

St Francis Community Special School

St. Francis Community Special School, Wickenby Crescent, Lincoln LN1 3TJ
Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

St Francis Community Special School is a maintained school that provides residential care as part of a 24-hour curriculum for young people, with learning or physical disabilities, up to the age of 19 years. Boarding is available from Monday afternoon to Friday morning during term time. There is accommodation in shared and single bedrooms for up to 18 young people each night.

Inspection dates: 12 to 14 November 2019

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: 22 January 2019

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that safeguarding investigations and reviews are consistently well organised and well documented. (Linked to National Minimum Standards 11 and 13)
- Ensure that the head of care receives formal and effective supervision, which is recorded. (Linked to National Minimum Standard 19)
- Ensure that fire doors are included in health and safety checks. (Linked to National

Minimum Standard 6.2)

- Ensure that when young people feel that they have been bullied, this is dealt with in line with the school's policy on bullying. (Linked to National Minimum Standard 12.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people thoroughly enjoy their time in residence. Staff treat young people with dignity and respect. This is particularly the case when young people need to be moved using specialised equipment and when young people need help with their personal care.

Staff love their work. Their enthusiasm is reflected in the way that they care for the young people. Their approach makes young people feel special. Because young people enjoy good, trusting relationships with staff, they are confident to express their feelings and talk about any problems they may have.

Young people benefit from being in residence and can recognise the progress that they make. For example, one young person who has not had the chance to socialise out of school is making lasting friendships. Young people are well supported to become more independent. This includes being able to take age-appropriate, carefully assessed risks. Some young people have used public transport for the first time. Others have been supported to spend time in the community with their peers, without direct adult supervision. Spending time in the residence increases young people's confidence and self-esteem.

The student council and prefect system is well organised. Leaders implement changes as a result of listening to young people. For example, there have been recent changes to menus and to the residence timetable. Young people have a voice, whatever their disability or communication style.

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

Young people feel safe. Staff know young people's needs extremely well. Risks are reduced because of good care and health planning. Staff are well trained to carry out healthcare tasks. They are also supported by nurses to meet young people's complex health needs. There are good procedures for the administration of medicines.

Risk assessments generally support staff to manage and reduce risk. They are regularly reviewed and updated in line with emerging risks. However, on one occasion, a risk assessment relating to the sharing of a bedroom had not been fully completed. This has since been put right.

Health and safety is generally well managed. As a result, the environment is safe and secure. However, there is no system to monitor the correct functioning of fire doors in the residence. During the inspection, one fire door was not operating effectively because it did not fully close.

Leaders generally recognise potential safeguarding issues quickly and take appropriate action. Good communication between school staff, parents and the local

authority ensures that risks and vulnerabilities are recognised and reviewed. When safeguarding incidents happen, managers ensure that there are open and frank discussions with partner agencies so that lessons can be learned. However, in one such example, learning and analysis was not well organised or well documented. The quality of recording in other safeguarding records is also not of a consistently good standard.

School staff are proactive in teaching young people about acceptable behaviour and about respecting each other. On one occasion, however, a child has felt bullied. In this case, leaders have not recognised their concerns as a bullying issue. Leaders have not responded in line with their own bullying policies.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The head of care is enthusiastic about meeting each young person's needs and takes a very 'hands-on' approach. Her approach filters down to staff who reflect her enthusiasm and passion in their own work. Because the manager involves herself so directly in the care of young people, she has a very good understanding of each young person's needs.

The head of care sets high standards and has high expectations of staff. Staff know that their performance has to be consistently good. Performance management systems, both formal and informal, are used well. As a result, staff feel well supported. Staff also receive good-quality training.

There is a dedicated governor for the residence who has a good understanding of disability issues. Her experience is useful to the wider management team. She is working constructively with leaders to build on strengths and address areas of weakness.

The head of care has not received formal supervision at a time when this would have been beneficial. However, some less formal support has been provided. More formal and more regular supervision would provide better opportunities to support the head of care.

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: SC038622

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Mrs Anne Hoffman

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Inspector

Caroline Brailsford, social care inspector



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