded to reflect their views about the residential provision.

### **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:** 2644536

**Headteacher:** Hayley Ross

**Type of school:** Residential special school

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## **Inspector**

Mark Anderton, Social Care Inspector

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