

Foxwood School

Seabrook Road, Hythe, CT21 5QH

Inspection dates 26–27 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher, senior team and governors lead the school outstandingly well. They enable all members of staff to contribute to the school's high-quality teaching and achievement.
- Middle leaders plan meticulously and ensure that classroom tasks are well organised and provide stimulating experiences for all pupils.
- Teachers and their teaching assistants provide a high level of expertise in meeting the needs of all pupils. Consequently, the quality of teaching is outstanding and makes a significant contribution to the progress of every pupil.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress from their very low starting points because of the expertise in teaching and detailed tracking of their progress.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make outstanding progress. This is also true of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Pupils at post-16 make excellent progress towards their accredited courses which prepare them well for life and living.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. They feel very safe in school and their level of attendance is high.
- Parents and carers are extremely pleased with the school's work to keep their children happy and safe.
- Governors ensure resources are extremely well allocated so that pupil premium funding has an excellent impact on the achievement of the eligible pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, 14 of which were joint observations with the headteacher and members of his senior team. In addition, the inspection team made shorter visits to lessons to focus on the aspects of literacy and numeracy across the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in class and attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the headteacher, subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire, which provides evidence of the opinions of parents and carers. However, inspectors took account of comments from parent surveys carried out by the school and spoke to the parent liaison worker. They also spoke to parents and carers as they brought their children to school.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including school improvement plans, data on pupils' current progress, pupils' written work, the governing body minutes and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Janev Mehmet, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maureen Coleman

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Foxwood is a special school for pupils between the ages of three and 19 years old who have profound and severe learning difficulties.
- A majority of pupils who attend the school are eligible for the pupil premium. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language.
- Pupils at post-16 are not entered for GCSE, but take another accredited course that prepares them for life and living.
- The school is part of a hard federation with another special school and has been involved in a new building project where staff from both federation schools have been working closely to prepare for the move in 2015.
- The school has an 'outreach team' of 17 teaching staff who work with the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils who need support with cognition and learning, communication and interaction, behaviour, and visual and hearing impairment. Thirty five primary schools, six secondary schools, and two pupil referral units benefit from this specialist service.
- The school is a centre for excellence for Early Years Foundation Stage education. It also has awards for work it carries out with the pupils in art and in movement to develop their dexterity and coordination.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the high expectations across the school for teaching, learning and behaviour are maintained and consolidated when moving into the school's new setting in 2015.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The achievement of pupils and their progress from their starting points are outstanding. This is because pupils make continuous rapid progress.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are promoted extremely well across the school. This is as a result of the excellent teaching of communication, reading, writing and mathematics and early cognitive skill development.
- Pupils enjoy reading and are provided with opportunities to role-play characters through drama activities. For example, pupils performed the play *Oliver* at a local school.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding make excellent progress in both English and mathematics. They do as well as their classmates in Key Stages 3 to 5, and better than their classmates in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils at post-16 make outstanding progress in their programmes that prepare them well for life after school. They visit local shops, take part in enterprise projects and are encouraged to do everyday activities on their own.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make excellent progress from their very low starting points because of the expertise and understanding of the children's needs. Every minute step of progress is built on at a steady pace and children grow and develop rapidly.
- Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and those who speak English as a second language make excellent progress because the tasks provided for them are well matched to their needs.
- The most able pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points because they are provided with specific activities that enable them to excel.
- Throughout the school there is clear evidence of the excellent progress being made by pupils because their needs are so well known and understood. All pupils are extremely well supported to fulfil their potential. As a result, they love coming to school and being part of the school community. Consequently, the school's work to promote equality of opportunity and diminish any discrimination is outstanding.
- Pupils' achievement is also reflected in their sporting opportunities. Pupils are constantly encouraged to develop their teamwork and communication skills through a programme of games and activities. They took part in the East Kent Pentathlon competition, and events linked to cycling and football.
- Pupils take part in drama and theatre productions as well as playing instruments and composing music. Through these activities they develop skills in responding to others and expressing their emotions. Most importantly, they are able to develop their individual talents and skills through being part of a choir, talent shows and art competitions.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding because all teachers and their teaching assistants use their expertise well in providing all pupils with the best opportunities for learning. As a result, pupils respond extremely well to lessons and are keen to improve.
- Pupils develop their skills in reading and writing quickly because teachers encourage pupils to think and work through games and activities that interest them. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils practised sounding out their letters through games and interactive conversations. Consequently, teaching of language, literacy and communication skills is of excellent quality and ensures that children learn to sound out letters confidently.
- Pupils improve their skills in mathematics because teachers and classroom assistants encourage problem-solving and investigating skills. Pupils in a post-16 class were asked to think about their enterprise project and whether or not the money they had raised covered the cost of the

materials. Pupils were keen to respond.

- Pupils regularly carry out tasks that enable them to make choices and work with others. They listen well and work collaboratively. For example, in a Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils with profound and multiple needs were able to contribute to a story facilitated by electronic resources. Their classmates were asked to indicate what they felt about the story. They were able to do this using coloured and specially marked cards to indicate their opinions.
- Teachers check the progress of pupils after every task to make sure each one reaches their potential and is able to move on to the next step. Teachers constantly provide clear verbal feedback to pupils about their achievement and encourage them to improve further.
- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and encourage individuals to respond to their work. Books that were looked at in Key Stage 1 showed that pupils colour in. As a result of the constant dialogue with their teachers, pupils have a good understanding of what they have done well.
- The most able pupils are provided with tasks that are more difficult than other pupils' work. They thrive on these opportunities, such as when Year 6 pupils of higher ability attended science lessons in the other school of the federation to carry out science experiments.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school community has a high level of respect and care for everyone in it. As a result, pupils behave extremely well at all times and are courteous towards each other and their teachers.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are extremely positive. In their lessons, they listen well to instructions and always take part with high expectations for achieving their tasks; a dance and movement lesson exemplified this. Pupils were so excited about moving to the music, some dressed in fancy bright clothes. They wanted to have a go, even when the moves were more difficult.
- Pupils contribute positively to their school. They take part in gardening, collective fund raising, and perform plays and choir concerts. More recently they have been celebrating India day with art, cooking and displays, and have been excited that one of their teachers is going to India to support pupils like themselves.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and are confident when talking about their school and their teachers. Pupils say there is hardly any bullying at their school, and they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They understand the different forms of bullying, for example the potential dangers of the internet, because the school raises awareness of this on a regular basis.
- Pupils are very keen to attend school and arrive promptly to lessons. Attendance is above the national average for schools similar to Foxwood. This is partly because of the diligent work by the parent liaison worker to maintain good attendance, and partly because the pupils love to attend. Parents and carers acknowledge that their children are very happy in school and feel safe.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The executive headteacher and his team lead the school outstandingly well. He empowers all staff to relentlessly meet the needs of pupils in order to maximise their full potential.
- Since the previous inspection the school has worked meticulously to implement excellent checking systems, as well as improve resources and opportunities to improve pupils' experiences across the school. These are now embedded in the school and contribute to the school's success.
- Leaders and managers reinforce high expectations for all staff and pupils. They ensure that

consistently high-quality teaching leads to outstanding achievement. Leaders model a positive approach to all staff and pupils.

- Middle leaders are at the core of driving high-quality practice in the classroom. Detailed planning is sharply focused on achieving the best outcomes for every individual pupil. Meticulous checks on pupils' progress lead to teachers supporting pupils' achievement extremely well.
- Additional funding is allocated effectively. It is used to provide one-to-one support for the pupils who are eligible. Consequently, the expertise applied to pupils' learning ensures that they achieve extremely well from their starting points.
- The curriculum is extremely well planned and organised by all teachers. Subjects and activities offered take full account of pupils' specific needs to enjoy and achieve. Pupils deepen their knowledge through activities that develop empathy, teamwork and an understanding of the world. Arts and crafts, music, drama, sports and gardening are all subjects that pupils enjoy and achieve well in. They also go on a range of school visits to local and national churches, parks and beaches. Recently pupils visited the theatre in London to watch the *The Lion King*. This was a significant experience for all the pupils.
- Sports funding is used extremely well to promote sports and healthy lifestyles. Pupils represent the school in boccia (a precision ball sport similar to bowls) and football competitions, and take part in a sports day and healthy picnic events. These opportunities help build pupils' health and physical development.
- Foxwood makes sure that its pupils experience all elements of spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning. It encourages cultural awareness and empathy through assemblies and religious studies lessons. Pupils enjoy using the sensory garden and sensory rooms where they can reflect on their emotions. They take part in the carol services, enterprise projects and residential visits. They gain an excellent understanding of countries around the world through 'global competitions' created by their teachers.
- The school works exceptionally well with other professionals and the wider community through its outreach work. It provides training and expertise for teachers across the local authority as well as working directly with pupils who have specific behavioural, profound and multiple needs. The school is also a centre for excellence for Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Safeguarding practices meet the statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides excellent support for the school. It has endorsed partnership working with other schools and has brokered specific support as and when the school has required it. The local authority provides a range of courses for staff at all levels and has carried out joint reviews with the headteacher to support school self-evaluation.
- The executive headteacher and his team have led the plans for a new building for the school. This has been done exceptionally well, and has involved parents and carers, pupils and teaching staff from both federated schools.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The Chair of the Governing Body has, in a short space of time, succeeded in galvanising a strong group of governors. He leads the governing body exceptionally well by using high-quality leadership skills to empower individuals. Consequently, all governors have an excellent understanding of their roles and their accountability. They regularly take part in training and have a strong understanding of the school's data, which they use when they visit lessons to check learning and progress. The executive headteacher is challenged regularly through questions linking to his comprehensive reports to the governing body. Governors build good rapport with parents and carers and celebrate pupils' successes. They ensure that teachers are suitably rewarded for good performance related to the quality of their teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors allocate pupil premium funding in the best interests of the pupils concerned. Consequently, these pupils make excellent progress from their starting points.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	119057
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	431032

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Hewson
Executive Headteacher	Neil Birch
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2012
Telephone number	0130 3261155
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