

Inspection of Fiveways Special School

Victoria Road, Yeovil, Somerset, BA21 5AZ

Inspection dates: 18 to 20 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils excel in all areas of their learning at Fiveways School. The curriculum enables and supports pupils to learn how to communicate their views and feelings exceptionally well. Consequently, pupils relish learning about a range of subjects. Children in the early years love listening to stories and respond with enthusiasm and joy. Students in the sixth form articulate their thoughts about the world around them very well.

Staff are very knowledgeable about the communication, learning and therapeutic needs of each pupil. Thus, each pupil, including children in the early years and students in the sixth form, learn an expertly designed curriculum that meets their specific needs. Pupils and their parents value the education provided by the school.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to form positive relationships and to participate in the world beyond school. Pupils have many well-planned opportunities to learn about life in Yeovil and throughout Somerset through visits to the shops and parks, travelling by rail and volunteering at Ham Hill. The school's vision, 'to live a good life now and in the future' is realised fully through the curriculum. Pupils, including children in the early years and sixth form students are exceptionally well prepared for living meaningful, purposeful lives.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school is highly ambitious for all pupils. It is aspirational for pupils' social, emotional and educational development. The vision of the school enables and supports pupils, including children in early years and students in the sixth form, to engage in the world beyond school exceptionally well.

Throughout the curriculum, pupils learn how to communicate their knowledge with impressive skill. Pupils learn through highly tailored approaches to 'read' the code of visual symbols accompanied by whole words and signing with precision and success. For example, children in the early years who are nonverbal are empowered to 'read' and articulate their thinking. They respond to texts with their own personal opinions. Sixth form students are supported to communicate their ambitions for the future. The early reading curriculum is very well structured and well taught. Pupils learn to make strong connections between letters and their corresponding sounds. The curriculum transforms the life chances of pupils at the school.

In the early years, children's physical development is prioritised throughout the curriculum. Children explore the world through a range of personalised activities that successfully stimulate their learning. Stories lie at the heart of the curriculum and are used effectively to support children's understanding and knowledge of the world around them. Children learn about number very well. Relationships between staff and children are nurturing and supportive. As a result, children flourish at the school.

Staff check what pupils know and do not know with precision. This ensures that the approach to learning for each pupil is bespoke and appropriate. Pupils learn how to navigate the world with success and confidence. For example, pupils continually review their learning about road safety through moving from one part of the school site to another. Sixth form students build upon their prior learning about life cycles through planting seeds and tending the garden. Consequently, pupils experience success in their learning which builds their self-esteem.

Sixth form students are extremely well prepared for life beyond school. For example, students gain valuable qualifications. Students also engage in the Duke of Edinburgh award which further develops their knowledge and confidence. Students participate in work experience and volunteering placements that meet their individual needs and interests. Students learn how to apply their knowledge of mathematics to real situations thereby preparing them very well for their futures.

Pupils learn extremely strong citizenship skills. Pupils engage in the democratic process of voting for the student council. The student council empowers pupils to make changes to the school such as improving the school dinners. Through the secure relationships with staff, pupils learn about the importance of kindness, respect and empathy. Pupils continually learn about the importance of consent in all areas of their lives.

Pupils' attitudes towards learning are extremely positive. Pupils have learned how to voice their feelings and manage their emotions. Pupils' attendance at school has improved. The school is vigilant about engaging with parents and carers to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

Governors are very knowledgeable about the school. They provide support and challenge in equal measure. They are passionate about the school's role in shaping the future lives of pupils. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working at the school and feel very well supported. Through continuous training, staff are very well equipped to meet the emotional, physical and sensory needs of each pupil.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	123944
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10322231
Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	13
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Malcolm Gulliver
Headteacher	Swavek Nowakiewicz
Website	www.fivewayschool.co.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	18 – 19 April 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Fiveways School is a special school catering for pupils from the ages of 4 to 19 years. It provides for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties.
- All pupils have education, health and care (EHC) plans.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and members of the leadership team.
- An inspector held discussions with the chair and members of the governing body.
- An inspector held discussions with the school improvement partner and the education officer from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, English and physical education. In each subject, inspectors met with senior and curriculum leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with staff to consider their views.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers who responded to the confidential questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. They evaluated the views of staff and pupils from the Ofsted online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mike Thomas

Ofsted Inspector

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