

Name of School:	Silverwood School
Principal/Headteacher:	Sean McKeown
Hub:	Wootton Bassett
School phase:	Special – All through
MAT (if applicable):	Not Applicable (N/A)

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Leading
Date of this Review:	23/03/2026
Overall Estimate at last QA Review:	Effective
Date of last QA Review:	12/05/2025
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	03/07/2023

Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising host school leaders and visiting reviewers, agrees that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

Leadership at all levels Leading

Quality of provision and outcomes Leading

AND

**Quality of provision and
outcomes for disadvantaged
pupils and/or pupils with
additional needs** Leading

Area of excellence N/A

**Previously accredited valid areas
of excellence** Living our values, the impact of values
throughout our school, 29/04/2024

Overall peer evaluation estimate Leading

Important information

- The QA Review provides a peer evaluation of a school's practice in curriculum, teaching and learning, and leadership. It is a voluntary and developmental process, and the peer review team can evaluate and offer 'peer evaluation estimates' based only on what the school chooses to share with them.
- The QA Review estimates are not equivalent to Ofsted grades. The QA Review uses a different framework to Ofsted and the review is developmental not judgmental.
- The QA Review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. If you choose to share this report, or extracts thereof, externally (e.g. on your website or with parents), please ensure that it is accompanied with the following text:

Challenge Partners is a charity working to advance education for the public benefit. We are not a statutory accountability body. The QA Review does not audit schools' safeguarding or behaviour policies and practices. However, Lead Reviewers and visiting reviewers are expected to follow Challenge Partners' safeguarding policy and report any concerns as set out in the procedures.

1. Context and character of the school

Silverwood is a large, community-maintained special school for pupils aged 4 to 19, with more than 520 pupils on roll. The school operates across three campuses. Work is now complete on extensive new facilities at Rowde, the largest campus. The smaller Trowbridge and Chippenham campuses are dedicated to primary provision, with an additional Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) satellite provision and a post-16 college site in Chippenham.

All pupils have education, health and care plans (EHCPs) and present with a wide range of needs, including moderate (MLD), severe (SLD), and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), complex speech, language and communication needs and autism (ASC), and additional medical conditions. The school also has a higher-than-average number of disadvantaged pupils. Pupils come from a wide catchment area, with most travelling to and from the school on local authority funded transport.

Silverwood continues to be an integral member of Wiltshire's drive for more effective inclusive educational provision and practice. This resonates with the school's vision of 'building community, inspiring learning'. Silverwood is a Values-Based Education (VBE) School. In 2023, it was awarded the Enhanced Values-Based Education Quality Mark, recognising the deeply embedded, values-led culture throughout the school and its growing influence beyond it.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- Leaders and governors articulate a clear, values-driven vision that shapes a cohesive and aspirational culture, ensuring consistency across sites and strengthening a sense of belonging within the school community and beyond.
- There is a strong focus on improving teachers' subject knowledge and pedagogy through high-quality, responsive professional development and collaborative practice, leading to confident delivery and consistent approaches across pathways, as demonstrated through the introduction of IRIS Connect to develop and refine teaching practice across all three campuses.
- Leaders at all levels design, implement and review programmes of study that are closely aligned to curriculum aims and pupils' EHCP outcomes, ensuring ambitious, personalised learning and clear progression across pathways to support academic and personal development. For example, leaders reviewed progress data and adapted physiotherapy provision so a pupil could access lessons more consistently and improve outcomes.
- Pathway and subject leaders have a strong impact through collaboration, training delivery and curriculum development, ensuring that there is consistency and expertise across the school, as seen when middle leaders rolled out mathematics progression documentation across multiple sites.
- The climate for learning is calm, purposeful and supportive, enabling pupils to regulate and engage effectively with learning, as demonstrated when the

refinement of structured arrival routines reduced dysregulation and ensured pupils settled quickly into lessons.

- Community engagement is a strength, enhancing learning through strong relationships with families and external partners. For instance, parents who were initially reluctant to engage with the school felt confident to request support for the first time, improving consistency between home and school.
- Curriculum enrichment, including social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, is embedded through varied experiences that build social skills, cultural awareness and personal growth. This was illustrated when pupils participated in the school parliament and communicated ideas about community and belonging.
- Leaders ensure that pupils can access a wide range of enrichment activities, providing opportunities for social interaction and skill development beyond the structured curriculum. This was seen through the Friday afternoon planned pupil engagement activities such as band, dance and karaoke.
- Personal development is prioritised and has a positive impact on pupils' character, including confidence, resilience and self-advocacy. For example, some pupils are encouraged to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.
- Provision for well-being is comprehensive and responsive, supporting both emotional and mental health needs so that pupils can engage in learning. For example, a pupil was supported outside the classroom during a difficult period before successfully returning to the learning.
- Pupils develop a strong understanding of their role in modern Britain, including diversity and equality, through real-life experiences and community links. This was evidenced when learners participated in work experience and community volunteering to build skills for adult life.

2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if...

- ... leaders at all levels continued to be coached and developed to pursue educational excellence across every delivery team.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- The curriculum is ambitious, highly personalised and rooted in preparation for adult life, ensuring that all pupils access meaningful learning regardless of need across all five curriculum pathways. For example, in the Key Stage 4 (KS4) Formal pathway, a Year 11 pupil developed greater motivation to read after preparing for a McDonald's interview, with staff adapting reading materials to reflect this real-life context.
- Curriculum planning is coherent and sequenced across each pathway, with leaders and class teams aligning long-term, medium-term, and short-term plans to EHCP outcomes and school values. For example, in a Key Stage 3

(KS3) social communication class, staff adapted whole-school planning into personalised activities that reflected pupils' communication and sensory needs.

- Reading is prioritised through a consistent, multi-sensory phonics approach and a culture where every pupil reads daily. For instance, in Goldfinch Class (Social Communication Upper Primary), pupils engaged in a structured phonics session using personalised consonant/vowel/consonant (CVC) cards and sensory resources, sustaining attention and demonstrating enjoyment.
- Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and engage in ongoing professional development through collaborative research-informed reflective practice. For example, in the EYFS Satellite phonics group, the teacher adapted teaching strategies in real time to better meet children's communication and engagement needs.
- Teachers use total communication approaches highly effectively, integrating speech, signing, visuals, and other augmented and alternative communication (AAC) approaches to maximise understanding and expression. This was demonstrated in Aspin Class (KS4 Pre-formal), where pupils used eye gaze, symbols and communication boards to make independent choices about food for a planned visit to the Rowdy Cow café.
- Pupils engage positively in learning and apply skills across contexts, demonstrating increasing independence and confidence. Including in Bullfinch Class (Upper Primary Semi-formal), where pupils independently collected and interpreted data using tally charts and pictograms, then proudly shared their work.
- Teaching materials are high-quality and carefully adapted to remove barriers and meet individual needs. For instance, in a formal maths lesson, resources were modified with braille, tactile supports and adapted layouts so a visually impaired pupil could fully access counting and problem-solving tasks.
- Pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding progressively, with a strong focus on preparation for adulthood. Specifically, in Beech Class (KS4 Formal), pupils prepared for travel training by discussing safety, routes and expectations, demonstrating understanding of real-world application.
- Pupils are well prepared for post-16 pathways through personalised curricula, qualifications and structured transition planning. In Year 9, individual transition plans are created to identify appropriate post-16 destinations, ensuring alignment with pupils' strengths and aspirations.
- The quality of work across the curriculum supports both academic progress and personal development, including well-being and cultural awareness. As evidenced by pupils participating in whole-school events such as Eid celebrations, developing respect and understanding of different cultures alongside their academic learning.
- Most pupils make strong progress from their starting points, and assessment is used effectively to inform teaching and next steps. For example, in KS4, a Year 11 pupil improved spelling significantly after targeted intervention during lesson time, identified through progress monitoring.

- Clear values and high expectations are embedded and consistently modelled, leading to high levels of regulation, positive behaviour and engagement. For instance, in Plane Class (Year 7 Formal pathway), pupils took turns sharing their 'Life in a bag' autobiographies, they asked permission to speak and confidently expressed their views in a respectful classroom environment.
- Relationships are strong and supportive, creating a positive culture for learning where pupils feel safe and motivated. By illustration, in Cypress Class (KS3 Social Communication), pupils used regulation strategies such as swings and sensory spaces, enabling them to remain calm and engaged.

3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if...

- ... high quality teaching across all phases and pathways continued to build on established best practice.

4.1 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and/or pupils with additional needs - What went well

- Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of their pupils and take a highly personalised approach to supporting vulnerable children and their families.
- Leaders prioritise high quality provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, including pupils known to social care, through rigorous tracking, targeted interventions and multi-agency working. For example, leaders identified a pupil not making expected progress due to therapy withdrawal from lessons and adjusted provision to reduce missed learning.
- The SENDCo team provides effective leadership through rigorous EHCP reviews, ensuring that provision meets pupils' changing needs, while teaching assistants (TAs) are deployed effectively to deliver interventions and support independence. For instance, TAs delivered communication and phonics interventions that improved targeted pupils' engagement and progress.
- Leaders ensure that there is strong pastoral support, parent engagement and pupil voice so vulnerable pupils are supported emotionally and academically, and barriers are addressed quickly. For instance, a pupil experiencing difficulties at home was supported outside the classroom until they were ready to return to learning.
- Leaders ensure that curriculum content prepares disadvantaged pupils for adulthood through life skills, travel training, community learning and work experience opportunities. For example, a pupil was taught travel training and personal safety to reduce risk when accessing the community.
- Leaders monitor progress closely through assessment systems, progress groups and targeted interventions to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make expected or better progress from their starting points. For example, a pupil's

speech and language therapy focused on pre-teaching vocabulary, which resulted in improved engagement and progress in lessons.

- Behaviour and attitudes are supported through inclusive relational practice, emotional regulation support, and therapeutic interventions so that disadvantaged pupils are ready to learn and feel safe in school. For instance, a Year 8 pupil was supported, one-to-one, through a range of emotional regulation strategies which prepared the ground for engagement in lessons.

4.2 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and/or pupils with additional needs - Even better if...

- ... leaders continued to share their vision and practice of relational inclusion to support best practice in a range of school contexts, both locally and nationally.

5. Area of Excellence

N/A

Following the QA Review

The review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. However, we encourage you to share the main findings with your hub/hub manager so that they can support your hub's activity planning. Challenge Partners will also collate and analyse content reports from across the partnership of schools and trusts including using AI tools to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector (sharing these with the partnership) each year. The QA Review reports remain confidential to Challenge Partners and the host school. This ensures that schools embrace the review as a development process, acting as a catalyst for their ongoing improvement. This is the primary purpose of the QA review. However, our aim is that the thematic analysis will demonstrate the additional value of a sector wide overview, illustrated with real-life examples.

For further support following your QA Review, schools can access the School Support Directory; the Challenge Partners online tool that enables schools to connect with other schools in your hub and across the national partnership of schools. The School Support Directory can be accessed via the Challenge Partners website.

(<https://www.challengepartners.org/>)

Finally, following the QA Review, schools may find it useful to refer to research such as the EEF toolkit to help inform their approach to tackling the EBIs identified in the report (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit>)