

Newbury Manor School

Mells, Nr. Frome, Somerset BA11 3RG

Inspection dates

24–26 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Good

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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Sixth form provision | Outstanding |
| Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision | Good |
| Quality of care and support in the residential provision | Good |
| How well children and young people are protected in the residential provision | Good |
| Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers in the residential provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have a clear vision for creating an effective school to ensure that all pupils achieve well and develop social and communication skills appropriate to their age.
- Pupils achieve well in this good school. Leaders ensure that they meet the independent school standards and national minimum standards for residential special schools in full.
- Teachers ensure that learning programmes are skilfully and effectively planned to meet the needs of pupils.
- Pupils make sustained progress from their starting points. All pupils gain success in achieving academic qualifications. Residential pupils are very well supported.
- Sixth form provision is highly effective. Students make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Some pupils join the school with extremely challenging behaviour. Individualised and carefully targeted support ensures that the behaviour of these pupils is transformed during their time at the school.
- Pupils feel safe and are kept safe. Their careful supervision ensures that any inappropriate behaviour, when it does occur, is swiftly dealt with.
- Strong collaboration between education and care staff is a strong feature of this provision. It helps promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This includes the promotion of British values in school.
- Good leadership and governance ensure that staff receive effective support for their professional development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers are equally confident in their promotion of English and mathematics across the whole range of subjects.
- The role and impact of middle leaders in leading specific areas of school responsibility is not fully developed.
- Pupils do not receive the specialist support that they require to maximise their sensory development.

Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for residential special schools

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule for The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') the national minimum standards for residential special schools and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes by:
 - Ensuring that teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop their English and mathematics skills in other subjects
 - ensuring that specialist occupational therapist teaching improves pupils' sensory development to match other areas of their learning.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - supporting staff to gain opportunities to develop specific and relevant expertise with pupils with complex needs.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers in the residential provision is good

How well children and young people are protected in the residential provision is good

- The Principal ensures that all the independent school standards and national minimum standards are met, including the complaints procedure and arrangements for providing information to parents. He works very closely with the headteacher and Head of Care as an effective senior team responsible for the school and residential provision. This provision is admired and respected by pupils, staff and parents.
- Standards have risen since the last inspection. The period of instability that marked that time is now over. With smaller numbers, both in school and in residence, leaders have been better able to focus on their core purpose of giving pupils who need very specialist provision the opportunity to develop their full potential.
- The Principal and headteacher have a good knowledge of the school's performance because they monitor all aspects of its work very effectively. In addition, the Head of Care supports high-quality residential provision. Leaders have created an enthusiastic team who deliver high-quality personalised care.
- Formal lesson observations are a key element of the detailed appraisal system, which also enables staff to evaluate their own performance. Leaders set challenging annual objectives and there is a coherent link between the performance of teachers and their pay. This enables teachers to improve their practice.
- Effective self-evaluation enables the school to set priorities for development. These are addressed in teachers' performance objectives, while the appraisal process also effectively highlights professional development needs and aspirations.
- The curriculum is mostly broad and balanced and is a real strength in the way it is personalised to meet the needs of every pupil. As a result, pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. This good progress is also supported by strong teaching throughout the school. However, the school does not currently offer pupils some subjects, such as design and technology, on site.
- Leaders promote wider learning opportunities effectively, often well supported by residential staff. The idea of the 'waking-day curriculum' enables pupils to develop wider life and independence skills.
- Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds, but all are supported to make the best possible progress. This reflects the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity and to tackling discrimination.
- Safeguarding is robust and all staff are well trained to understand their responsibilities. This includes understanding their legal duties to protect pupils from the risk of radicalisation under the government's Prevent strategy.
- Links with pupils' homes are very strong and are greatly appreciated by parents. In addition to these strong links, greater support is provided if needed. For example, through working with parents in their home to help their children.
- Links with the local authorities who place children and young people at Newbury Manor are equally positive. Similarly, links with a range of outside professionals are strong, ensuring that pupils' needs are effectively met.
- The senior leadership team in its current form is still relatively new, having been in place since January 2015, when the registered manager of the children's home was promoted to become Head of Care, and its impact is not yet fully evident. In addition, the role and impact of middle leaders in monitoring reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum is not yet evident across all subjects.
- The proposed changes to increase the residential accommodation and additional school places are part of a carefully planned and controlled expansion programme.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Priory Education Services, and particularly its Regional Manager, hold the school and its leadership to account very effectively. Monthly detailed reports from the Principal and a termly governance meeting give the company a detailed picture of the effectiveness of the school and outcomes for pupils.
 - The company has a clear picture of appraisal and performance management, and provides resources to support the professional development of staff. It ensures that all necessary training is undertaken within the legally required time limits. To date, this work has had a positive impact on developing

experienced teachers' practice and developing their knowledge of working with pupils with complex needs and anxious behaviour. The company is aware that even more could be done to develop the expertise of new staff in this area. The company ensures that the Principal is given challenging annual objectives, which are carefully monitored and reviewed.

- Care is taken to manage the school's finances to ensure that all resources are appropriately directed to the education and residential requirements of the pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and fully meet requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- A committed and highly effective team has now been created following a major turnover of staff since the previous inspection. This has led to a rise in pupils' standards. Effective learning is demonstrated by the good and sometimes outstanding progress made by pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations and work closely with colleagues to devise programmes aimed at meeting individual needs. This helps pupils to enjoy their learning. As a result, their behaviour, while challenging at times, is more focused on learning. Progress is not only measured through pupils' academic achievements but also takes into consideration the development of pupils' sensory, language and emotional skills.
- Detailed planning maximises the effectiveness of teaching. Throughout the school, staff work together very effectively in teams to support learning. This underpins the rapid progress that is typical throughout the school.
- Pupils arrive at the school with a wide range of needs and abilities. Staff work together well to ensure that pupils benefit from good teaching, which supports them in developing both academic and social skills.
- Teachers' effective questioning in lessons challenges pupils well. Pupils' prompt answers reflect their positive engagement in learning. Even when pupils communicate non-verbally they are questioned, using learned communication strategies, and their good engagement and response is still expected. Teachers help pupils to become enthusiastic and resilient learners who understand that they will sometimes get things wrong. In this way, the most-able pupils in particular become effective and spirited learners.
- Effective communication is at the heart of successful teaching, whether it is verbal or non-verbal. Reading is promoted well and reinforced through the effective use of phonics (the sounds made by letters). The most-able pupils enjoy their daily opportunities to read for pleasure and this supports them in making good progress.
- Care is taken by staff to avoid stereotyping and the use of derogatory language. This is especially important since many pupils say they have suffered from this use of inappropriate language in the past. Current pupils insist it does not happen at Newbury Manor.
- The school accepts that further development of middle leadership roles would strengthen opportunities to promote reading, writing and mathematics across all subjects and lessons. In addition, there is an acceptance that the lack of an occupational therapist means that the sensory development of pupils is not currently maximised.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There are clear policies for first aid, providing effective support for pupils who are taken ill. In addition, detailed fire safety procedures contribute to creating a safe environment, as do the detailed risk assessments and health and safety arrangements that are regularly monitored by senior leaders.
- Pupils develop good levels of self-confidence and self-awareness during their time at the school. Their enthusiasm for learning is remarkable when considering that many were school refusers before they joined the school. Pupils are very proud of their school and are well aware of the changes for the better it has brought to their lives.
- The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is most strongly reflected in the huge amount of progress that pupils make socially. For example, they learn to take turns, collaborate, share and listen to the views and ideas of others, which also helps them develop their understanding of British

values.

- As pupils go through their secondary education, the school ensures that independent careers advice supports transition to the next phase of their learning. As a result, most pupils remain in education beyond Year 11 and enter the sixth form. The care taken by the school in this process is reflected in the detailed annual transition reviews in which the views of pupils and their parents are taken fully into account.
- Attendance is high because of pupils' positive engagement with learning and with the staff who develop such positive relationships with them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The difficulties encountered in behaviour management since the previous inspection have been dealt with effectively. Staff are gaining confidence and expertise in managing pupils' behaviour. However, there is now the need to embed this excellent practice throughout the school and with less experienced members of staff.
- When pupils first join the school, some demonstrate challenging behaviour. Staff quickly de-escalate issues as they start to arise, and they praise and reward pupils appropriately. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is improving, which is enabling them to achieve well and make good progress.
- The school helps pupils to appreciate that others may think and act differently to themselves. As pupils start to understand that their behaviour has a direct impact on others, they become much more able to get on well together, support each other and to build good friendships.
- Careful supervision of pupils at all times ensures bullying or negative behaviours are kept to a minimum and dealt with effectively when they do occasionally arise. Extremely effective liaison exists between residential and education staff and this ensures careful hand-over arrangements at each end of the school day.
- The school works hard to ensure that all pupils gain an understanding of the dangers of misusing the internet and social networking sites.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Great care is taken to ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are carefully understood when they first join the school. As a result, teachers focus on developing each pupil's capacity to learn so that they are helped to make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Staff regularly monitor and review pupils' progress information. This creates a clear whole-school picture of pupils' achievement, which shows students improving rapidly from their individual starting points.
- The most-able pupils not only re-engage with learning successfully, they go on to achieve success at GCSE level. Most go on to follow academic courses at the partner further education college.
- Disadvantaged pupils make faster progress compared with other pupils nationally.
- Teachers focus on developing pupils' core English and mathematical skills. For some pupils, the specific promotion of communication skills is central to their learning and overall success. This enables them to engage successfully in learning and become independent learners. However, there are times when these essential key skills are not promoted well enough. On these occasions, pupils' learning falters.
- Senior leaders analyse pupil performance to ensure that no group underperforms; for example, boys and girls do equally well.

Sixth form provision

is outstanding

- All of the independent school standards are met in relation to sixth form provision. The close and highly effective partnership with a local further education college, which itself was recently found to be outstanding by Ofsted, is at the heart of the exceptional provision.
- Staff of the two institutions work together extremely closely to ensure that high quality provision meets the needs of students. In return, the college is always represented at transition reviews at the school to ensure that students' needs can be fully met. The school's students are always taken to college by a designated member of the school's staff and supported well to cope in the college setting. Staff are

careful not to develop an over-reliance on their help, but instead to promote independence and life skills.

- Students follow a broad range of courses at school and go to college to focus on foundation level courses. Starting at Level 1, there are clear pathways to follow courses up to Level 3. A range of accreditation at an appropriate level can be gained, including BTEC and GCSE. Students' study programmes are as effectively tailored to their needs as those lower down the school, so that best possible outcomes can be achieved and students stretched to achieve their potential.
- Teachers take great care to ensure that the transition to college is smooth and that students are well prepared. Effective and independent careers advice from specialist staff at the college ensures that care and support is also provided for the transition into young adulthood at the end of a course.
- The success of provision is reflected in the 100% retention rate and current attendance of nearly 99% of all pupils.
- Students feel safe and supported to appreciate how they can keep themselves safe. The fact that they are so positive about spending a significant part of their week in a large mainstream college environment reflects the success of the provision.

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision are good

- Children and young people make good progress, both socially and emotionally, through the residential provision, which supports their learning effectively.
- Children and young people enjoy their residential experience. The activities on offer promote their extended learning throughout the day and they try new experiences in a safe environment.
- Many children and young people had negative experiences of school and learning before arriving at this setting. Families recognise how their children have been helped to develop skills in communication, manage their behaviour and grow in confidence.
- Parents are extremely positive about the impact and value of the residential provision, with comments such as 'the best school my child has ever been in'. Through collaborative working with residential staff, parents welcome the opportunities to use strategies practised in the residential provision at home.

Quality of care and support in the residential provision is good

- The introduction to residential care is planned sensitively and at the child's pace. Staff allow children to take their time. Parents report how well residential staff listen to children and young people and give them space to adjust to coping with a new situation.
- A strength of the residential provision is the commitment and enthusiasm of all staff. They place the well-being of children and young people at the centre of their practice. Staff are imaginative in finding ways to support children and young people with autism and learning disabilities to enable them to be successful.
- The furnishings and décor throughout are of high quality, the single en-suite bedrooms providing privacy. The three new en-suite bedrooms, currently not occupied, are of equal high quality. Lounge areas are comfortable spaces in which to play, watch television and do activities. There is insufficient storage space for cleaning appliances and bed-linen, which has led to the inappropriate use of the staff bathroom as a storage area.
- There are opportunities for pupils to take measured risks as part of growth and development. This includes activities such as swimming, cycling and trips out in the community.
- Children and young people are treated with dignity and respect. Residential staff are sensitive to individual needs and support them well. Cultural needs are met through diet, health care and the celebration of festivals. Comprehensive placement plans provide detailed guidance on individual needs.
- Residential staff work effectively with education, therapy and support staff and with families. Together they create a team focused on each child, providing stability and consistency to enable each child to flourish.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 131016 |
| Social care unique reference number | SC033016 |
| Inspection number | 10006135 |
| DfE registration number | 933/6195 |

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

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| Type of school | Residential special school for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders |
| School status | Independent |
| Age range of pupils | 7–19 years |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 23 |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 2 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Number of boarders on roll | 5 |
| Proprietor | Priory Education Services Ltd |
| Chair | Sophie Garner |
| Principal | Andy Holder |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | From £65,000 |
| Annual fees (boarders) | From £98,000 |
| Telephone number | 01373 814980 |
| Website | www.priorygroup.com |
| Email address | newburym Manor@priorygroup.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 4–5 July 2012 |

Information about this school

- Newbury Manor is a specialist day and residential school for up to 30 male and female pupils between the ages of seven and 19, with a maximum of five residential places. It first opened in 1996. All pupils have autistic spectrum disorders, often with additional complex needs.
- Of the current 23 pupils on roll, all have a statement of special educational needs, or an education, health and care plan. The majority are of White British background.
- Fifteen of the pupils are disadvantaged, in that they are known to qualify for free school meals, or are looked after by their local authority.
- The school has a service level agreement with Strode College to provide a range of sixth form courses. It currently uses no other alternative provision.
- The school does not enter any Key Stage 4 pupils early for external examinations.

- Since the last inspection of the school and residential facilities in 2012, the school has gone through major changes. It changed its name from Farleigh College in May 2013, when a new headteacher for the education provision was also appointed.
- The current Principal, overseeing the whole site, was appointed in January 2014. He took steps to deregister the residential provision from that date.
- The Department for Education (DfE) agreed a material change to the age range of the school, reducing school places from 65 to 30, in August 2014.
- A new Head of Care was appointed in January 2015, following the decision to completely revamp the residential facilities, which led to the creation of five single occupancy en-suite bedrooms. The department of education gave its consent for this new provision in April 2015 and the first residential places were taken up in June 2015.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place with one day's notice. Six lessons were observed, all jointly undertaken with the headteacher. The social care inspector spent time with children and young people and the staff in the residential facilities.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, headteacher, head and deputy head of care, the speech and language therapist, the referrals manager, the site services manager and the regional manager of Priory Education. Discussions were held with representatives of local authorities who place pupils at Newbury Manor, the school's improvement adviser, the educational psychologist with whom the school works and with the further education college which supports sixth form provision.
- The views of parents were gathered from the 15 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey, from six emails received from parents and from discussions with five parents at the school.
- A meeting was held with a social worker and a placement officer from local authorities who place pupils at the school so that the local authority perspective could be taken into account.
- Discussions were held with members of the school council and with members of the sixth form. Conversations with children and young people in residence, together with opportunities to talk with pupils during lessons also enabled inspectors to gather views. Pupils' work was looked at in lessons and a detailed scrutiny of a sample of work from across the school was undertaken. Case studies provided a picture of the wider provision in place to support pupils.
- The views of staff were gathered from their responses to the staff questionnaire and from discussions throughout the inspection with education and residential staff.
- The inspectors checked compliance with the independent school regulations and the national minimum standards for residential schools. They looked at a wide range of documentation in both the residential provision and the school. These included information on the progress and achievement of the pupils, planning and assessment, self-evaluation and improvement planning, and a range of policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding and the implementation of the government's Prevent strategy.
- During this inspection, the Department for Education asked inspectors to consider a material change to increase the number of places for day students from 25 to 27. In addition, they were asked to consider the school's request to use three further single occupancy en-suite bedrooms in order to increase the number of residential places from five to eight. The inspectors recommended to the Department for Education that the proposed changes to both provisions should be accepted, making the total approved capacity of the school 35 pupils.

Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Clare Davies

Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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