

Farney Close School

Whole School Local Offer



Updated April 2026 (v14)

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The SEN Information Report requires schools to provide information to the local authority under section 69 of the Children and Families Act 2014 for the purpose of inclusion in that authority's Local Offer.

Overview of the provision named Farney Close School.

Farney Close is a school that sits within the Farney Educational Trust, which is a registered Charity with the Charity Commission, registered number; 307024.

There is both a Board of Directors and a Board of Governors who oversee the running of the Trust. Both Boards ensure that the expectations of the Charity Commission are adhered to. The school's charitable status means that it is a non-profit making organisation and so all excess funds are used to develop the school's provision.

The Senior Leadership Team comprises of the Principal (Sara Hack), the Vice Principal (Ray Lau), the Head of Education (James Mills), the Head of Residential (Jason Maynard) and the Head of Behaviour and Attitude (Rebecca Clements).

Age range: 9 to 18 years. (National Curriculum Years 5 to 13)

Type of Placements: Day and Residential, Monday to Friday, 38 weeks a year. We offer 5-day residential placements, part boarding (Monday to Friday) and day placements. We have capacity for 100 children and young people.

Location: Single rural site off the A23, 5 miles outside of Haywards Heath in West Sussex.

Which Local Authorities place young people at Farney Close?

Farney Close is regularly used by Local Authorities across the south, southeast and east of England including Surrey, West Sussex, East Sussex, Brighton & Hove, Kent and Essex as well as by several London boroughs.

What does the school provide for young people?

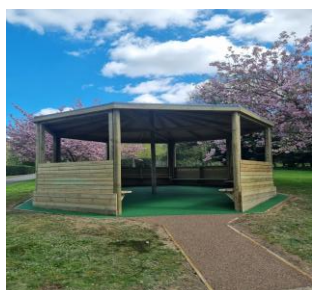
Farney Close provides education, care, social development and therapeutic support to young people who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and experience a range of needs including, but not exclusively:

- Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) (a sub-type of ADHD)
- Autism (ASC) (where challenging behaviours are the primary need)
- Conduct Disorder (CD)
- Dyslexia

- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)
- Speech and Language Difficulties including social communication and interaction.

We recognise that many conditions are applied to children and young people and are happy to discuss how we may be able to support individuals with differing needs.

At Farney Close School, we know the profound impact that the environment has on learning, and teachers carefully blend indoor and outdoor opportunities to tailor teaching to each individual, drawing on a diverse range of spaces such as our outdoor classroom, cinema room, extensive grounds, and the bespoke play equipment, climbing apparatus and outdoor gym resources, designed specifically for each key stage.



What specialist services are available at Farney Close School?

The school has a specialist staff team offering additional services on-site: A School Social Worker, an Adolescent Counsellor, an Art Therapist, Dyslexia Specialist and support team, Speech and Language therapist (SALT), an Occupational Therapist (OT), two therapy assistants (ELSA Trained), a Referrals and Inclusion Officer and a School Nurse. As of April 2026, we have a Drama Therapist joining this team which will be over seen by our newly appointed Head of Behaviour and Attitude.

Our SENCO and their team undertake thorough assessments of academic need when all children start at the school, and this is revisited regularly. Individual packages are prepared and presented to identified individuals.

From April 2026 a building dedicated to our therapy and SEN offer will be open.

Our School Social Worker works directly with all young people that are Looked After by their local Authority, are on a Child in Need Plan, a Child Protection Plan or an Early Help Plan.

Beyond all this we have a hugely experienced educational and care team who are all dedicated and committed to the work that we do. The majority of staff across the school have worked here for many years.

We have small class groups, a maximum of 8 students with a teacher and teaching assistant (TA) in each class. Each class has a dedicated TA, all of whom are ELSA trained and work with that class throughout the day, whilst teachers are subject specific. We run the full national curriculum but offer vocational skills for those interested in subjects such as catering, Hospitality, motor car maintenance, construction, and media.

At Farney Close, we believe in inclusion rather than exclusion, and our dedicated Inclusion Unit ensures that children who may otherwise face suspension, exclusion, or barriers to engagement are instead supported to remain in education, rebuild confidence, and experience a positive, carefully managed transition back into learning.

How are referrals made for a place at Farney Close?

Local Authorities normally make an initial application to the school to place a child that they believe may benefit from our provision. Parents, carers and advocates may contact the school directly requesting a visit or to talk to us about their child to ascertain whether our school might be suitable. In all cases, parents and carers are advised to correspond directly with their Local Authority.

The Referrals and Inclusion Officer deals with all referrals to the school. Upon receipt of a referral - and if we think we can successfully meet the young people's needs - he will meet with the child and their parents/carers either at their home or at the school, he will talk about the school and gain a clearer idea as to whether we would be the right placement. After this point if both parents/carers and the child, as well as the school all feel that we are likely to be the right provision we would arrange a visit to school and an assessment with our SENCO. Following this visit to Farney Close the Referrals and Inclusion Officer will meet with a Senior Leader and a decision will be made as to whether we would feel it appropriate to offer a half term's trial (all children come to us on a half terms trial initially).



For more information on our referral and admission process please contact us on 01444 881811 or by email: referrals@farneyclose.co.uk

How are decisions made about who can attend Farney Close?

Decisions about offering a place to a young person is made by one of the school's Senior Leadership team. They are supported in making these decisions by the Referrals and Inclusion Officer who assesses all referrals made to the school. If we are not able to offer a place, it is usually because:

- we have no vacancies in the respective year group
- we feel the applicant presents a level of risk to themselves or others beyond our ability to manage

- we feel that we do not have the specific expertise or range of resources to meet a child's needs.

Any decision made by the school can be explained and discussed in further detail.

Is there a difference between the service offered to our day pupils to that received by the residential pupils?

We ensure that our day pupils receive the same care and input that our residential pupils get. The day pupils have a dedicated Link Worker, who is the TA that works throughout the day with that Tutor group. Their focus is to support each day pupil at times that they may need some input above and beyond that which is offered by other members of our educational and care teams.



The Link Worker is there at the beginning and end of each day as well as being at hand throughout the school day. They will also ensure that parents, carers and other relevant adults (e.g. social workers etc) are kept fully informed of progress and relevant incidents.

What involvement can Parents and Carers expect once their child is placed at Farney Close?

The school places strong emphasis on communication with parents, carers and others who work with and support the young people. We view good communication and planning as crucial to a young person's progress and recognise the importance of us all working together for the best interests of the child. All young people have a dedicated Link Worker. These dedicated people are the primary source of contact for parents and carers. This provides opportunities for parent/carers to share information or concerns, which are quickly passed on to the right person in the school in order to provide a response. We report regularly to parents and carers on young peoples' attainment and progress. Parents and carers receive regular calls or/and emails, on young peoples' progress and direct phone enquiries following holiday periods.

The school provides curriculum and other information on a child's engagement in the life of the school for the purpose of annual reviews. Termly reports regarding subject attainment and social progress are sent home each term. Since September 2024 we have recorded school day social progress on a Social, Emotional Learning chart of which copies are sent home with the school reports. The residential pupils also have a care plan progress chart which is formatted in the same way.

We converse regularly with parents, carers and others as appropriate, in order to maintain a positive focus on young peoples' needs and progress and in order to clarify any plans to support them. Parent/carer consultation events are held each year for

each year group plus two other face2face events also take place. We also hold an Options evening for our Year 9 pupils.

Farney Close produces up to date information on its website about the general life of the school. Email is accessible through the site. Emails and Newsletters, keeping people updated with school news, are sent out on a regular basis.

Parents, carers and others working with the young people can arrange to visit the school. Requests for visits are addressed promptly to prevent delay. We encourage parents and carers to maintain regular phone contact with their child in the evening.

Is there a school uniform?

Yes. All children and young people, whether day or residential, are expected to follow our uniform policy throughout the school day. Wearing a school uniform gives a sense of community and helps to separate the school day from social time. The school provides the first sets of uniform tops and the PE kit. School shoes must be completely black and be able to be polished.



Are meals provided by the school?

Yes. The school day starts at 9.15am each day for our secondary pupils and 8.45am for our Primary children. The Primary pupils have breakfast on the Primary unit when they arrive.

We welcome secondary day pupils from 8.45am to give them chance to have breakfast, catch up with friends, spend time with key adults and have some "chill" time to prepare themselves before lessons start. The residential pupils have breakfast on their houses.



Lunch is eaten in the dining room. This is a hot main meal served by our catering team. Wednesdays are the day that we celebrate other cultures. We serve main meals at lunchtime to give everyone the chance to learn about foods eaten in other countries. Our day pupils usually leave before the evening meal. The residential pupils have tea on their houses. This is usually a "light" meal e.g. baguettes, sandwiches, wraps, salad, baked potatoes. Supper is also eaten on the residential houses.

What extra-curricular activities are offered by the school?

Farney Close offers a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for young people whether they are day or residential, providing them with new experiences and challenges that help to enhance their levels of confidence and self-esteem. We have a Forest School's team that develops programmes that take place both during the school day and during each evening. Since January 2025 we have moved from having 5 lessons a day in KS3 and KS4 to 6 lessons. The last lesson of the day, 'Lesson 6', is focussed on life skills which includes Forest Schools and a huge variety of subjects dependant on what year group you are in such as Photography, Brick therapy, Debate club, Driving Theory Lessons, Motor Mechanics, Construction, a variety of Sports, Cooking and Fishing. Year 10 all work to gaining their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award in this lesson whilst for year 11 lesson 6 is used as an opportunity for revision, as we move through the year.



In January 2025 we opened our new cinema room which is used throughout the day and in April 2025 our new Library was also opened.

KS2 and KS3 also have half a term of swimming lessons, at a local pool, each academic year with a particular focus on being safe in the water as well as learning to swim or increasing skills for those that are already swimmers.



There are three fishing lakes within the school grounds and a dedicated Forest Schools area. The school also has Archery on site, Mountain Biking and has a fully equipped Sports Hall. Locally the school uses places such as the Triangle Leisure Centre, the Dolphin Leisure Centre, the K2 Leisure Centre, Ardingly Reservoir, Hove Lagoon and local cinemas, bowling lanes, lazer quest etc as well as taking advantage of our close location to the beach and the south downs.

What level of training do the Staff at Farney Close School have and receive?

All teachers are fully qualified or are pursuing degree and/or Initial Teacher Training. Teachers teach subject specialisms; thus, the standard of teaching is high. An instructor teaches vocational courses. Care staff are qualified to at least a Diploma Level 3 in Residential Childcare. Two members of care staff have undertaken their Forest schools award. As a whole school we are moving towards being recognised as Trauma Informed.

Individual training is strongly encouraged, plus all staff receive regular training in a range of areas to support young people including:

- Child protection and safeguarding
- Trauma awareness
- First Aid

- Team Teach
- Health and Safety
- Fire Safety awareness
- a range of training to aid and assist continuing professional development of both the individual and teams.

How does the school identify young people's progress and/or additional needs?

Upon admission, young people pursue an initial screening process to assess current



attainment levels and identify any additional difficulties that may affect their learning and social understanding. This assessment provides a baseline from which we measure progress throughout the duration of a young person's stay. This is monitored throughout the year using a range of assessments covering all curriculum areas which confirm young people's progress.

Members of the care team work with the residential young people on a new young person's care plan before moving them onto a more individualised plan which are used to develop individual young persons' independence, skill and social understanding.

The Head of Education, with the support of the Principal and Vice Principal, manages the education programme. Care matters are managed by the Head of Residential with the support of the Principal.



The therapeutic team provides regular updates on their work with children young people, informing colleagues about possible emerging issues and reflecting on children and young people's progress through their therapeutic programmes.

How does the school match the curriculum to each young person's individual needs?

Subjects are taught by specialist teachers. All classes also have a teaching assistant present. Our Teaching Assistant have been ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) trained since November 2025.

Classes are small, with a maximum of eight young people per class but typically no more than six. Young people with additional learning difficulties are supported through programmes devised and delivered by our Dyslexic specialists, our Speech and Language Therapist and our Occupational Therapist.

Teachers are able and experienced in making work accessible to all children. Members of the therapeutic team advise and inform teaching and care colleagues of their work, helping to ensure that teaching strategies can support particular learning styles and attend to potential difficulties before these emerge as barriers to learning.

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum enabling young people in Key Stages 2 and 3 to access all national curriculum subjects.

In Key Stage 4, young people have a range of options in either academic or skills-based learning. These are taught to GCSE, Entry Level, and/or following a Lazer Skills course.

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How does Farney Close ensure that all young people are kept safe?

Safeguarding our young people threads throughout all aspects of life at Farney Close. We have a Safeguarding Team comprising of the Principal as the named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Head of Behaviour and Attitude is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL). The Vice Principal, Head of Education (CEOPS Ambassador), Head of Residential, School Social Worker, SENCO, School Nurse and Referral and Inclusion Officer are all also trained to DSL level and are part of the extended safeguarding team. All staff receive regular Safeguarding and Child Protection training. A robust recruitment process is in place and a detailed Safeguarding Policy guides staff in their everyday work with young people.

How does Farney Close promote the wellbeing of its young people?

The staff team seeks to encourage all young people to participate in school life, improve access to the curriculum, expand and extend their ability to learn and encourage young people to feel more positive about themselves as learners and their potential to succeed. If young people experience success, they can improve their confidence and boost their self-esteem.



The school's therapeutic team provides opportunities for young people to consider and reflect upon their circumstances, make and implement plans to bring about change, whilst constantly promoting their wellbeing.

The therapeutic team work hard to maintain a safe and comfortable environment. They look to provide firm and consistent boundaries, and they have clear expectations about young peoples' behaviour. They encourage young people to learn to trust responsible adults and respond to good guidance. There is strong communication between the therapeutic team and the teaching, care and learning support teams.

We have both a HUSH room and an Amber room to support children throughout the day. The HUSH provides an environment where children can regulate whilst the Amber room is a place for reflection. Both rooms have a trauma informed approach.



The School Nurse further enhances the wellbeing provision. We have a wellbeing centre where the Nurse is based and offers health and welfare attention, advice and care to all young people and members of staff. Beyond this we have a wellbeing team, comprising of adults throughout the school that look at how best to support the wellbeing of children, young people and Farney Close employees.

Does Farney Close provide for young people in years 12 and 13?

The school has developed a post 16 provision for residential children. Students enrol for courses at local FE colleges or learn in the school's post 16 learning area; they receive additional support, advice and supervision from a dedicated Learning Mentor at Farney Close, who accompanies them to college and provides support throughout their period of post-16 provision.



In addition, the school provides opportunities to develop social and communication skills via courses provided by specialists in the field, independent living skills and, where appropriate, work experience. Continuing therapeutic support is made available to our post 16 students.

How does the school prepare young people for moving on from Farney Close?

Our SEND team lead on preparing each child or young person for the next stage of their education or employment once leaving us.



An independent career advisor works with the school to offer further support and advice for children in year 10 to help them identify the path they wish to follow.

Young people receive support in their preparation for college or other post-16 destinations. Young people making visits to college open evenings within a reasonable geographical distance of the school can be accompanied by Link-Workers or other staff in order to help familiarise them. Young people leaving Farney Close are encouraged to maintain contact and the school will offer support and advice as young people begin to make the transition to young adulthood.

What is the level of accessibility of the school?



The school is located within a 32-acre site, with classrooms and residential Houses spread across the site.

Wheelchair access to the main house enables further access to the school dining room, several meeting rooms and bathrooms which are all situated on the ground floor.

There is no lift to the two upper floors of the main house, which accommodates some of the classrooms, but exterior rooms can be accessed by wheelchair. The vocational building has a lift to enable the first floor to be accessed. The Sports hall and multi-gym is also fully accessible.



Residential units are all ground floor accommodation and can be accessed via a wheelchair although a portable ramp may be required to navigate steps into some of the Houses.

What professional links does Farney Close have?

Farney Close is a member school of the National Association of Special Schools (NASS).

What is the most recent Ofsted outcome?

At our most recent Ofsted inspections, Farney Close was judged overall to be Good by Ofsted Education (June 2025), with *Outstanding* in all areas except the Quality of Education, which was judged *Good*. In addition, Farney Close, for the third consecutive inspection, was judged *Outstanding* in all areas by Ofsted Social Care (January 2026). The reports are available to read on our website and clearly reflect the journey that we are travelling.

Where can I find further information about Farney Close?

The school maintains a website which supplies all relevant information:

www.farneyclose.co.uk

Parents, carers, or other people working to support a child, can contact us on 01444 881811 to arrange a visit or to talk to the Principal, Vice Principal, Head of Residential, Head of Education, Head of Behaviour and Attitude, the School Social Worker or the Referrals and Inclusion Officer.

Anyone with a professional interest in our work are more than welcome to visit the school; please phone or email to make a mutually convenient time to do so.



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