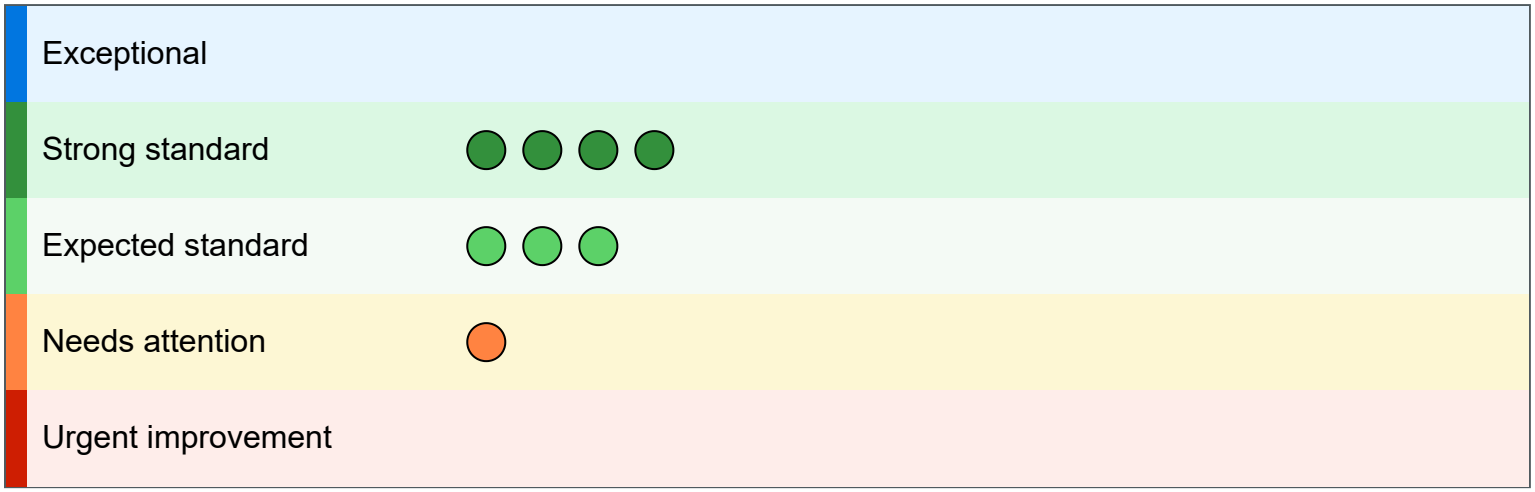
Fosse Way School

Address: Longfellow Road, Radstock, Bath, Somerset, BA3 3AL

Unique reference number (URN): 137493

Inspection report: 20 January 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Leaders work highly effectively with pupils, families, external agencies and a range of highly skilled staff, including therapists, to ensure that the school's attendance strategy is highly successful, and it is. Rates of absence are consistently lower than those seen nationally for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders analyse patterns of attendance astutely. Any pupils who attend part time are under regular review to ensure that, over time, these pupils' attendance increases. This is typically the case.

Staff model the school's behaviour policy consistently. Pupils understand it and apply it particularly well as a result. They show positive attitudes when learning and at social times. Many pupils become positive role models. They learn to hold meaningful conversations with staff and pupils and demonstrate good manners. Pupils greet staff positively at the start of the day and also enjoy sharing lunch with their friends.

There are rigorous systems in place to review any patterns in pupils' behaviour effectively. This ensures that staff quickly get to the root cause of any poor behaviour or bullying. Staff take appropriate action and support pupils effectively. This means that any pupils who struggle to manage their emotions receive timely and purposeful help. Suspensions are infrequent and used appropriately. Restrictive physical intervention is used rarely.

Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders' highly ambitious inclusion strategy sits at the heart of the school’s work. Their work has a palpable impact over time on the achievement and experiences of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Right from the very start, pupils receive a careful transition into school, taking into account all aspects of their life and experiences so far. Ongoing staff training ensures that the staff are adept at identifying and assessing pupils' individual needs.

They adjust learning with precision so that pupils receive appropriate support and achieve highly. Staff work highly effectively to check how well this support is working for pupils, including speech and language therapy. Leaders maintain a robust focus to continually enhance the provision for all pupils. They make decisions that place pupils’ needs at the centre of the school’s work. This ensures that pupils and their families can access a wide range of timely support and specialist guidance.

Leaders’ use of pupil premium funding is highly effective. It has a substantial impact on broadening pupils’ wider experiences. This ensures that the school is successful in overcoming any barriers pupils face. Leaders commission alternative provision when needed and keep a clear oversight of the education that pupils who attend receive.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

The school’s extensive pastoral support is embedded extremely well into all aspects of everyday life. Leaders work extremely well to provide pupils with a bespoke package of support that meets their individual needs. This support has a highly tangible impact on pupils' outcomes. Their readiness for the next stage of their education is substantial and sustained.

The school's personal development programme is ambitious and highly effective. Leaders have set out precisely the key learning pupils will secure within their individual curriculum pathways. They continuously review this to ensure that the specific curriculum meets pupils' needs superbly. Pupils also work towards preparation for adulthood outcomes, which are adjusted for the different pathways. Overall, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, develop a deep knowledge of all areas of the personal, social, health and economic education programme. Pupils revisit subject content frequently so that they get the chance to practise and deepen their learning. Pupils develop their social skills and cooperation skills very well.

Pupils have an appropriate understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. The relationships and sex education and health education curriculum provides pupils with the knowledge they need. For example, pupils learn about puberty and consent.

Pupils understand how fundamental British values, such as democracy, are important in the world they live in. Pupils proudly take on a range of leadership roles, such as school councillors and milk monitors. They understand how these roles make a positive contribution to the school community and beyond.

Careers education is comprehensive and informs pupils' future choices. A wide variety of work experience options are carefully selected to offer pupils a wide range of appropriate opportunities. These are underpinned by the wide range of learning activities in the curriculum to prepare pupils for the world of work. For example, learning in food technology leads to further qualifications and work experience in hospitality. Pupils benefit from placements in the community, for example at the Roman baths and local radio station. This helps prepare them for next steps and life beyond school.

Post 16 provision

Strong standard

The school has very high expectations for students in the sixth form. Students are extremely well prepared for later life. They are fully supported to progress into education, training and employment. This includes high-quality work experience and the development of skills for independent or supported living. This is having demonstrable impact on pupils' lives. Leaders work highly effectively to check and make sure that the curriculum is effective. For example, currently, they are making innovations to teaching up-to-date technologies such as artificial intelligence.

The curriculum is expertly designed across curriculum pathways and to meet students' varying starting points. Students' progress over time is monitored closely and used to adapt the curriculum as necessary. There is a deliberate quality to the way the curriculum builds students' aspirations by ensuring that high-quality visits and work placements and learning

opportunities complement these. Pupils' work is of high quality and demonstrates staff's high expectations of pupils. Students understand these expectations and rise to meet or exceed them.

Students speak with great enthusiasm about the post-16 programme. Parents and carers are highly positive about the way the sixth form supports their children to achieve, feel part of the school community, thrive personally and academically, and be 'work ready'. All students in the sixth form move on to further training or employment.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Leaders and staff have an unequivocal focus to prepare pupils for adulthood and ensure that pupils are ready for their next stage by the time they leave. Notably, pupils learn how to shop, cook, travel on public transport, manage money and learn the household tasks they will need beyond school. All pupils go on to college, further education, internships or employment and sustain meaningful placements.

The school's bespoke curriculum pathways ensure that pupils develop appropriate knowledge and skills and achieve ambitious outcomes from their starting points. Older pupils achieve a range of national accredited awards, including GCSEs, entry level qualifications and vocational courses.

Pupils learn to read well. They also develop secure mathematical knowledge and skills. This ensures that pupils can apply their knowledge to everyday tasks confidently. When pupils have gaps in their knowledge or skills, bespoke support ensures that gaps close steadily over time, including for disadvantaged pupils and those known to social care.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The curriculum includes a suitable range of subjects. The school’s 3 flexible curriculum pathways ensure that pupils study curriculums that build on their varying starting points, knowledge and experience. Staff typically combine their secure subject knowledge with a firm understanding of special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures that they swiftly make any reasonable adjustments that pupils need. For example, most pupils use a range of sensory and visual resources to help them to learn well from key stage 1 onwards. Typically, pupils, including those who study at a satellite provision at a local secondary school, learn well because their curriculum is highly tailored to meet their needs.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the curriculum and aspects that need refinement. They work very well to ensure that teaching is continually effective. Leaders generally set clear expectations of how to assess and check what pupils know and can do. However, there are occasions when the teaching sequences for a minority of pupils are not based on a precise understanding of what pupils already know. When this happens, pupils do not practise the most essential knowledge that they need to secure.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders, including the academy committee, understand the school's strengths very well. They know well the areas they need to develop further, especially the early years. Leaders put pupils at the centre of any decision-making and continually act in the best interests of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively.

Leaders provide a comprehensive staff professional development programme that includes teachers and staff who are new to the profession or school. They ensure that staff implement the school's expectations and policies effectively. The trust and school consider staff's workload and wellbeing. Staff make a consistently positive contribution to supporting pupils' individual needs.

Leaders' oversight of the school's work is a particular strength when considering the sixth form, pupils' behaviour and attendance, and how well pupils progress towards their individual targets. Leaders make regular checks on the curriculum and teaching. This ensures that they quickly identify any improvement priorities, for example when refining curriculum pathways for pupils with multiple needs. The school is working productively to improve provision in the early years. The right work is going into place. However, it is at an early stage.

Leaders build positive and effective relationships with parents and carers, external agencies and the commissioning local authorities. Most parents rate the school highly. However, a minority of parents identify weaknesses in communication when they have concerns. The school and trust are working dedicatedly and building effective relationships with parents.

Needs attention

Early years

Needs attention

Leaders understand what needs to improve in the early years. They are working with determination to bring this about. However, there has not been enough time to see demonstrable impact. Children do not receive the teaching that they need to secure their learning in the early years. Staff do not have all the necessary subject knowledge they need. As a result, teaching is not suitably adapted to build on children's starting points. The curriculum does not provide children with the opportunities they need to regularly practise the most essential knowledge, skills and tasks that they need to master. The interactions between staff and children are not effective. This does not support children's development in communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Some teaching resources are not appropriate.

Staff deliver care practices safely, for example intimate care. However, the school's record systems needed strengthening during the inspection. Staff prioritise reading stories and developing children's early reading behaviours. Leaders are proactive in admitting more children to the early years in response to the local area need. They work closely with

families and nurseries to ensure a smooth transition into school. This ensures that children are safe and settle to school over time.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Most children's experiences of the early years are too varied. They do not receive an appropriate curriculum in all areas of learning and do not succeed in their education. Leaders are improving the early years provision. However, the impact of their actions is not yet evident.

Fosse Way is highly inclusive. Meeting pupils' individual needs and celebrating their achievements are at the centre of the school's work. Leaders prioritise developing pupils' communication and language skills as well as their preparedness for adulthood. This ensures that most pupils do well academically and personally. This is especially the case in the sixth form, where students succeed as individuals.

Pupils benefit from consistent routines, such as 'breakfast time', which promote their successful start to the school day. They greet adults warmly as they arrive each morning. Pupils' happiness is also evident in their high attendance. Pupils embody the school's high expectations of behaviour and learning. They readily apply the school's approach of 'Ready, Respectful, Safe'. Highly effective pastoral support, including a range of therapies, ensure that pupils become resilient and grow in confidence over time.

Pupils learn how to keep safe in and beyond school. For example, they gain detailed knowledge about the key factors that shape healthy relationships. Pupils are clear that harassment and discrimination are unacceptable there. They are confident that staff will address any bullying or harassment swiftly.

Pupils benefit from extensive experiences to broaden their horizons and build their confidence, for example through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and working for the on-site café. LEGO club is just one of many clubs to enjoy.

Typically, primary- and secondary-age pupils learn the wide-ranging and ambitious curriculum well. They build secure foundations in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Many rise to the high expectations set for them across the curriculum. Everyone learns important life skills, including how to cook. When pupils leave, all progress on to college, further education and training or employment.

Next steps

• Leaders should continue to improve the quality of provision for children in the early years so that teaching and the curriculum prepares children for the next stage of their education by ensuring that: the curriculum and teaching is sufficiently focused on the prime areas of learning; the learning environment supports children's development effectively, and that staff use it effectively; staff have the expert subject knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum consistently well; and staff understand how to, and do, provide children with high-quality and

meaningful interactions and enough opportunity to practise new learning.
• Leaders should ensure that across all curriculum pathways, sequences of work and high-quality assessment enable teaching to consistently build on what pupils know already so that pupils master curriculum content consistently well and achieve highly across the curriculum over time.

About this inspection

This school is part of The Partnership Trust Learning, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Emily Massey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alison Reevey.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers and a range of other staff, including therapy staff. They met with the CEO, 2 trustees and 2 members of the local academy committee. Inspectors also held telephone conversations with 2 local authorities who place pupils at the school.

Inspectors spoke with some parents at the start of the school day, on the telephone and also considered email correspondence.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is a special school, academy converter. The school no longer has a residential provision.

The school caters for pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties. Many pupils and students have communication and language difficulties, including a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.

All pupils have an education, health and care plan.

A small number of Fosse Way students attend a satellite provision known as 'ST2' at a nearby secondary school. These pupils attend full time.

The school admits pupils into the early years from the age of 3. There are currently no children attending under the age of 4.

The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.

Headteacher: Fiona Skinner

Lead inspector:
Julie Carrington, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Andrew Buckton, Ofsted Inspector
Liz Geller, His Majesty's Inspector
Phil Minns, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

This data is from 20 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

224
Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

220
Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,152

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

51.85%
Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

100.00%
Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

0.00%
Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder, MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	100%	91%	Not available
2022 leavers (revised)	93%	93%	Not available
2021 leavers (revised)	100%	94%	Not available

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	11.2%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	10.5%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	9.4%	9.0%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	34.8%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	34.1%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	33.5%	26.5%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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