

Inspection of The White House School

170 Magna Road, Poole, Dorset BH21 3AP

Inspection dates: 17 to 19 April 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at The White House School. Many pupils have been out of education for some time. Through the well-structured curriculum, they flourish. Pupils learn how to manage their emotions through mindfulness lessons. Consequently, pupils are reflective and thoughtful.

Relationships between staff and pupils are very strong. Pupils learn the importance of healthy relationships and form firm friendships. They learn how to be empathetic to the needs of others. Pupils learn about helping others through the curriculum. For example, pupils in the school council gather the views of others to improve aspects of the school. For example, the school council worked with school leaders to set up a football goal.

Pupils' social, emotional and academic development is prioritised at the school. Approaches are personalised to the needs and interests of each pupil, which supports their engagement with learning. Pupils have opportunities for physical development through the climbing frame, swings and walking path. Pupils learn to play well together.

Most pupils are autistic and have social and emotional difficulties. Pupils are very positive about the impact of the school on their well-being. They learn to be part of the school community.

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

The school's vision to provide an effective curriculum that supports pupils' academic and social and emotional development is clear. Leaders, including the proprietor, have constructed a curriculum that helps pupils to learn a range of subjects. The school checks on pupils' educational and social and emotional development continuously to ensure that the most effective bespoke provision is in place. Teachers use a range of strategies to support pupils' learning. However, in a few subjects, learning is not yet fully adapted to meet the needs of pupils. In these subjects, pupils do not learn as effectively.

Therapeutic interventions such as speech and language therapy strengthen pupils' learning well. As a result, pupils are supported in learning to read. Pupils enjoy learning to read, and through the phonics programme many read well. The school prioritises reading and pupils listen to a breadth of stories. Supporting pupils' communication skills is a focus in all subject areas. Through a range of bespoke strategies, pupils are helped to articulate their views. However, leaders acknowledge that this is an area for further development. For example, some pupils with severe learning difficulties do not learn how to communicate their knowledge in depth.

Leaders and staff are knowledgeable about the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the school. The curriculum is tailored to meet their needs. For example, pupils with severe learning difficulties learn about their

responses to the world around them through their senses. Pupils were observed responding to a range of smells through well structured support. Pupils are supported to voice their responses about a range of topics orally which helps them to develop their writing. They enjoy writing their imaginative interpretations of the books that they are reading in lessons.

The school's work integrates the development of pupils' character with academic learning. Through the study of texts, pupils learn about the importance of kindness and fairness. The curriculum supports pupils to be well prepared for the world beyond school. For instance, visitors such as members of the fire brigade provide information about fire safety and different careers. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe.

Parents and carers are effusive about the transformative role of the school in their children's lives. They are very positive about the ways in which the school works closely with families in supporting pupils' academic and social and emotional development. One parent said, 'The school is like a light at the end of a tunnel.'

Leaders, including the proprietor, are very knowledgeable about the independent school standards. They ensure the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Staff are unanimously positive about working at the school. They are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some subjects, learning is not routinely adapted to enable pupils to learn as effectively as they do in other subjects. As a result, pupils do not build their knowledge as well in these subjects. The school should ensure that learning is adapted effectively to meet the bespoke needs of pupils in all subjects.
- Some pupils do not learn how to communicate their views and knowledge about the world in depth. As a result, they do not communicate their learning, their needs and interests in depth. The school should ensure that all pupils learn bespoke communication strategies so that they can articulate their thoughts and views in depth.

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	149536
DfE registration number	839/6015
Local authority	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
Inspection number	10299276
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	6 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	24
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Arc Schools Ltd
Chair	David Farley
Headteacher	Elle Vinall
Annual fees (day pupils)	£51,000
Telephone number	01202 985215
Website	www.thewhitehouseschool.org
Email address	reception@thewhitehouseschool.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The White House School is an independent special school catering for pupils from the age of six to 11. It provides education for pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties, alongside pupils with autism.
- All pupils have education, health and care plans.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school belongs to Arc Schools Ltd.

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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and members of the leadership team.
- An inspector held discussions with the proprietor and the chair of the school board of Arc Schools Ltd.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, early reading, mathematics and geography. 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.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jyotsna Paranjape

Ofsted Inspector

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