

New Fosseway School

Bridge Learning Campus, Teyfant Road, Hartcliffe, Bristol, BS13 0RG

Inspection dates 5–6 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress. From a range of different starting points, pupils develop key skills in communication, literacy and mathematics.
- The sixth form is good. Pupils are well prepared for their future destinations.
- Teaching is usually good and some is outstanding.
- Pupils are cared for well. Those with the greatest needs show that they trust staff by calming and accepting help. Others say they are confident that any problems will be sorted out.
- Pupils with challenging behaviour receive very good support that leads to their behaviour improving.
- The headteacher and the new leadership team have ensured that pupils' learning is central to the vision for the school. They have brought about rapid improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements
- Governors know the school well. They offer effective challenge and support. They have a strong vision for the future.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Pupils are not always provided with enough opportunities to be fully independent in the way they learn and communicate.
- The curriculum does not always ensure that the pupils leave school with nationally accredited qualifications that show how well they can do things.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed every class and saw all teachers at work. In total, parts of 13 lessons were observed. The majority of observations were carried out with a member of the senior management team. There were a number of additional short visits to classrooms. Pupils' work was looked at.
- Inspectors examined data on pupils' progress, documents relating to the curriculum, safeguarding, minutes of governing body meetings, and records of behaviour and attendance.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body, a local authority representative and a group of pupils.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) but inspectors took account of the school's questionnaire to parents and carers.
- The opinions of staff were considered through the responses to 21 questionnaires.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Stephen McShane, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alan Jones

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- New Fosseway School provides education for pupils with severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and those with needs on the autistic spectrum.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The majority are of White British heritage. The proportion that speaks English as an additional language is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for those eligible for free school meals, those who are looked after and those with a parent in the armed services) is above average.
- New Fosseway and an all-through mainstream academy together form the Bridge Learning Campus.
- A small number of sixth form students follow courses at City of Bristol College.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2011. Two assistant headteachers took up post in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, ensuring that pupils always make the best progress they can, by:
 - support staff always using questions and guidance that focus on high expectations for pupils' learning
 - providing frequent opportunities for pupils to learn independently and take appropriate risks
 - providing symbols, sign and sensory activities that are specifically tailored to individual pupils' communication needs to promote high engagement
 - using on-going assessment throughout the lesson to check pupils' engagement and learning and teachers adapting the lesson accordingly.
- Ensure that there is a range of accredited courses on offer that captures the learning of pupils of different abilities and different interests.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school's data show that the majority of pupils make good progress over time and are on track to reach challenging targets.
- Pupils leave with skills necessary to go to a range of future placements that are suitable to their needs and future aspirations. In the sixth form, they make good progress in a range of different courses covering literacy and mathematics and preparation for adult life.
- The emphasis on the teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) to all pupils means that they make good progress in reading and writing. This is evident in on-going assessments, books and photographic evidence. Some children are mark-making using different pen and pencils for the first time, others are writing their own name. The most able are able to write short pieces of text that express their views and thoughts. Their writing is now correctly punctuated with a clear structure.
- Progress in mathematics is also good. For example, those pupils with the most significant need experience the different properties of a variety of shapes through sensory opportunities. Others use their knowledge of counting and measuring successfully in everyday situations.
- The school's analysis of pupils' progress shows that different groups of students make very similar progress. These groups include boys and girls, students from different minority ethnic backgrounds or those additionally supported through pupil premium funding.
- Pupils make considerable strides in their communication skills. Pupils are able to make choices or express their needs and emotions successfully through signs, symbols or developing a wider vocabulary and self-confidence.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school's records show that teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection and is now usually at least good. Observations and visits to classrooms during the inspection and an examination of pupils' work confirmed the school's judgements.
- There are good relationships between staff and pupils. Staff know pupils well. Lessons are well planned so that there is a clear structure. Suitable resources and activities, including a range of practical tasks, are available for pupils of different abilities, to support good progress.
- In the best teaching, teachers are tuned into the moods and responses of all the pupils. They amend and adapt the lessons accordingly. This results in high engagement and increased cooperation and communication from the pupils, resulting in excellent progress in learning.
- Strategies to improve communication are used in most lessons. Symbols and signing support writing and speech. Routines, song or particular smells are used to cue pupils into learning. When used effectively, these techniques improve engagement and attention. However, occasionally they add little, particularly when they are not tailored specifically to individual pupils' communication needs. Symbols are sometimes too small or complex to aid reading. Routines are carried out, but their effect on learning is minimal.
- Support staff are key to the best learning. With a minimum of fuss, they thoughtfully attend to any pupil's personal needs so that learning is not interrupted. In the best lessons, their questioning and guidance keep the child's focus on learning. They build on pupils' responses and challenge them further. They sensitively correct mistakes. Occasionally they intervene too quickly or provide an answer for the pupil rather than seeking opportunities to deepen learning.
- The best teaching in the school encourages pupils' independence. Pupils are actively helped to learn in different environments that bring new challenges either with new teachers, in different classrooms, classrooms in the mainstream school, or on college courses or work experiences. All these opportunities mean that pupils learn key lifeskills and how to adjust to different circumstances. In a few lessons, pupils are too passive and wait too long before they are asked

to join in.

- Where teaching is outstanding, staff use ongoing assessment to check students' understanding throughout the lesson and adapt work accordingly. However, this excellent practice is not yet widespread and, where teachers do not check on students' engagement and learning, their progress can slow down as a result.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are cared for very well. Comprehensive risk assessments and high staff supervision from vigilant adults make sure that pupils are kept safe. Those pupils spoken to say there is no bullying and the school's records confirm this. Pupils are confident that adults sort things out if there is a problem.
- Pupils respond well to direction and work well. Pupils accept the gentle and sensitive guidance from adults. Sometimes they are too passive in lessons.
- The school has a range of ways of celebrating pupil's achievements from 'stars of the week' to the end of year 'Prom' party. These strategies contribute well to improving the self-esteem of many pupils who are vulnerable.
- Pupils who experience considerable anxiety are offered relaxation, sensory resources, yoga, music and dance therapy. Their anxiety lessens and they are able to learn more effectively.
- Staff know pupils very well. There is a collaborative team approach that means that when a student's behaviour is challenging, different strategies are tried, monitored and evaluated. The school rightly prides itself on its flexibility. Changes are made to the environment, staffing and curriculum. This problem-solving approach, which involves other professionals when appropriate, is successful in bringing about improvements. There is a reduction in the need for physical interventions. Physical attacks by pupils are reduced. Pupils learn to manage their behaviours and frustrations more successfully, which has a considerable positive impact on their daily life and that of others.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders, including governors, responded robustly to the findings of the previous Ofsted inspection. The headteacher has ensured that pupils' learning and progress are always the key priorities. She demands the best and has taken firm action when it has been needed. She has made key appointments and now has a strong leadership team that has brought about significant improvements, particularly to teaching, learning and the curriculum. As a team, they are reflective and knowledgeable. New initiatives are tried, monitored and adapted to ensure they have a good impact on learning.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders have an in-depth view of the current quality of teaching. They have provided appropriate whole-school professional development or individual support to teachers, which have brought about improvements. Training has appropriately recognised the key role of support staff.
- The school promotes equal opportunities well. The improved assessment data enable senior leaders to check progress and ensure no groups slip behind. The school promotes a harmonious climate where difference is valued. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is developed well through the curriculum of the school and special events.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. There are good relationships with external agencies so responses to any child protection concerns or additional family support that is required are good.
- The school's evidence shows that the majority of parents and carers are happy with the school. The school is popular and there is a demand for places. The staff questionnaires and the very positive climate in the school indicate that staff morale is good.
- The curriculum is good. There is a clear focus on learning to communicate, read, write and learn

mathematics. Re-organising the school day has considerably increased the focus on these basic skills. The well-planned curriculum in the sixth form means that students systematically cover a range of courses with age-appropriate content and focus.

- The school has rightly recognised the need to extend the range of nationally accredited qualifications offered so that all learning can be captured and students are challenged even more. The opportunities that the school provides with its partners through work experience, college or mainstream school considerably enhances the curriculum offer and means it can be adapted to an individual's particular needs.
- The local authority provides good support and challenge. The adviser knows the school very well through regular meetings, analysis of data and evidence and frequent visits to classrooms. This is supplemented by information from colleagues in the special needs, finance and personnel departments in the local authority. Local authority advisers have delivered well-tailored support and training that have made a good contribution to the school's journey of improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Governors are in close contact with the school. They offer timely support and have made sure that they have the necessary knowledge and understanding to question and challenge the school about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. With the headteacher, they have ensured that teachers and support staff have appropriate targets and those teachers who are paid more have greater whole-school responsibilities. They have been creative so that they can reward staff with temporary promotions to provide professional development and strengthen leadership. They have a strong strategic vision for future developments and good understanding of immediate improvements necessary.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	109393
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	422508

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation special
Age range of pupils	7–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	27
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Button
Headteacher	Shan Wynne-Jones
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 February 2012
Telephone number	01179 030220
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