

# Fair Ways School

New Road, Swanwick, Southampton, Hampshire SO31 7HE

## Inspection dates

23–25 January 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Sixth form provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Senior leaders have built tenaciously on the early successes of the school. The director and headteacher lead with clarity, purpose and a strong desire to improve outcomes for pupils. As a result, staff work very effectively with the common purpose to turn the lives around for the pupils under their stewardship.
- Leaders' checks on the school's effectiveness are meticulous. They have implemented strong systems to track pupils' progress academically, socially and emotionally. Despite using this information very well to evaluate the school's many strengths, on rare occasions, leaders could be more analytical to bring about sharper improvement.
- Directors from the trust share leaders' very high standards and expectations. They hold leaders to account diligently.
- Pupils' excellent experience is complemented by a well-planned curriculum that meets pupils' individual needs exceptionally well. Consequently, pupils have opportunities to apply their learning to real-life contexts and have their sensory and emotional needs met extremely well.
- Other leaders add value to the effectiveness of the school. For example, the deputy headteachers maintain the effective day-to-day running of the two main sites very well.
- Teaching is highly effective. Staff know pupils exceptionally well because of precise and ongoing assessment of pupils' needs. They tailor lessons exceptionally well to engage pupils' interests. Consequently, pupils make rapid gains in their academic, personal and social development.
- Other adults, such as teaching assistants and therapy assistants, are highly skilled and are used effectively to support pupils' learning.
- There are very clear policies for managing pupils' complex behaviour. Staff are well trained and implement the school's policies to very good effect. Therefore, pupils learn to re-engage in learning. They develop new skills that help them to form meaningful friendships with their peers.
- Staff promote the emotional well-being, health and safety of pupils in all that they do. Pupils are very well cared for. Safeguarding arrangements are very effective.
- The 16 to19 study programmes are tailored to meet students' individual needs. Students are supported very effectively to develop skills and achieve qualifications. The great majority of students go on to succeed in sustained education, training or employment.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (the independent school standards) and associated requirements.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leaders' use of their comprehensive checks on the school's effectiveness by ensuring that their evaluations consistently focus on how provision can be improved further.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The director of education, ably supported by the headteacher and deputy headteachers, has successfully created a culture of very high expectations, where the life chances for very disaffected pupils are reversed and successfully improved. Leaders have taken determined and focused action since the time of the last inspection to improve provision. They have skilfully secured the highest commitment of staff, who work tirelessly to go the extra mile and meet every individual's needs. As a result, provision is highly effective and pupils are achieving increasingly improved outcomes.
- Leaders are highly focused on the individual needs of pupils, specialising by accommodating those who have social, emotional or mental-health needs on one site (near Swanwick), and those with autistic spectrum disorder on the other (in Totton). Consequently, each pupil benefits from a curriculum that is designed for their specific interests and needs. This helps to ensure that the primary focus, either on pupils' emotional development or their communication, is very successful. Pupils are set challenging targets in these areas. Teachers and therapists make a highly cohesive team and ensure that every part of the day is utilised to allow pupils to learn and apply the skills needed to meet their targets. For example, clearly defined parts of the day allow access to a trained counsellor for pupils who have social and emotional needs.
- Leaders' checks on the effectiveness of the school are extremely systematic and meticulous. Since the last inspection, leaders have implemented very precise systems to review pupils' progress academically and emotionally. Leaders also have strong systems for recording incidents of serious misbehaviour, and also when restraint has been necessary. As a result, teachers and other staff know where they need to invest their energy to bring about further improvement, and leaders hold them rigorously account to do so. However, on rare occasions, leaders are not as analytical as they could be to allow them to be even more strategic. Leaders, rightly, recognise the need to improve in this area as the school continues to grow.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils exceptionally well. Leaders ensure that pupils' experiences are highly personalised. As well as a wide variety of subjects, pupils benefit from tailored therapy sessions. Pupils make rapid and sustained progress in a wide range of areas, particularly art, mathematics and science, as well as in their health and emotional well-being. Wider opportunities are drawn into the curriculum, which broaden and enthuse pupils in their learning and help prepare them for the next stage in their education, employment or training. For example, the car workshop that has been developed at one of the trust's offices is highly valued by some students in the sixth form.
- Although the standard of education is very high, leaders have extended and improved provision further. For example, the addition of outdoor learning experiences since the arrival of the headteacher and the broadening of options in the creative subjects have helped pupils across the school to explore wider career pathways. Independent careers advice supports pupils to focus on programmes of study through which they can experience success. The advice they are given is supported well by curriculum opportunities to explore meaningful employment and link their learning to the real world.
- Middle leaders make a significant contribution to leadership and management. They have

clearly defined roles, and support leaders to identify where pupils are making the best progress and where extra attention is needed. Middle leaders rightly focus their time and energy on their areas of responsibility with energy and enthusiasm. For example, the therapeutic lead on the Swanwick site knows every individual and their behaviour plans exceptionally well. She uses this information to plan effective strategies that allow pupils to access extra therapy sessions. She then evaluates the impact of amendments to pupils' experiences thoroughly to ensure that pupils make more rapid progress in their self-regulation whenever possible. As a result, pupils' behaviour improves over time.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. Pupils are encouraged to show respect for each other and to treat others equally. Leaders encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions when things go wrong. Pupils increasingly take responsibility for their actions. Many learn to make meaningful friendships with their peers for the first time or after protracted periods in social isolation due to being excluded from their previous schools. Consequently, pupils are highly appreciative of the work that is done for them by staff. They recognise that they are valued as individuals, and strive to repay the faith that is shown in them. Pupils who were spoken to believe that there is a strong sense of community because positive relationships are at the heart of the school's ethos.

## **Governance**

- Governance arrangements are robust and delivered through the mechanisms of the Fair Ways Trust. The director of education reports regularly to the board of directors, who challenge and support leaders diligently to be more aspirational for pupils. Directors receive comprehensive information about the school, covering many important elements, including pupils' progress, incidents of poor behaviour and records of restraint. Directors use this information exceptionally well to ask searching questions of leaders and insist on the highest standards.
- Directors oversee performance management arrangements with rigour to address any weak performance. They follow up on areas of interest diligently, consistently looking for evidence that provision is improving and that the outcomes achieved by pupils match their own high aspirations.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are extremely effective and managed very well. There are clear lines of responsibility at the school so that all staff know who to go to if they are concerned about the welfare of a pupil. There are appropriate arrangements to ensure that a senior leader who has completed the designated safeguarding lead training is available to staff on each site. All staff are carefully checked for their suitability to work at the school, and records are kept in a way that meets statutory requirements.
- Leaders, and in particular the headteacher and director for education, work very effectively with other agencies. When necessary, they are willing to take tough decisions and tenaciously follow up any concerns with colleagues from other agencies.
- Pupils' welfare is paramount for all staff because of the detail and robustness of policies promoted by leaders. These policies and procedures strictly follow the best safeguarding

practice guidelines and are consistently implemented. Staff fully promote a culture where pupils' safety is the priority.

- Staff receive comprehensive training on a broad range of safeguarding topics, including online safety, radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. They have a deep understanding of pupils' vulnerabilities and of reporting procedures within the school and beyond. Any allegations against staff or concerns about any pupil's safety are appropriately shared with the local council's designated safeguarding lead on the rare occasions this has been necessary.
- Excellent health and safety practices, including the arrangements for fire prevention, ensure that the physical environment is very well managed and secure at all times. The procedure for dealing with pupils' medication is comprehensive and robustly implemented.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Outstanding**

- Teaching is organised in an extremely effective and bespoke way. Teachers are highly skilled and specialised according to the needs of the pupils that they teach. For example, those who work with pupils whose primary need is social, emotional or mental health deliver lessons that meet their emotional needs, as well as what pupils need to learn academically. Similarly, those who work with pupils diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder use highly specialised approaches to help pupils engage successfully in their individual programmes of study. In both settings, teachers focus on what they know interests and motivates pupils exceedingly well. This helps to ensure that lessons are meaningful, and helps pupils make excellent progress towards key life and work skills as they learn independence and self-regulation.
- Pupils profit from very well-planned and varied programmes of intensive one-to-one sessions with teachers. All staff are highly qualified and have excellent subject knowledge. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils' programmes of study build on the targets set as part of their termly individual education plans.
- Teaching is delivered enthusiastically and sensitively to meet pupils' interests and responses. Teachers, teaching assistants and therapists know pupils particularly well because of the effective use of assessment. Staff carefully challenge pupils to build on what they can already do. Pupils strive to do better because of the effective use of praise and what motivates individual pupils. Subsequently, over time, pupils develop greater skills of independence and self-motivation.
- Teachers, teaching assistants and therapists on the Totton site are highly skilled in their use of tools to aid communication, such as pictures and symbols. Staff use a consistent approach to using intonation and limited language to help pupils understand language at their own pace. Throughout sessions, no opportunities are missed to allow pupils to practise the skills identified as needing improvement through the annual review process. Similarly, those on the Swanwick site ensure that learning opportunities allow time to reflect upon how pupils are feeling and why. Pupils are encouraged to express their feelings more readily, ask questions and participate in difficult conversations when appropriate. Consequently, pupils across the school experience lessons that support them to make rapid progress in their individual areas of need.
- Classrooms are appropriately organised according to the age and abilities of the pupils.

On the Totton site, individual workstations are used very effectively to engage pupils in their learning. Subject-specific classrooms for those on the Swanwick site are very well resourced and support pupils' learning experiences very well. For example, the science classroom allows pupils to engage in practical experiments and improve their knowledge and understanding of the world.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. This is because pupils receive highly individualised care and support that address their holistic needs to very good effect. Pupils feel understood and valued. They say that staff know them well. This has a positive impact on their self-esteem and is effective in reducing anxiety. As a result, pupils become happier, calmer and more able to focus on their learning and development.
- Excellent therapeutic work underpins outstanding care. A strong and bespoke therapeutic team for each site enables staff to have an excellent understanding of pupils' individual needs. Consequently, staff know pupils' personal therapy needs, and cater provision to meet them exceptionally well. For example, pupils with autism spectrum disorder have their sensory needs provided for during lessons, as well as during timetabled sessions in the sensory rooms.
- Staff motivate pupils to develop healthier lifestyles and independence. They provide ample opportunities for pupils to engage in a broad range of extra-curricular activities, both on each school site and in the local and wider communities. Catering studies are a central element to the curriculum for pupils across both sites. Pupils learn to prepare healthy foods which they then share with staff and each pupil on the site where they attend. This helps pupils to understand healthy choices and develop skills of independence and a sense of self-worth.

### Behaviour

- The management of pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The school's policies focus on promoting acceptable, positive behaviours, while recognising and celebrating pupils' unique qualities. As a result, pupils show very positive attitudes to their lessons, during which they are typically calm and purposeful. Pupils' attendance significantly improves, often from a low starting point, because they learn over time to re-engage in their learning and enjoy school.
- Leaders have developed effective practices to manage the bespoke challenges of pupils' behaviour according to their needs. Pupils' individual positive-behaviour plans are managed very effectively. Staff apply them consistently. Leaders ensure that they are freely available to support staff at times when pupils' behaviour is particularly challenging. On the Swanwick site, access to a trained counsellor allows pupils to explore their feelings and develop a better understanding of themselves. Consequently, pupils settle quickly into the school and make rapid improvements in the management of their own behaviour.
- When pupils experience times of crisis, there are clear policies for staff to follow. Staff do so professionally and adeptly. All staff have received appropriate training to support de-

escalation and the use of restraint when absolutely necessary. Records of all incidents are kept diligently by leaders. They are used to adapt what is offered to young people effectively. Consequently, pupils' behaviour consistently improves over time.

- On the Totton site, some pupils have highly challenging behaviour because of their communication and sensory needs. Staff monitor and review what may be triggering unwanted behaviours very carefully. They then analyse the behaviour so that they can adapt provision to better meet the needs of pupils, for example by securing extra access to the sensory rooms. As a result, pupils often make rapid improvements in their behaviour, which are sustained over time.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **Outstanding**

- Due to their needs, pupils often join the school working at levels that are much lower than are typical. Furthermore, many have had significantly disrupted experiences, having been repeatedly excluded from previous schools or educated for long periods at home. Nevertheless, staff make excellent use of assessment to find out where pupils' strengths and weaknesses lie, as well as their interests. They use this information very effectively to plan tailored programmes of study. This helps to ensure that pupils make rapid gains in their learning from the moment they start at the school.
- Improving pupils' outcomes underpins the ambitious work of leaders. Therefore, staff focus relentlessly on securing excellent progress in pupils' academic, social and communication development. Teachers, therapists and teaching assistants share leaders' very high expectations and use assessment effectively to plan programmes of study that build on what pupils can already do. Consequently, pupils make substantial progress, personally and academically, in lessons and over time.
- Following a period of transition when they start at the school, pupils become much more effective as learners. Consequently, the future opportunities that become available to them improve significantly. Due to the high expectations of leaders and staff and the bespoke programmes of study available to them, pupils make rapid progress across a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics, and their communication. Furthermore, pupils make rapid progress towards the targets within their education, health and care plans or statements of special educational needs.
- Leaders have worked hard to secure the best education for pupils when they come to the school. For example, they have extended the qualifications that are available for pupils to study. Therefore, pupils leave the school with at least one qualification, and often with many, at a level that is appropriate to their abilities. For example, some gain GCSEs, while others gain access to vocational qualifications that allow them to go on to study courses in areas of their own interest.
- By the time students leave the sixth form, not only have they made exceptional progress, particularly given their starting points, but they are also significantly better prepared for the next stage in their lives.

### **Sixth form provision**

### **Outstanding**

- Provision in the sixth form is equally effective as it is across the rest of the school. This is

because the curriculum is built on the same key principles. Bespoke plans for students ensure that useful and varied work experiences and careers advice dovetail seamlessly with lessons. Students' studies relate closely to their needs and aspirations, as reflected in their annual review paperwork.

- Students are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment. School leaders help students develop the skills to live an independent and fulfilling life. Leaders have made excellent use of the locality to help students apply what they are studying to real-life contexts. Students speak positively about how they are supported to make progress in their studies.
- Students enjoy their 16 to 19 study programmes, behave exceptionally well and attend regularly. This is because the curriculum is personalised and built around their needs and interests.
- The school's close engagement with a number of colleges, businesses and enterprises enhances students' chances of getting positive work placement experience, apprenticeships or employment. All students from the previous three years have moved on to secure meaningful and sustained placements in the next stage of their education, employment or training.

## School details

Unique reference number	135240
DfE registration number	850/6088
Inspection number	10033952

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 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 sixth form	6
Proprietor	Fairways Care (UK) Ltd
Director of Education	Gareth Webb
Headteacher	Darren Male
Annual fees (day pupils)	£63,349.52–£85,389.20
Telephone number	01489 579 011
Website	<a href="http://www.fairways.co/education">www.fairways.co/education</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@fairways-school.org">admin@fairways-school.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	12–14 March 2014

## Information about this school

- Fairways is an independent co-educational special school for students aged from 11 to 19 years.
- The school is registered for up to 40 students. At the time of the inspection, there were 38 students on roll.
- All of the students attending the school have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan and have been identified as either having emotional,

behavioural and social difficulties or autistic spectrum disorder. The students come from a variety of home backgrounds, including foster care, and some are looked after by their local authority.

- The school aims to ensure that 'No-one is disadvantaged educationally and that education provision is a continuous process. Students are encouraged to achieve, whatever their abilities, and are confident in their abilities and those achievements.'
- The school is based on two main sites. The provision for social, emotional and mental-health needs is at a site situated near Swanwick in Hampshire and the provision for those with an autistic spectrum disorder is at a site in Totton, Southampton.
- The school uses facilities away from school for sports, vocational training and work experience. There are established links with a number of local colleges, including Highbury College, South Downs College and Fareham College.
- The school was last inspected in March 2014.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 10 lessons across both sites, all jointly with a member of the senior leadership team. Pupils' behaviour during lessons, as well as in and around the school, was observed.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, those who have responsibility for safeguarding and the director of education from the trust. Discussions were held with pupils during visits to lessons.
- The inspector analysed school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, reports provided by external advisers, annual statement information and tracking information about pupils' achievement, attendance, behaviour and exclusions.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures were scrutinised, including correspondence between the school and the local authority safeguarding board. Records linked to work with other agencies were reviewed, as well as those relating to how the school has responded to complaints.
- The inspector reviewed 54 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire. There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, for these to be reviewed because there were fewer than 10 of them. However, the inspector considered responses from parents and carers to the school's own questionnaires and parents' contributions to annual reviews.

## Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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