

Inspection of Fromefield Manor School

North Parade, Frome, Somerset BA11 2AB

Inspection dates: 29 April to 1 May 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils have had unsuccessful placements or lengthy absences out of education before they arrive at Fromefield Manor School. In a short space of time, pupils start to thrive. Staff take the time to form trusting relationships with pupils, getting to know what interests and motivates them. This individualised approach is the linchpin of the school's success. It quickly makes pupils feel safe, well cared for and ready to learn.

The school sets high expectations for pupils' academic learning. It has crafted well-thought-out curriculum pathways. Staff carefully unpick pupils' specific needs and provide a range of appropriate and engaging learning tasks. Typically, pupils work hard, experience success and grow in confidence.

An atmosphere of calm and purpose pervades the school. Staff greet pupils warmly as they arrive. Well-established routines, such as morning breakfast, give pupils predictability. At lunchtime, staff support pupils in interacting with each other and making friends. Over time, pupils learn to understand their behaviours and self-regulate their feelings.

The school threads aspects of pupils' personal development beyond the classroom. Pupils take pride in contributing to school projects such as litter picking, gardening and collaborative art pieces. Visits to shops in the community help prepare pupils for adulthood.

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

When pupils start school, they follow a carefully considered induction programme. This allows teachers to identify pupils' starting points and integrate outcomes from their education, health and care plans (EHC plan). From these starting points, staff create ambitious and personalised curriculum pathways to meet pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Each pathway identifies the essential knowledge and skills pupils need to learn. Many pupils work towards suitable qualifications such as the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network life-skills awards.

Quickly, pupils start to experience a sense of achievement. For example, through practical activities, pupils learn to recognise numbers, write for the first time or develop their understanding of measuring and calculating. Staff continuously review each curriculum pathway to ensure it is relevant and meets pupils' needs.

Typically, staff have secure knowledge of the curriculum pathways they teach. They use a variety of strategies, such as visual cues and symbols, to support pupils in communicating their wants and needs. Expert guidance from therapists helps staff adapt the curriculum to meet pupils' speech and language needs. As a result, pupils build up their communication skills successfully.

The school is developing a strong reading culture. Pupils have regular opportunities to visit the school library and select books that capture their interest. When pupils join the school, staff check how well they can read. Pupils at the early stages of reading have started to secure their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make. However, some of the checks staff make do not pinpoint specific gaps in pupils' reading knowledge. Furthermore, not all staff have the expertise to deliver the reading curriculum consistently well. This makes it difficult for staff to provide pupils with the precise support they need to overcome barriers to their reading.

Impressive work from the whole school team ensures that pupils' behaviour and attendance improve markedly after joining the school. This is because the school invests heavily in meeting pupils' social and emotional needs. It has quickly established a caring and nurturing environment. Staff put in place highly effective strategies such as reward boards and social stories. These help to ease pupils' anxiety and manage their emotions and behaviour.

The school has designed an effective personal development offer. Pupils make a difference to the life of the school. They help with important decisions such as budgeting for new equipment and choosing the end-of-term reward. Staff use real-life scenarios to discuss relevant topics. These include consent, healthy relationships, rules and laws. Immersive experiences, such as the Japanese tradition of decorating trees with tanzaku, add to pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils attend careers fairs and receive impartial advice. This information helps them to make informed choices about their next stage of education.

Parents and carers speak with great enthusiasm about Fromefield Manor. Many shared glowing accounts of how the school has completely transformed their children's educational experiences, allowing them to flourish and attend regularly after years of struggle.

The headteacher leads with a determined vision and moral purpose to do what is right for pupils. Staff are exceptionally positive about working at the school. They fully embrace relevant training and feel confident in their roles. Many benefit from working with other schools in the company to further strengthen their expertise. Well-being initiatives, such as the 'guardian angel' programme, mean staff look out for each other and complete random acts of kindness. All this and more cultivates a strong spirit of teamwork.

The proprietor has secure oversight of the school's work. Regular visits and focused feedback mean that practice has evolved and improved, even in the short time the school has been open. The proprietor has ensured that the school consistently and securely meets the independent school standards (the standards) and complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. It maintains the school building to a high standard. Relevant policies, such as safeguarding, are up to date and reflect the latest statutory guidance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The school has not fully developed its approach to assessing and supporting pupils with gaps in their reading knowledge. This makes it difficult for staff to provide pupils with the precise reading support they need to overcome barriers to their learning. The school should ensure all staff have the expertise to teach reading well. Additionally, it should strengthen reading assessment so that pupils get the precise support they need to become fluent and accurate readers.

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	150752
DfE registration number	933/6028
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10374885
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	9
Number of part-time pupils	5
Proprietor	Aspris Children's Services Limited
Chair	Nancy O'Regan
Headteacher	Gemma Drury
Annual fees (day pupils)	£93,637 to £120,150
Telephone number	01373 456480
Website	www.aspriscs.co.uk/fromefield-manor-school
Email address	fromefieldmanorschool@aspriscs.co.uk

Information about this school

- Fromefield Manor School opened in September 2024. This is the school's first standard inspection.
- The school provides education for pupils with SEND. Most pupils have autism. All pupils who attend the school have an EHC plan. They are placed in the school by five local authorities.
- The school is registered to admit up to 30 pupils. Although the school is registered to have students in the sixth form, at the time of the inspection, there were few students on roll in this phase. As such, the inspectors did not give a grade or report on the provision to avoid identifying individual students.
- During the induction period, pupils start on a part-time basis and build up to a full-time timetable.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.
- The proprietor has appointed a governing body. The chair of this governing body is the regional director, Rebecca McArthur.

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.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and a range of staff to discuss aspects of the school's work. The lead inspector met with the regional director and the chief operations officer for the proprietor body. He also held telephone conversations with representatives from local authority commissioning teams.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication and language, reading, mathematics and personal, social, emotional and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum documentation and samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to a range of pupils reading to an adult.
- 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.
- Inspectors conducted a range of activities to confirm whether the school met the standards in full. This included health and safety checks of the premises, risk assessments, record-keeping for behaviour management and supervision during social times.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and the school's arrangements for supervising pupils on their arrival at school, in classrooms and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sandy Hayes

Ofsted Inspector

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