

Inspection of 3 Dimensions

Chardleigh House, Chardleigh Green, Wadeford, CHARD, Somerset TA20 3AJ

Inspection dates: 19 to 25 November 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils arrive each morning with enthusiasm. The atmosphere in classrooms and around corridors is vibrant and positive. Pupils are happy and safe in this inclusive place. The school's vision 'be friendly, be resilient, be happy, be successful' underpins the teaching of all pupils. This helps to create the respectful climate that permeates throughout the school.

All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Many pupils have faced significant challenges in their education before joining the school. Staff take time to understand each pupil's needs well. They use this knowledge effectively to build strong and trusting relationships with pupils. Their positive attitudes to learning and high aspirations reflect this. Pupils feel valued and know that they are appreciated and belong.

Opportunities to enrich pupils' experience of education and beyond are exceptional. The school tailors these to individual pupils and their interests. This includes the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, work experience in a local factory and visits to a donkey sanctuary. Pupils learn how to be responsible citizens through the charity events they organise. All this prepares pupils well for the next phase in their education, careers and training.

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

Typically, pupils have a history of poor attendance at their previous settings and have been out of school for long periods of time. This means that they often arrive with less knowledge than would be typical for their age. The school works effectively to support pupils to overcome any barriers to attendance. Staff use a range of assessments to identify pupils' starting points and specific therapeutic needs when they join. This information informs individual curriculum pathways for pupils. These pathways are well-matched to pupils' academic needs. As a result, pupils attend well and gain new knowledge and skills quickly.

The school has high aspirations for all pupils. The curriculum is ambitious and broad. The school supports many pupils in key stage 4 and 5 to achieve a range of suitable accredited qualifications. It has thought through most curriculum subjects to ensure that pupils develop a breadth of knowledge and skills. In these subjects, the sequence of learning has been considered carefully. Staff are clear about exactly what to teach and in what order. Opportunities to revisit and secure important knowledge into pupils' long-term memory are built within the curriculum. For example, in art and design, pupils learn how to use a paintbrush in order to create different effects in their work. Pupils use this knowledge and apply it to 3D art. Consequently, pupils achieve well. However, in a few curriculum areas, the school has not identified the essential knowledge it wants pupils to remember. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding in some areas of learning persist.

Reading is a priority for the school. It is clear that reading is the key to the curriculum. The school's programme for teaching early reading and phonics is well established. Staff have received training so that they deliver the phonics programme effectively. They use assessment information to address any gaps quickly. Books pupils read match the sounds they know. Older pupils read a broad range of literature from a wide range of authors. They develop comprehension knowledge well. Staff check pupils' understanding and, where needed, address misconceptions swiftly. As a result, pupils, including those in sixth form, make strong progress in their reading and comprehension skills.

The school prepares pupils exceptionally well for life beyond the school. The aim is to develop independent, aspirational and confident young people. This is the focus for the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. The school has structured the careers education to support pupils in making decisions about their future destinations and aspirations. Preparation for transition to local colleges and sixth-form providers starts early. This ensures that pupils are well prepared for their next steps. The school works closely with parents and carers to secure the best opportunity for pupils.

Pupils feel safe. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including when using technology. They also learn life skills, such as how to cross a road safely and prepare food. Through the PSHE curriculum, pupils learn about positive relationships and the importance of consent. Pupils know that fundamental British values are essential to ensure a fair and equitable world. They understand the impact that discrimination can have on individuals.

The school's leaders have a secure understanding of the independent school standards. The proprietor body provides a balance of challenge and support. It ensures that the school is compliant with the schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a few curriculum subjects, the school has not identified the essential knowledge pupils need to learn and by when. As a result, some gaps in pupils' knowledge remain. The school should ensure that all subjects are sequenced clearly to build pupils' subject-specific knowledge and address any historical gaps so that pupils' learning is secure in all subjects.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	134909
DfE registration number	933/6207
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10342051
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 25
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	54
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	7
Number of part-time pupils	16
Proprietor	P Bloom Ltd
Chair	Richard Power
Headteacher	Caroline Rolfe
Annual fees (day pupils)	£64,900 to £89,990
Telephone number	01460 65611
Website	www.3dimensions.org.uk
Email address	caroline@3dimensions.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 to 18 March 2022

Information about this school

- 3 Dimensions is an independent special school registered to provide education for pupils with autism. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school opened in 2005 and is currently registered for 64 pupils aged seven to 25 years of age. All pupils are placed at the school by their representative local authority.
- The school is owned by P Bloom Ltd and is part of the Options Autism Strand.
- There are currently 41 pupils on roll. Twenty-five pupils attend the school full time. This includes seven students of sixth-form age. There are no adult learners.
- The school operates from two sites. Some pupils are based at the Chardleigh site, TA20 3AJ. Older pupils are based at the Hummingbird site, TA20 1PB.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection started on 19 November. It was paused in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy. Inspectors returned on 25 November to complete the inspection.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with a representative from the proprietor body, a representative from the board of governors, the headteacher and other senior staff. They also held meetings with groups of staff and spoke with pupils.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- 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.

- To check the school's compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors carried out a range of activities, including meeting with leaders, a site walk to check the premises on both sites, looking at the content on the school's website and scrutinising the school's records and documentation.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, including free-text comments. There were no responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Wendy D'Arcy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Hilary Goddard

Ofsted Inspector

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