

Ofsted Report, March 2024

Information for Parents

Windmill Hill School is a specialist school in Luton for pupils aged 11-16, catering for a range of special needs that include profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD) and pupils with ASD and complex needs. It opened in September 2021 and is part of the Creating Tomorrow Partnership.

During a recent Ofsted inspection in February 2024 the school was rated 'inadequate' by Ofsted.

Kevin Latham, CEO of Creating Tomorrow Partnership said: "We thank the Ofsted inspectors for their honest appraisal of the school. Though we are not happy with the outcome, inspectors agreed with our own internal appraisal of the school and supported the plans we were already implementing to turn around the quality of education. The inspection took place during a period of change, where we were already updating the curriculum to improve learning standards. We are pleased the inspectors recognised the swift action taken by the trust and the journey we are on."

"The inspection also acknowledged the hard work put in by the whole team, resulting in "high quality pastoral care", ensuring our students are safe and happy, that students had strong relationships, and felt listened to and understood."

Since the inspection, significant steps have been made towards ensuring children are learning what they need to. Michelle Brett, Interim Head of School said: "The planned new reading scheme has now been rolled out alongside new curriculum maps, to support teachers to plan the right lessons at the right time, and how to adapt the learning to the individual child. The team is committed to delivering the very best educational outcomes for every child and continues to work hard every day to deliver sustained progress against the rapid improvement plan."

Commenting on behalf of Creating Tomorrow Partnership, Jeannette Payne, Chair of Trustees said: "We are fully committed to Windmill Hill School. As soon as our quality assurance procedures flagged an issue, we acted swiftly, redeploying our resources and expertise, to ensure that the school is brought back on track quickly."

“When Ofsted visited, the changes were recent and had not had time to show their impact. However, we are already in a significantly improved place with regard to our quality of education compared to the day of inspection.”

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are children safe when attending Windmill Hill School?

Yes, absolutely.

Ofsted says “The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.” and that “leaders are vigilant in keeping pupils safe.”

It also found that: “Pupils are happy. They like the adults that care for them. They appreciate that staff treat them with dignity and respect. Staff know their pupils’ needs well.”

Inspectors stated that “pupils have ... high quality pastoral care,” and that “pupils’ focus in lessons and behaviour has improved.”

2. What is the school doing to improve the quality of education?

At the time of the inspection the trust had already identified the improvements required for leadership and quality of education and was in the process of rolling out a rapid improvement plan. Since the inspection, we’ve:

- rolled out a new reading scheme, including phonics resources and more appropriate books for children;
- fully implemented our new curriculum and put in weekly training for teaching staff to ensure they are supported every step of the way. Every member of staff has been allocated an experienced mentor from one of our other schools to help them adapt the learning to each individual child;
- introduced subject leadership teams to improve teaching and learning;
- recruited three new teachers including a deputy head and an assistant head.

We’re also working even more closely with Luton Council’s Education Service, as well as with other local special schools, to share best practice to improve the quality of education at Windmill Hill.

3. Is the school's leadership team able to deal with the issues outlined by Ofsted?

Yes. Creating Tomorrow Partnership has made significant changes to the leadership of Windmill Hill School since the end of 2023. This has included introducing an experienced headteacher from another school in the trust, the CEO of Creating Tomorrow (also an experienced headteacher) as well as the recruitment of new senior leaders, including a new deputy headteacher who will be starting April 15th.

Ofsted identified that "the new leaders are having a positive impact" and that "staff have responded positively to the guidance leaders are providing."

The inspectors also noted that, "trustees are providing effective oversight" and "the trust has responded quickly and appropriately to provide stability and a rapid plan for improvement."

4. Has Windmill Hill School been "inadequate" since it opened?

No. Creating Tomorrow Partnership has worked in conjunction with external expert school advisors since opening, who have been monitoring the school's performance, alongside our own internal monitoring and quality assurance checks.

The monitoring process identified areas for improvement last year and the school acted swiftly to implement an improvement plan.

We recognise that a change in leadership has affected the implementation speed, but Creating Tomorrow Partnership has redeployed experienced staff to support Windmill Hill School deliver what's needed.

5. How soon might the school be able to lose its "inadequate" rating?

Creating Tomorrow Partnership will be supporting Windmill Hill School to rapidly improve in line with its action plan and should there be any concerns, they will be addressed promptly, so you can be reassured that standards will improve, regardless of the "inadequate" rating.

Ofsted is planning a new full graded inspection in around 30 months, according to their guidance.

We look forward to hearing from parents and children about how the school is changing and improving well before the planned re-inspection. We'll also ensure there are plenty of opportunities to do this.



Head of School
Michelle Brett

Who to contact

We're here to listen.

If you have any concerns or questions about the Ofsted report, your child's education, or our improvement plan, please contact:

Kevin Latham

klatham@creatingtomorrowtrust.co.uk

01582 280652

