

# SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

March 2025

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Phoenix School (Sheffield), and Forestwood (Bury) are DfE registered special schools, providing education for young people admitted to their co-located hospital services.

Our schools are regulated by OFSTED you can read their last inspection via the websites.

[Forestwood School](#)

[Phoenix School](#)

## Recognition

**Katy Edmondson – Head Teacher at Phoenix School received the following feedback from a young person:-**

*"Thank you for providing the right help and support in school. You have been an amazing supporter through my journey at Cygnet and thank you for everything".*

**Phoenix School received some great feedback from a parent:-**

*"That is really good and positive news and as you say, the duck project has been, we feel a massive driver to get XXX motivated and enthusiastic into coming to education and we I am sure like yourself, hope this will be the first steps in getting her to engage more and start to build her self-confidence and self-worth leading to her self-esteem starting to grow to the point that education can be a positive influence rather than a competitive environment. Thank you so much and please keep up the great work it is so greatly appreciated".*

**Forestwood received some wonderful feedback during a QNIC inspection:-**

*"School is incredible. Seeing how much the teachers care and also the diversity of subjects there is access to".*

## What we've been up to

Forestwood School underwent a full, unannounced, inspection by **Ofsted** in February. We're delighted that following the inspection, Forestwood School was rated **Good in all key areas**; quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership and management.

Inspectors noted: "Forestwood School is a haven for its pupils who flourish because of the care, kindness and support that they receive from staff".



Head teacher Wendy Webster said: "I am delighted with the report. I particularly liked the use of the word "haven" to describe the atmosphere of the school".

"All the staff have worked hard to improve the environment to ensure that all students feel comfortable and nurtured which in turn promotes increased confidence in achieving educational progress. The inspectors recognised that our experienced and passionate staff are able to find the educational gaps, ensuring that students are well prepared for the next stages in their education. I am very proud of the whole team and feel privileged to be working with them."

Ed Hall, Head of Education at Cygnets Health Care said: "The report reads very well and is a testament to the hard work of the school and hospital staff. To have their commitment (to ensuring all young people will benefit from education despite barriers) recognised, is a just reward for the team's effort. The inspector also praised how Cygnets values education as an integral part of a young person's treatment whilst in hospital. Keep up the good work!"

Read about the inspection the full Ofsted report [here](#)

**World Book Day** theme this year was 'Read Your Way' which was celebrated at both of our schools in March.

Forestwood School highlighted their dedication to encouraging reading for pleasure amongst all pupils.



Pupils shared meaningful quotations and created colourful illustrations that beautifully captured the essence of their chosen stories.

One pupil commented: "I'd forgotten how much I enjoyed that book and how much I loved to read when I was younger – can we get a copy in the library?"

More about the day at Forestwood is [here](#)



Phoenix School celebrated in Roald Dahl style, with education staff members dressing up as characters from the well-loved children's book, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

World Book Day was also combined with their Science Week Living Eggs Project. Students participated in "Read a Book with a Duck" where they enjoyed reading whilst cuddling an adorable little duckling.

You can read all about how Phoenix celebrated [here](#).

The 7-16th March marked **British Science Week (BSW)** and the theme this year was 'Change and Adapt'. At Forestwood School we explored how games have been adapted for those with a physical impairment. On the first day, we carried out a circuit of simple games (Jenga, Skittles, Beanbag throwing and a Bleep test). We then introduced a disability. For example, doing Skittles with a blind fold and Jenga with one hand. The bleep test with a blind fold proved to be rather interesting but it opened up some very interesting conversations on how loss of a limb or sense affects our ability and made us feel. For example, feeling more disorientated, vulnerable and does our non-dominant hand become dominant over time?

The next day we then carried out some games that are, in fact, played at Paralympic level. Boccia is a game played sitting down. The aim is to get your set of balls closest to the target (Jack ball). Boccia is a fantastic sport, not only for its addictive nature, but one of the most inclusive sports to date where any limb can be used to propel the ball (even tapping it with a probe attached to a helmet off a ramp) and one in which girls and boys can compete together. We also had a go at dribbling a ball where one opponent had a blindfold on. As in Blind Football, this game was adapted with an audible ball and a coach to guide therefore honing in on our auditory senses. Most essentially, it exercised our skills for communication and trust.



On Friday 14th March teaching staff from Forestwood & Phoenix Schools attended the annual QNIC Special Interest Day.

The day brings teaching staff together who all work in Hospital Schools to learn about changes in CAMHS, what this means for education and an opportunity to share best practice and increase their professional network.

In addition to an update on the upcoming changes in CAMHS services in England, staff heard from the following keynote speakers:

Elizabeth Smeaton a patient representative of QNIC talked about her own experiences - "All or nothing – a student's experience of transitioning to inpatient schools"

Afees Ali – QNIC Patient Representative spoke about the role of hospital schools in empowering young people

Regina Cobbinah gave a key note speech around the role of education in supporting young people's journey to recovery

There were also break out rooms where staff could choose from:

- Short stay admissions - curriculum plans and qualification.
- Strategies for working with young people in the community.
- "Not motivated to be educated"
- QNIC education standards and QNIC peer reviews.

The day was a great success and an excellent opportunity for staff to share best practice in what are unique settings.

*"The short stay admissions-curriculum plans and qualifications discussion was good to hear other school's qualification aims and how they are adapt to on average shorter stays in hospital".*

*"I thought it was all very good. Some of it was new and there was a lot of useful information"*