

Inspection of Linwood School

Alma Road, Winton, Bournemouth, Dorset BH9 1AJ

Inspection dates:	28 to 29 January 2025
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?

At Linwood school pupils, including children in the early years and sixth-form students, are happy, safe and nurtured with care. The school has very high aspirations for pupils to succeed. Across the different campuses, pupils are enabled and supported to learn extremely well. Consequently, they are very well prepared for their next steps.

Through the carefully constructed curriculum, pupils engage with learning a range of skills. The staff evaluate each pupil's learning needs with expertise. This results in highly bespoke approaches to the development of each pupil. For example, some pupils learn how to travel across the city by bus, while others study GCSEs in English and mathematics. This highly personalised approach to learning enables each pupil to flourish.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exceptional. Children in the early years learn the routines of school very well. Sixth-form students manage their independent learning with maturity.

Through very strong relationships with staff and each other, pupils learn the importance of friendship, kindness and consent. Throughout the curriculum, pupils learn and practise the concepts of individual liberty and democracy. They have many opportunities to communicate their ideas about the subjects they study.

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

The school places the social, emotional, physical and academic needs of each pupil at the heart of everything it does. The school's high expectations for each pupil to be a confident, well-rounded individual is evident across the curriculum. Staff continually check what pupils know and do not know to ensure that they build on their prior knowledge. The focus on communication is suitably broad and underpins pupils' learning in all areas. Staff expertly develop and support pupils' ability to articulate their views about the world around them. In the early years, children are immersed in a language-rich environment. Children learn to listen and engage with stories extremely well. In the sixth form, students voice their ideas about texts with impressive insight. Pupils are supported to understand the world around them through social stories.

Reading is prioritised in all areas of the curriculum. The early reading programme enables pupils to develop a range of reading skills. Staff are meticulous in ensuring that each pupil reads and understands progressively more complex language. For example, sixth-form students were observed knowledgeably identifying the language of opinion in a text. Dependent on the needs of pupils, they receive highly bespoke support. Pupils, including pupils who struggle, learn to read very well.

The school is a calm, harmonious learning environment in which pupils thrive. Through robust, personalised approaches, the school enables pupils, including children in the early years and sixth-form students, to regulate their emotional responses to the world around them. The strong relationships with staff and the expertly designed curriculum support

pupils' engagement with learning. The school successfully manages issues regarding attendance through bespoke approaches.

Sixth-form students are extremely positive about the opportunities to develop work-based learning. Through an impressive programme, students develop progressively stronger knowledge of different work environments. For example, students experience work in a supermarket, a hotel and a crafts shop as well as a range of other places. Across the school, from the early years, pupils are very well prepared for their adult lives. They learn to make food, tend to plants and sell them. They receive very strong guidance regarding careers, life skills and vocational opportunities. The school prepares pupils to lead meaningful, fruitful lives.

Pupils' personal development underpins the curriculum. The personal, social and health education programme is very well structured enabling pupils to learn about the world around them. Pupils, including sixth-form students, learn about the importance of healthy relationships. Exploring and experiencing the world beyond school informs pupils' learning about a range of subjects. For example, pupils routinely visit the local parks and shops to practise their social skills and develop their knowledge of the community.

Leaders' vision is overwhelmingly shared by staff. Leaders' expert knowledge of the range of pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) informs the continual development of the curriculum. Governors are very knowledgeable about the school and pose suitable scrutiny. Staff are very positive about the support for their workload and their well-being. They are proud to work at the school and value the ongoing training programme which enhances their work. Parents are overwhelmingly pleased with the provision at the school.

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	113961
Local authority	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
Inspection number	10344500
Type of school	Special
School category	Community Special School
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	410
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Lay
Headteacher	Gemma Talbot
Website	www.linwood.bournemouth.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 November 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- All pupils who attend the school have an education, health and care plan. Four local authorities fund these places.
- The school has six sites: Linwood campus in Winton, Springwood campus in West Howe, Summerwood campus in Charminster, Woodford campus based at Twynham Primary School, an industry-based programme, 'Classroom in the Heart of Industry' (CHI) and Littlewood campus based at Oakdale Junior School.
- The school has a training, support and advice service which provides outreach work and SEND-focused training locally.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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 the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, members of the leadership team and governors, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector held a teams call with education officers from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, English, personal, social and health education 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

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