

# Inspection of Culverhill School

Kelston Close, Yate, Bristol BS37 8SZ

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Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Chris Walker. This school is part of the Enable Trust which means other people in the trust have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Andrew Buckton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Tubb.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Culverhill is a school where positivity, acceptance and friendship shine through. Staff ensure that each pupil is at the core of everything they do, reflecting the school's mantra of 'inspire, nurture, thrive'. The warm and nurturing relationships between staff and pupils sit at the heart of the school's success. Pupils are listened to. This develops a strong sense of community and keeps pupils safe. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and attend regularly.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in lessons and during social times. They demonstrate high levels of respect and kindness towards one another. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They accept each other's differences. Pupils go out of their way to help and support friends experiencing challenges.

Staff work tirelessly to ensure pupils' needs are met well from the moment they start school. Developing pupils' independence is carefully threaded throughout the curriculum. This consideration ensures pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the world beyond school.

Pupils relish the opportunity to take on positions of leadership and responsibility, such as school councillors and eco-warriors. They undertake these roles with pride. Pupils learn what it means to be active and responsible citizens.

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

The school and trust are aspirational for all pupils. They are unwavering in their determination to provide the very best learning experiences. Pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans are pivotal to curriculum development. Pathways are designed with precision to meet the needs of pupils. As a result, the school provides an outstanding curriculum that enables pupils to experience significant success academically, socially and emotionally. However, the school is not complacent in its continued drive for excellence. It leaves no stone unturned in finding ways to refine and tweak the already excellent provision.

Careers information, personal development and preparation for life are impressively intertwined within the academic subjects. This ensures that pupils develop the knowledge and skills they need to pursue their interests. There is no ceiling on pupils' aspirations. The school does all it can to encourage and develop pupils' ambitions. Careers events, work experience, visits and visitors are carefully planned and contribute to pupils being exceptionally well prepared for life beyond school.

Reading is central to the curriculum. The school aspires that all pupils will become, at the very least, functional readers. Staff are well trained in the teaching of phonics and early reading. Books are carefully chosen which excite pupils and match their phonic knowledge. Pupils understand the importance of reading. Consequently, pupils learn to read exceptionally well. They talk knowledgeably about their favourite authors and genres.

The development of pupils' independence is a priority. As part of their learning, pupils experience and develop a range of skills, such as travelling independently, home maintenance and cooking. In addition, pupils have the opportunity to go on residential trips and into the community. Pupils love running the regular coffee mornings, where they can practise money management and develop their communication and social skills further. All these activities help build pupils' employability and increase their independence.

Pupils consistently have positive attitudes and show commitment to their education. They demonstrate high levels of motivation and show resilience and determination when they face challenges. Pupils are respectful of everyone within the school and beyond.

Pupils' mental health and emotional well-being are of the utmost importance to the school. Staff, alongside a range of highly effective therapeutic provision, ensure pupils receive the right support at the right time. Pupils appreciate the 'worry box' to alert staff when they are anxious. They are confident that immediate action will be taken to resolve any worries they may have. Gus, the therapy dog, is a favourite visitor to the school, who helps pupils to relax and aids their ability to communicate their feelings.

Parents are overwhelmingly happy with the school. They appreciate the outstanding education and care their children receive.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146014
<b>Local authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288231
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Academy special converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	147
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Tubb
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Andrew Buckton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Walker
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.culverhillschool.org.uk">www.culverhillschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	18 and 19 October 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Culverhill School caters for pupils with a range of complex learning difficulties.
- All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school is part of Enable Trust.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement 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 discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers and staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, English, mathematics and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils across the school read to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. The inspectors met with school leaders to discuss and scrutinise how they respond to behaviour incidents and pupils' attendance.
- Inspectors considered key documentation, including school development plans and the school's self-evaluation.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The lead inspector spoke with trustees and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey, Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text replies. Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the day.

## Inspection team

Jen Southall, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Malcolm Willis

Ofsted Inspector

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