

Bure Park Specialist Academy

16a Keyes Avenue, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR30 4AE

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

Bure Park Specialist Academy is a day and residential special school in Great Yarmouth that caters for boys who experience social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

The residential provision comprises three purpose-built houses situated in the school grounds. The school is a member of Broad Horizons Educational Multi-Academy Trust.

There are 80 pupils on roll, 25 of whom board for up to four nights a week. The inspector met several boarders during the inspection.

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

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

Inspection dates: 14 to 16 January 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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: 28 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children thrive and have a strong sense of safety and stability in this residential provision. Experienced school leaders and skilled staff are ambitious for children and provide high-quality and individualised support that enhances children's life chances. Children make excellent progress from their starting points, and their time in residence adds significant value to their overall school experiences.

Children are extremely happy in residence and enjoy spending time with each other and with staff. Staff know children well and have a thorough understanding of their individual needs. They confidently use a research-informed relationship-based model of support to build strong rapport with children and provide individualised care. As a result, children flourish in a loving, nurturing and supportive environment.

School leaders ensure that there is a holistic and systematic approach to the review, analysis, monitoring and support provided to children. Children make significant progress in their educational attainment and social skills. Residential staff and school staff work exceptionally well together. Children who stay in residential have higher school attendance and are more likely to achieve the educational objectives set out in their plans than those who do not. Children's reading levels accelerate at a faster rate compared to children who do not board. Strong monitoring by school leaders and bespoke support provided by staff have enabled this progress.

Staff work exceptionally well with children to improve their social confidence, self-esteem and sense of community. Children have been successful in working towards nationally recognised achievement badges for their sporting accomplishments. Children are making progress in relation to obtaining bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh awards. Staff help children to volunteer in local environmental restoration schemes, including beach cleanups and litter picking.

Children highly value and enjoy a wide range of enriching activities that enhance their school day. Staff provide stimulating and creative evening activities that encourage children's imagination and enthusiasm for literacy. All children have enjoyed exciting outings that have broadened their experiences. Well-planned sporting fixtures support children's healthy lifestyles and interests. The variety of opportunities available to children greatly improves their well-being and has ensured that they establish lasting friendships with each other.

Staff provide high-quality support to children to help them to understand and explore their identity and emotions. A school-wide approach to interventions is provided to children, which includes one-to-one sessions, speech and language therapies, and play and mindfulness activities. Children enjoy opportunities to spend time with therapy dogs. A wide range of resources are available for children to use in line with the model of therapeutic approaches adopted by the school.

Staff routinely listen to children's views, and their opinions influence their residential experiences. School leaders have considered children's wider views well. They review children's completed surveys and ensure that these contribute to development plans that provide continuous improvement in the provision.

Children continue to make progress in their personal development and life skills. Independence-building activities are matched to children's developmental milestones and are woven into day-to-day activities in residence. Staff encourage children to document their success in customised achievement booklets. Children are proud of their accomplishments and begin to build stronger aspirations for their future.

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

Parents and social workers have strong confidence that the staff advocate for children's best interests, safety and well-being. The relationships forged with parents and professionals enable honest and open conversations which ensure that children's safety is central to all decisions.

The designated safeguarding lead works well alongside school leaders and a team of deputy safeguarding leads. She is tenacious in her work and directly challenges external professionals when she feels that they are not acting in children's best interests.

All staff receive bespoke training to provide high-quality therapeutic support to children. Staff are empathetic to children's past experiences and are extremely skilled in de-escalation techniques when responding to children's emotions. Risks in residence are minimised because of staff's strong understanding of children's needs.

Children are extremely motivated to work towards an innovative incentive scheme in residence and the wider school. Many children meet identified goals and receive exciting rewards and privileges. The success of this scheme means that children greatly improve their self-determination and emotional resilience from their starting points.

There is excellent peer support between children. Older children are positive role models to children who are new to residence. When some children have shown low confidence and anxiety, other children have provided sensitive support to help them overcome their anxieties.

On the few occasions when there has been conflict between children, staff have responded swiftly and supported children to resolve their differences amicably.

When physical intervention is used, it is necessary and proportionate. School leaders ensure that meticulous monitoring and analysis take place to review interventions. This has ensured swift learning and adaptations to children's behaviour management strategies when needed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

A highly experienced and qualified head of care successfully manages the staff team alongside a skilled deputy and two assistant heads of care. They work seamlessly alongside other school leaders to provide the best experiences for children in residence. School leaders are diligent, highly energised and completely focused on improving the future outcomes for children. Their commitment to enhancing children's experiences is evident in the quality of the care provided by staff.

School leaders have overseen several recent improvements. They have strengthened key worker staff roles, which has enabled a more personalised approach to care for children. Routines have been adapted in each of the three residential houses to better reflect children's needs and personalities. Additional play resources are now available to children in line with the therapeutic model adopted by the school. School leaders have a clear action plan to support further development in residence.

There are established arrangements for sharing information and for reflection, feedback and learning with staff. Staff receive frequent supervision and regularly attend well-planned team meetings. High-quality training equips staff with the skills to meet the children's individual needs.

School leaders are proactive in enhancing children's reputation and presence in the community. Children have taken an active role in planning special events, including a summer barbeque and Christmas fete. These events have been greatly enjoyed by children, neighbours, parents and professionals and have strengthened the school's connection with the local community.

The head of care continues to participate in and influence a residential special schools' strategy group, where they share emerging good practice. The headteacher sits on a regional association of headteachers championing the rights of children with special educational needs. Consequently, school leaders have influenced support to a greater number of children than those who attend the school.

School trustees have strong oversight of the residential provision. They visit residence regularly and consider children's views. A team of independent visitors provides robust external monitoring. Any recommendations made are swiftly responded to by school leaders.

Staff value the wide range of support that the school provides for their mental health and well-being. There are high staff retention levels in residence, which has provided strong continuity of care to children.

All national minimum standards are met.

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/teacher in charge: Hayley Ross

Type of school: Residential special school

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Inspector

Mark Anderton, Social Care Inspector

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