

# Fiveways Special School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123944
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	328022
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judi Bedawi

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	60
Sixth form	14
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	3
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Malcolm Gulliver
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Collis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 October 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Victoria Road Yeovil BA21 5AZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01935 476227
<b>Fax number</b>	01935 411287

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<b>Age group</b>	4–19
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Fiveways School is designated for pupils and students with profound multiple learning difficulties and/or disabilities (PMLD), severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities (SLD) and increasingly complex additional needs such as communication, medical, behaviour and autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). All have statements of special educational need. Almost all pupils are White British with a very few from minority ethnic groups. There are more boys than girls. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum extends into Key Stage 1. Attainment on entry is exceptionally low. The standards achieved by pupils against national averages remain well below average due to their complex needs. In September 2007, the school gained specialist school communication and interaction status. A charitable trust fund provides additional resources and accommodation. The school gained the Healthy Schools award and the financial management standard (FMSIS) in 2007. A book week took place during inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Fiveways is an outstanding school and is at the cutting edge in providing innovative best practice for its children, pupils and students. The inspirational headteacher and his senior management team lead by innovative example, working alongside the enthusiastic and dedicated staff team. As a result, the quality of education and pupil achievement is excellent, with each pupil having the best possible learning and life experiences.

Parents and carers express extremely positive views of the school, typically describing it as an 'excellent', 'brilliant' or 'superb' school and saying, 'If we won the lottery tomorrow we would still send our child here; there is no better provision!'

All pupils love their school, arriving in the morning with huge smiles, eager for new discoveries and challenges. Their attendance is good, despite absence due to illness or hospital appointments. They know that eating well helps them to stay healthy and they feel very safe moving around the school site. Pupils' behaviour, attitudes, manners and relationships with each other are exemplary because adults meet their welfare needs so superbly. The 'family style' community is deeply embedded, sharing and celebrating together but supportive in overcoming any difficulties. The outcome is that every child blossoms, so that their personal development and growth of confidence, responsibility and independence is excellent.

Excellent teaching and learning are epitomised by extremely high expectations. Teachers and their assistants interact seamlessly, so that pupils are always fully included, whatever their ability or sensory needs. Lessons progress at a vibrant pace with much good humour, so that pupils are very highly motivated. Curriculum activities are thoroughly planned and adapted. Specialist status enables rapid development of expertise in different communication strategies. This has an impressive and direct impact on the outstanding progress made by pupils and students, relative to the wide complexity of their needs.

Pastoral care is outstanding with on-site medical support and speech and language therapy that, as far as is possible, removes learning barriers. Although use of communication is excellent, pupils' academic guidance is good. Assessment for learning is recognised by the school as an evolving process. There is some good practice in setting communication, learning and personal targets. However, they are not consistently broken down into measurable, clear 'bite size' chunks, so that all pupils know what they do well and how to improve, and the school can more closely track small but significant steps in pupils' progress.

Governance and management are impressive, totally focused on raising achievement and the best possible pupil outcomes. There is astute involvement in monitoring school performance, development and finances and in challenging senior leaders about school improvement. Partnerships, outreach work and inclusion are exceptionally strong. The school is a major player in developing and managing provision for pupils with PMLD, SLD and complex additional needs. Its capacity to improve is outstanding.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 1

Standards are well below the national average, but students' achievement and personal development are outstanding. Students study in refurbished houses within the school site, providing excellent opportunity for life skills. They become very responsible young adults with exceptionally mature, yet realistic, attitudes to life and learning. This is because extremely

skilled teaching and excellent shared leadership and management concentrate on raising student achievement, independence and support, with increasing award scheme development and accreditation network (ASDAN) modules awarded. In addition, a new mini-business enterprise is already inspiring students' entrepreneurial skills. The rich curriculum meets specific complex needs and students' own interests and aspirations through highly successful individual learning programmes. Impressive careers guidance, wider work-related learning opportunities and excellent community college links result in exceptionally high uptake of further education, residential work training and employment. Students talk animatedly about their own work experiences, for instance, at the Fleet Air Arm Museum. Sixth form parents say, 'We are receiving excellent support in preparing him for the next step in his education' and, 'We are sad she has to leave.'

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children get a wonderful start, thriving because they are cherished and nurtured so well. New arrivals are extremely settled and secure, with parents saying, 'We feel very happy to leave our child for the first time.' Children greatly enjoy lively daily routines to develop their social and communication skills, enabling them to 'learn how to learn', such as while choosing fruit at snack time being gently reminded to say 'please' and 'thank you' in the way easiest for them. Older children set impressive role models for behaviour, friendships and sharing success.

Although standards are still well below those expected for their age, children make outstanding gains from their exceptionally low starting points through EYFS and into Key Stage 1. This is due to high quality teaching with carefully individualised and flexible learning, and sensory and therapeutic programmes. Refined daily, these take excellent account of children's emotional health and well-being. Children enjoy sensory role-play, storytelling and outdoor learning. All staff know their children exceptionally well. Learning and play are pitched exactly right, so that children are highly motivated, delighting in exciting discoveries, such as when an older child counted '1, 2, 3, 4' unaided. Children's independence, concentration and ability to communicate and understand at their own level, improves most significantly, delighting parents and carers.

Leadership and management are outstanding. Accommodation is very well resourced. It is recognised that improved cover for all weather activities will further enhance learning and tactile sensory experiences. Safeguarding is robust with good policies, risk assessments and known key people. Daily assessments build the picture of children's progress in the EYFS profile, with parents kept fully informed. Ongoing monitoring and discussion ensure steadfast focus on successfully meeting children's very complex needs.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Develop the new assessment procedures for those with the most complex needs to ensure consistent best practice in identifying precise 'small steps' of learning, so that all pupils and students become even more aware of how to improve their own work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

From exceptionally low starting points, almost all pupils, including higher attainers and those with complex PMLD and SLD, make excellent progress. This is directly linked to specialist school impact in identifying and developing pupils' ability to communicate and express views, using

many sensory, visual, audio and language resources, such as signing. A very few pupils with extreme needs or regressive conditions do less well. Data analysis, tracking, photography and levelling are used very well to show progress. In rigorous pursuit of excellence, the school is embedding a new computer tracking system to offer a clearer overview of achievement. Ways to measure very small steps of progress made by pupils with particularly complex needs are being explored further.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils say, 'We love Fiveways School!' They arrive happy and keen to do their very best because school is a place where learning is fun, develops intense curiosity and builds pupils' basic skills and confidence exceptionally well. Book Week's magical celebration of 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' fired pupils' imagination as they tried so hard to help one teacher find the often-spotted life-size bear. Pupils' behaviour, mutual respect and delight in others' success are excellent, adding much to the vibrant 'feel' of the school. They really enjoy the rewards and awards system, celebrated in a special weekly assembly. They have real understanding of the need to stay healthy and feel very safe, quickly seeking readily available help or advice. Spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. Cultural development through use of music, drama and art is strong. Main faiths are celebrated, but the school is investigating ways to extend pupils' understanding of multicultural lifestyles. Involvement in the local and wider community is outstanding. Pupils have a positive school voice and participate in regular surveys. They learn with pupils and students, from and at other schools, gaining independence through many visits and residential experiences, all of which have a positive impact on pupils' preparation for life beyond school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teaching and teamwork between teachers and their assistants are inspirational, summed up in one parent's comment that 'the energy and creativity of teachers in engaging our children never ceases to amaze!' Pupils' enjoyment and involvement in lessons are impressively achieved through excellent relationships and motivational praise. Practical one-to-one or small group activities consolidate communication and basic language and number skills extremely well. Teachers' excellent understanding of pupils' diverse complex needs, thorough subject knowledge and skilful questioning allow great flexibility so that lessons crack on at a rapid pace and ensure outstanding pupil progress. An excellent example of this was seen in the exhilarating, dramatic and sensory retelling of the bear hunt story. Planning is thorough with teaching assistants fully involved, contributing very well to ongoing assessment.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

Impressively adapted and very broad learning, sensory and therapeutic provision is very successfully meeting pupils' increasingly complex individual needs. In the last year, specialist communication and interaction strategies have been most significantly enhancing pupils' ability to express themselves in school and at home. Drama, music, art, physical education, the environmental woodland walk, and themed weeks or days such as French Day all enthuse pupils.

Higher attainers clearly recall the 'Tiger who came to Tea' at last year's book week. Outstanding enrichment includes many out of school clubs and activities that extend to weekends and holidays, such as rebound therapy and residential trips. Work related learning, taster days and college courses continue to expand and contribute significantly to pupils' progress.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care and support offered to pupils and their families and carers are excellent. They allows pupils the freedom to learn and parents the security of immediate 'open door' advice on welfare, medical and communication matters through school based staff, including a parent advisor and school nurse. The school hosts multi-agency meetings involving a wide range of expertise. The needs of the most vulnerable pupils are very well met. Safeguarding and associated procedures are robust. Transition procedures are extremely effective. Academic guidance is good. Targets for communication, learning and personal development derive well from identified needs in pupils' individual education and/or behaviour plans. However, whilst there is some very good practice in setting explicit, clearly measurable targets, this is not consistent across the school. As a result, some pupils are not fully aware of what they do well, or how to improve aspects that they find hard.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The excellent partnership of headteacher, senior management team and staff means that the school eagerly adopts and pilots new initiatives focused on raising achievement to the highest level. Governors offer invaluable support and expertise, being fully involved in decisions, yet not hesitating to question and challenge. The school is moving forward rapidly, due to the excellent shared strategies and vision to enrich the education of pupils with PMLD and extremely complex needs.

The school's self-evaluation of its performance is accurate, including analysis and use of achievement data, and monitoring and review of areas for improvement. The excellent revised school development plan now extends over several years to include a clear remit for continued specialist goals. Opportunities for continued staff professional development are outstanding, enabling staff to hone their already impressive skills. As a result of specialist status, the school trains staff from many other local and wider settings in communication skills. Inclusion is a model of excellent practice. Pupils are fully included in all activities and through partnership work with a growing number of special and mainstream schools and colleges. Partnerships are vibrant, enhanced considerably by impressive school charitable fund-raising that is providing the new hydro pool and linked communication suite. As a result, community cohesion is excellent.

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**Annex A**

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	1	
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1	
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1	
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1	
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1	
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1	

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1	

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<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

**Annex B**

**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 October 2008

Hello Everyone,

Inspection of Fiveways School, Yeovil, BA21 5AZ

Chris and I really enjoyed meeting and talking to you. We can see how happy you are and how hard you work. Thank you for being so helpful.

We think that Mark, Louise and all the staff do an outstanding job in teaching and caring for you, so that you think learning is amazing and you do extremely well. We can see that you have many friends and lots of fun. Your behaviour, the way you care for each other and do as much as you can for yourselves are outstanding – well done! You say that you love your school and we do too!

We have asked your school to do one thing.

- To give each of you very clear learning goals so that you really know what you are good at and how to get even better at the things you find hard.

We know that you will learn so much and love your time at Fiveways. I really do hope that Cath found the Bear!

My very best wishes,

Judi Lead inspector