

# Inspection of Active Wellbeing School

Phoenix House, Scotia Road, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST6 6FF

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Inspection dates: 5 to 7 November 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at this school genuinely have 'freedom to flourish'. Pupils are happy and feel safe because they are very well cared for and have positive relationships with the staff. Staff have an excellent understanding of pupils' individual needs. They make sure that they meet those needs throughout the school day.

The school has high expectations for what pupils can achieve. The curriculum is carefully planned and well organised. This ensures that there are no limits on what pupils can achieve. Pupils are highly engaged in their learning because staff make it interesting and easier to understand. Pupils are well supported to be successful. They complete work that is well matched to their ability. Pupils develop confidence when they succeed in their learning. They are rightly proud of how their reading is improving.

Pupils are friendly and welcoming. They show great respect for adults and each other. When some pupils struggle with their behaviour, they are well supported by staff. Pupils also support each other during reflection times and through their buddy roles.

Pupils make positive contributions to the school and local community. For example, they enjoy making their environment a better place through their litter picking at the local park.

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

Leaders are rigorous in all they do to drive school improvement. They constantly reflect on the quality of the education they provide for all their pupils. This includes not just the academic curriculum but every aspect of a pupil's experience during their time at the school. Leaders have introduced a new curriculum and ensured that staff have had a range of training to develop their expertise. As a result, there have been some significant improvements since the last inspection.

All pupils at the school have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). The school ensures that staff have an accurate understanding of each pupil's special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school engages with parents and carers to gain a full understanding of each pupil's needs and interests. It also works closely with relevant external agencies, such as speech and language services, to get expert advice on how to best meet pupils' needs. Using the information from the EHC plans and external agencies, the school creates targets in an individual education plan. Staff work towards the targets set throughout the day. Their knowledge of each individual pupil's needs, combined with a carefully designed curriculum, ensures that pupils achieve well from their various starting points.

The curriculum clearly identifies the knowledge and skills pupils need to know. Effective checks on what pupils know and understand help staff to break the learning down into clear steps. The use of a carousel in lessons enables staff to

focus specifically on these clear steps when working with pupils individually or in small groups. As the result of continuous staff training, which includes support from leaders, staff are skilled at adapting their lessons to meet a variety of individual needs.

Reading is a high priority. Staff are now trained to teach pupils at the early stages of reading using a consistent approach. Pupils develop a good understanding of letters and the sounds that they make through daily lessons. Staff accurately check pupils' understanding and provide timely support where it is needed. As a result, pupils read with increased fluency and confidence.

Pupils are highly positive about their education and talk with enthusiasm about what they are learning. For example, they know how to find countries on a globe and about current affairs such as the election of a new president in the United States of America. Many aspects of the curriculum are quite new. The school is working on embedding the changes. As a result, teachers' expertise in curriculum delivery and pupils' knowledge in parts of the curriculum is still developing.

Developing pupils' character and self-esteem is a golden thread throughout the curriculum and the wider opportunities on offer. Central to this is a positive approach to managing behaviour. Pupils learn how to behave well and why this is important. This also supports pupils to believe in themselves and their ability to succeed. They regularly reflect on how successful they have been in lessons. This motivates pupils to be even better when they might not have achieved as well as they wanted.

The range of planned events to develop pupils' understanding of the world around them are plentiful and purposeful. Pupils develop a good understanding of fundamental British values such as democracy. They vote on a variety of issues, and the outcomes of the vote genuinely matter. Pupils are proud of choosing the food bank as their most recent charity to support. Other opportunities provided help to develop pupils' talents and interests. For example, a school choir performs in the community, and pupils enjoy taking part in competitive sports.

Staff are proud to work at the school and feel well supported by leaders. They know their well-being is a priority.

The proprietor has clear oversight of the work of the school. There are frequent checks on the quality of education, safeguarding and health and safety. This ensures that the independent school standards are consistently met, including the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- The curriculum in place is relatively new and the school is still developing staff expertise in delivering it. As a result, pupils' knowledge in some areas of the curriculum is also still developing. The school should continue to embed the new curriculum and continue developing staff expertise in how to implement it.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	148037
<b>DfE registration number</b>	861/6024
<b>Local authority</b>	Stoke-on-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10360885
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent special school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	48
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Endeavour Specialised Schools
<b>Chair</b>	Julie Gilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanne Anderson
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£30,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	01782405598
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.activewellbeingschool.co.uk">www.activewellbeingschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:head@activewellbeing.school">head@activewellbeing.school</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 to 19 October 2023

## Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school's previous standard inspection was in October 2023 when it was judged to require improvement. In April 2024, Ofsted carried out a progress monitoring inspection. At this inspection, the school was judged to meet all the independent school standards that were checked.
- The current headteacher took up the post in January 2024.
- All pupils have an EHC plan. The main area of need is communication and interaction.
- There has been a change of name for the proprietor body. On Get Information about Schools, the name of the proprietor is Active Resilience Ltd.
- The school is registered to provide education for pupils aged four to 11 who have SEND. At the time of the inspection, there were no children in the early years. The youngest pupils were in Year 1.

## 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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders.
- The lead inspector also met with the chair of the proprietor body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, personal, social, health and economic education, geography and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; examined relevant documentation; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils'

interests first.

- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspectors also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- The lead inspector toured the premises and reviewed the school facilities. She also examined a range of documents relating to health and safety.

### **Inspection team**

Helen Forrest, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Hermitt

Ofsted Inspector

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