

Most inclusive practice across a school

Foxwood School, Hythe

Judges comments:

Well evidenced and made it clear how the school go above and beyond. It was clear from the start that the school encourage individuality and recognise achievement for the individual, not just evidencing the impact for the children, but also guiding outreach too.

Entry:

Foxwood is an all age school (3-19 years) for pupils with Profound and Severe Learning Difficulties, based in Hythe, Kent. Our Federated partner school, Highview has a designation for Complex needs and is based in Folkestone, Kent. Our pupils have a wide range of disabilities, including, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Physical and Sensory impairments.

Learning is personalised to meet the needs of individual pupils with an emphasis on Communication, Independence and Social skills. The school forms part of a “hard” federation with another special school, Highview in Folkestone, and there is a joint Governing Body. We are currently waiting a new build.

The School has an outreach team of 17 teaching staff who provide advice and support for pupils who have difficulties 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 advice.

The school is a centre of excellence for Early Years Foundation Stage education. Pupils at post 16 are not usually entered for GCSE, but take other accredited courses, such as OCR Life and Living Skills, that will prepare them for post school life.

We offer a wide range of educational experiences promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, emotional and physical development within a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum framework, in accordance with the National Curriculum; which maximises achievement within a safe and appropriate learning environment and provides pupils with an education relevant to their personal needs and appropriate to the world outside of the classroom.

We encourage personal autonomy, a sense of responsibility and the ability to make informed choices and decisions which leads to a more independent lifestyle. We develop self-esteem and personal worth in order to become a confident contributing

member of the community. The recent Ofsted report (June 2014) noted that “It also recognises that the school work to promote equality of opportunity and diminish and discrimination is outstanding.”

The school has Inclusion and Equal Opportunity Policies which are in place. Differentiation according to individual needs is at the heart of our provision; Individual achievements are shared at awards/ certificates events including awards evenings, music sport and art events etc.

We have a wide variety of Quality Marks the most recent being the Inclusion Quality Mark and the Gold award for Continuing Professional Learning Development.

Where pupils have specific medical/ health needs they may be placed in a class where these needs can be best met (e.g. availability of hoist and /or specific physiotherapy equipment). There are opportunities for internal inclusion and pupils from different classes join together for music, creative, physical and social activities.

Pupils have access to a wide range of resources across the school and staff work closely with other professionals such as OT's, SALT and Physiotherapists to ensure a truly personalised curriculum which is based on individual need.

All achievement is valued and opportunities to celebrate achievement are normal practice in the school. Communication, oral and written, is effective in inclusive learning and teaching including parent needs for translation and interpretation, we use different systems around school – Braille, Makaton, Objects of reference, Eye gaze systems, PECS etc. ICT effectively supports communication with its computers, IWB, iPads, touchscreen ‘tables’, laptops, eye gaze technology, variety of voice output communication devices and the use of a variety of connective switches. Classes and certain public spaces have signs (including symbols) advising pupils who they can ask for help/support. All pupils have keyworkers within their class team to support them, ‘be their voice’ and facilitate their personal care and ensure their wellbeing, as necessary.

Bi-termly newsletters for parents; school website; displays of pupils’ work in each class and in general areas of the school; press reports of pupil achievements, awards, presentations and special occasions all reflect diversity of needs and abilities of pupils.

The behavior of pupils is outstanding. Pupils contribute positively to their school. They take part in gardening, collective fund raising, and perform plays and choir concerts. More recently they have celebrated 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.

Considering the required high ratio of staff to pupils, pupil medical requirements and the necessary home-school-home travel arrangements, the provision of out of class activities is difficult to maintain. However, there is a popular football team, choir and film club representing a wide range. We do however offer Residential trips, Theatre trips and School plays

Learners are regularly consulted about school issues, with outcomes considered and addressed.

The School Council Meets regularly, with varying agendas (e.g. to set/consider school rules, to discuss wishes for new build, to take part in interviewing potential new TAs/teachers)

All pupils are extremely well supported to fulfil their potential; progress from their starting point is outstanding. 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. 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 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.

Learning and Teaching plans and schemes of work are adapted to local (individual) needs. Effective planning leads to clear outcomes for each pupil in every lesson. Learner progress is monitored within each lesson and lessons are modified to developing needs, with learners contributing positively in lessons according to their ability.

The school have recently appointed a new multi-agency team to support learners and their parents. The Achievement for All has increased parental engagement through the use of structured conversations. Regular parent information/consultation meetings have taken place on a frequent basis regarding the new build.

EYFS – parents are invited to weekly “Stay and Play” sessions where they can get to know their child's environment and staff in an informal way.

The school is a member of the Kent Association of Special Schools. This group engages in school to school support, including leadership development, governance

and pupil progress. The aim is to strengthen our ability to work collaboratively and co-operatively to enable our schools to grow, develop and improve together.

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.