

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 with literacy difficulties, developmental language disorder and associated social communication difficulties. The school has a Catholic ethos. It is situated in extensive grounds in a rural setting.

At the time of this inspection, there were 74 residential pupils at the school and 501 pupils on the school roll. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

The head of care is suitably experienced and working towards the relevant qualification.

Inspection dates: 10 to 12 December 2024

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 previous inspection: 7 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

There is a strong sense of community at the provision. Pupils have built respectful and strong relationships with staff and each other. Pupils consistently make excellent progress particularly with their education and independence. One pupil's parents said that they are 'thrilled' at the progress their child has made. Staff live and breathe the ethos of the setting and are highly invested in the progress of the pupils. One pupil describes them as 'kind and understanding' and explained that the support that they provide is intertwined with their school life. The residential experience is key in enhancing the pupils' overall progress.

Staff celebrate the pupils' uniqueness. Pupils can be themselves and explore their own identities in a safe and non-judgemental environment. Pupils' confidence continues to grow, and they are thriving as a result. One parent said that since joining the school their son 'does not feel differentiated'. As a result, he has gained confidence, and his mental health has improved. The provider's counsellor has helped pupils to explore their identity. They provide an informal space to talk using resources to help pupils.

Pupils have rich and varied experiences. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the activities available to them. An experienced coordinator has oversight of the after-school clubs. These clubs are linked to different themes such as 'cultural' and 'intellectual' activities. Pupils can make their own story books, play fantasy games, learn to play musical instruments, undertake performing arts and learn martial arts. Pupils also regularly enjoy activities away from the provision. These include trips to London, pantomimes, shopping and the cinema.

Pupils are making excellent progress in their education. They are highly engaged in school. Staff promote pupils' attendance and work with pupils and their parents when their attendance at school drops. One parent said that the difference they have seen in their son is 'incredible'. Their son was almost a school refuser, the nurture that staff provide has helped him find his passion again.

The residential accommodation is of a high standard. Leaders put great thought into the shared spaces for pupils. They have reorganised the accommodation to meet the needs and dynamics of the pupils. The bedrooms have been reduced in occupancy numbers to increase comfort for pupils. Pupils have access to a wide range of games consoles, computers, TV's, books, puzzles and games. The spaces feel lived in and are highly child focused.

Staff prepare pupils for adulthood effectively. Staff provide constant feedback to pupils on their routines and the cleanliness of their rooms. This encourages pupils to take responsibility for themselves. Helpful pictures and prompts are displayed for the

younger pupils helping them to get dressed and follow their routines independently. One parent said it is noticeable that their son has become more independent since starting at the provision.

New pupils are warmly welcomed to the provision. Staff are sensitive to pupils who may feel home sick. One parent said that staff have 'gone above and beyond' to help their son settle into the residential provision. Another parent of a pupil who has only just joined the provision said that they can already see 'massive improvements' in his confidence and self-esteem.

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

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is exceptional. Her dynamism and enthusiasm are pivotal to the creation of the provision's excellent safeguarding culture. The DSL has broadened the scope of safeguarding to tackle issues at an early stage, empowering staff to help pupils early on. The DSL keeps staff and governors up to date with training and the latest safeguarding issues. The DSL produces a fantastic online safeguarding update. This covers e-Safety and current safeguarding topics such as spiked vapes, male body image and pupils' mental health. The guide is interactive and includes links to make information highly accessible.

Leaders' oversight of safeguarding is strong. The staff meet often at staff meetings to track safeguarding concerns and actions for pupils. One social care professional said that the DSL has, 'An excellent grasp' of the challenges a pupil's family may face.

Pupils are highly confident in raising concerns. The DSL has produced a new 'worry video' for the pupils. This helps guide pupils on where to go to speak to key adults when they have a worry. This is particularly helpful given the needs of the pupils and helps them to break down barriers to access help. There is also a 'worry button' available to pupils on the provider's intranet where they can raise concerns. Pupils say that they would happily raise concerns with staff directly if they needed to.

Staff are acutely aware of the risks for pupils online. There are highly effective filtering and monitoring systems in place to reduce risks to pupils. The DSL has a keen focus on emerging risks. They are working proactively with the ICT department to skill up staff to be alert to these developments.

Leaders manage concerns about staff effectively. When there was a concern about the conduct of a non-contact member of staff this was shared with partner agencies. The concerns were investigated thoroughly, and the school's procedures followed. There have been no serious concerns about staff in the residential provisions. Low level concerns are managed well. Leaders in the provision promote a strong learning

culture which involves discussions with the pupils and staff involved. The head teacher and DSL have excellent recording and oversight of the concerns.

Pupils' overall health is a priority for staff. Nurses oversee detailed plans to help staff understand and manage the pupils' health conditions. When medication errors occurred there has been clear learning and systems improved to reduce the risk of recurrence. Nurses spend time with the pupils teaching them healthy routines such as effective handwashing. Pupils access counselling services and staff are supportive of these sessions. This close working enables all staff to support the pupils effectively with their emotional well-being. Counsellors obtain more specialist support when pupils need it.

Staff have a positive and proactive approach to behaviour. Pupils are rewarded with schemes such as 'pizza points' to promote good behaviour. On one occasion, a physical intervention was used with one pupil. This was appropriately used and for a short period of time. Staff spoke with the pupil involved following the incident to help them develop insight into risks. The pupil's risk assessment has been updated to ensure that staff are aware of the new risks.

Since the last inspection, one young person was missing from the residential provision on one occasion. The staff followed the correct procedures and informed the young person's family. Conversations and reflection took place with the young person about the consequences of their actions. Records are clear and capture the good response to the missing incident.

Safer recruitment is strong. The headmaster has close oversight of recruitment checks. The recruitment checklist ensures that nothing is missed. Additionally, the same stringency in safeguarding checks is undertaken for partners of staff that live on site. This ensures that pupils are surrounded by safe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The head of care works closely with her deputies to have excellent oversight of the residential provision. While the head of care was away from the service her deputies provided seamless oversight of the provision. They are visible figures in the residential provision resulting in a strong understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are focused on ensuring that the pupils receive the best care and support possible. The leadership team are held in high regard by staff and pupils.

Pupils are meaningfully involved in the running of the residential provision. The 'boarding council' meet regularly to discuss the residential provision. They decide on the sanctions used and meals. They also report repairs needed in the accommodation. Prefects have been given the responsibility to help run the council meetings. Pupils who are prefects develop confidence and are positive role models to the younger pupils. When pupils raise areas for improvement, they have full faith that the leadership team will respond promptly.

Staff have excellent support to help them carry out their roles. New staff are welcomed with an extensive induction. Staff have regular formal and informal support and supervision from leaders. There is a culture of ongoing development, with weekly learning opportunities for staff. Training is managed impeccably to ensure that all staff are up to date with the latest practice. Staff find guest speakers extremely beneficial. They have recently helped staff to develop insight into the pupils' learning needs and reflect on issues such as suicide prevention.

The governors are proud of the outcomes for pupils. They are highly passionate and aware of the vital role that the residential provision plays. The new governors responsible for safeguarding and the residential provision are highly experienced and skilled. They provide challenge and scrutiny to the leadership team. The governors review each detailed report produced by the independent visitor. They ensure that leaders follow up on any small areas of development.

One ongoing complaint has been concluded. The school's complaints procedure has been followed. A panel including governors investigated this complaint thoroughly. A tremendous amount of time had been taken to consider the complaint. There is a strong culture of accountability and learning.

The pupils' plans are clear and effective. They include the voice of the pupil throughout. Staff know the pupils incredibly well and understand the progress that they have made. This progress is reviewed annually and captured in detailed reports. Staff celebrate pupils' successes with awards linked to the school's three shared values of kindness, spirit and responsibility linked to the strongly embedded ethos.

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

Headteacher: Mr Jonathan Hetherington

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Inspectors

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