

Inspection of Forestwood School

Buller Street, Bury, Lancashire BL8 2BS

Inspection dates: 4 to 6 February 2025

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

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?

Forestwood School is a haven for its pupils who flourish because of the care, kindness and support that they receive from staff. Pupils develop the confidence that they need to reconnect with their education where they may have found learning difficult in the past. They are well-mannered and they value the respectful relationships that they enjoy with staff. Pupils are happy and safe.

The school has high expectations of pupils' achievement, all of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff work closely with clinical professionals to provide pupils with the sensitive support that they need. As a result, most pupils aspire to come to school and relish the opportunities that staff provide for them. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils build strong friendships with their peers. As school counsellors, pupils make a positive contribution to the life of the school. For example, they have helped to design the outdoor space so that it meets their sensory needs. Pupils enjoy a range of opportunities to be creative such as through art projects and music.

Some pupils enjoy paid roles at the school. For example, as classroom assistants and librarians. They learn how to cook a range of healthy meals. The school prepares pupils well for adulthood.

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

The proprietor has established an environment at the school where everyone is valued. It has worked effectively with leaders at all levels to assure itself about the quality of education that pupils receive. The proprietor ensures that the school meets its statutory responsibilities under schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. It maintains a robust oversight of the independent school standards (the standards) to ensure that they are met consistently.

The proprietor ensures that pupils study an ambitious curriculum. Staff value the guidance that they receive from expert subject ambassadors. This has supported their workload. Pupils study a broad range of subjects that also focus on their specific needs, such as building their knowledge of English and mathematics. In the sixth form, the school provides students with access to a range of subject pathways that lead to appropriate qualifications. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

In most subjects, the school has thought carefully about the information that pupils should learn. In a few aspects of the curriculum, the school has not given sufficient thought to the important knowledge that pupils should learn. At times, staff do not know precisely what they should teach and when. Consequently, the activities that staff design do not help some pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of these subjects securely. When this happens, pupils are not suitably prepared to tackle more complex learning in the future.

Staff use their strong subject knowledge to make effective checks on what pupils know and remember. They ensure that pupils address any gaps that they may have in their learning successfully. As a result, pupils quickly build a strong sense of achievement. The praise that staff provide helps pupils to feel motivated by their studies.

The school accurately identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Staff are provided with clear guidance and training to support these pupils effectively. Typically, staff use this information well to ensure that pupils with SEND can learn the curriculum that the school has designed.

The school provides effective support to pupils that find reading difficult. For some pupils, and students in the sixth form, this includes help to catch up with gaps in their phonics knowledge. Most pupils become confident and fluent readers. Pupils benefit from the school's focus on technical vocabulary. This helps them to grasp more complicated concepts and to understand more clearly the nature of the specialist mental health support that they receive. Pupils read from books that help them to gain a wider understanding of the world. For example, pupils learn about the differences that may exist between people and about the impact of conflict on peoples' lives.

Staff provide well considered support to pupils that need help to manage their own behaviour. Most pupils respond well to this help. Typically, pupils engage positively with staff about the work that they are given. Staff expertly address the barriers that prevent pupils from attending school. This has helped to increase the rate of attendance for the majority of pupils.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development, including in the sixth form, helps them to become resilient and independent young people. They know how to keep themselves safe and healthy. The school's programme of careers education helps pupils to move on to meaningful destinations with success.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some aspects of the curriculum, the school has not given sufficient thought to the most important knowledge that pupils should learn. This means that staff sometimes lack clarity about the curriculum content they should teach. This hinders pupils building on their knowledge securely in these subjects. The proprietor should ensure that staff are clear about what pupils should learn so that they can help pupils to achieve as well as they should.

- At times, staff design activities that do not help pupils to develop sufficient depth of knowledge in the subjects that they study. This prevents some pupils from achieving as well as they could. The proprietor should ensure that it supports staff to design learning activities that help pupils to build their knowledge securely over time so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their lives.

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	142675
DfE registration number	351/6004
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10342109
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	12 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	23
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Cygnets Health Care Ltd
Chair	Stephen Firn
Headteacher	Wendy Webster
Annual fees (day pupils)	£37,440
Telephone number	01617627212
Website	www.cygnetsgroup.com/locations/cygnets-hospital-bury/forestwood-school/
Email address	wendywebster@cygnetshealth.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 to 11 November 2021

Information about this school

- The school provides education for pupils who have been admitted to Cygnet Bury Forestwood Hospital, which provides child and adolescent mental health services for young people aged 12 to 19 years. The school is registered to admit up to 44 pupils.
- The school is located at Buller Street, Bury, Lancashire BL8 2BS.
- Some pupils who attend the school have an education, health and care plan. The school caters mainly for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils have additional needs which include, but are not limited to, autism, sensory and physical needs, post-traumatic stress disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder.
- The school does not use 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.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with representatives of the proprietor body and the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics and personal, social, health and economic education. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited some lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed the curriculum plans and viewed pupils' work for some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss provision for pupils with SEND, the curriculum, assessment, pupils' behaviour and the provision for pupils' wider development.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's online survey for staff. Inspectors gathered the views of parents, staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

- 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.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school premises to check the suitability of the premises and accommodation against the relevant standards.
- Inspectors viewed a range of documentation that was provided by the school, including those related to the standards.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school life. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at break- and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gil Bourgade

Ofsted Inspector

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