

# Dame Hannah Rogers School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	113653
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	378735
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30–31 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Denise Morris

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	20
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	13
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cliff Harris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Brian Carlyon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Woodland Road Ivybridge PL21 9HQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 892461
<b>Fax number</b>	01752 898101
<b>Email address</b>	mail@damehannah.com

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<b>Age group</b>	11–19
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	30–31 January 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	378735



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Denise Morris

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Seven lessons were observed, some jointly with senior leaders, over a period of four hours. Six different teachers, therapists and support staff were observed. Meetings were held with leaders, members of the governing body, teachers, learning support assistants, therapists and students. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. She observed the school's work, and looked at school planning documents, students' assessment data and individual education plans, the governing body minutes and school monitoring reports. Three parents and carers, and some staff and students, responded to the inspection questionnaires.

## Information about the school

Dame Hannah Rogers School is a small school which provides for students with severe physical difficulties. Over the last few years, the special educational needs of its students have become more complex and include profound and multiple learning difficulties and severe learning difficulties. Many have additional complex medical needs, including sensory impairments, and a few have autism spectrum disorders. There are a small number of students who are looked after by the local authority. The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds. The school is registered for students between the ages of five to 19, although currently all are aged 11 to 19. The school has not had any students under the age of seven for some time. The school has an on-site children's home providing boarding and respite care registered for 37 pupils. The inspection of the children's home was undertaken at the same time as the school inspection. The inspection report for the children's home can be found on the Ofsted website.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Dame Hannah Rogers is a good school. It has maintained its good outcomes for students since the last inspection because it has consolidated its strengths and made many improvements. The students, parents and carers are extremely positive about the school.
- All groups of students, including those in the sixth form, achieve well in English and mathematics. The sixth form is good. Students make the best progress in communication skills.
- Teaching is mostly good with some that is outstanding. Teaching typically extends students' skills and ensures that they have equal access to an exciting range of learning opportunities. In a small minority of lessons, the pace of learning slows because tasks are not targeted sufficiently at individual students.
- There is high-quality support for each student ensuring that their personal and educational needs are sensitively met.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Students, parents and carers overwhelmingly say that the school is very safe and secure, and that behaviour is excellent. Attendance has risen over the past year.
- The curriculum is now underpinned by an increased range of therapeutic approaches which contribute well to the health and welfare of students. Provision to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective.
- The monitoring of students' achievements has improved but it is not always undertaken regularly enough.
- The headteacher, along with other leaders and the governing body, has created a warm and welcoming ethos in which all students thrive and are highly valued. School leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are fully aware of what needs doing to improve further.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning for all groups of students by July 2012 by:
  - making sure that sufficient tasks are planned and taught in each lesson for each student to be challenged by the work set

- monitoring all the small steps taken by students so that there is a clear picture of their rates of progress in English and mathematics.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Most students' attainment on entry to the school is extremely low because of their special educational needs and/or disabilities which impact on their learning. Nevertheless, in the main, all groups of students achieve well given their starting points and acquire the skills to help them continue to make progress in the future. This is also the view of parents and carers. When they leave the school to go to college, most have achieved some vocational qualifications. Students make better-than-expected progress in English because of careful planning and some exciting tasks. For some students, their progress and achievement are outstanding. This is particularly the case in communication skills because of the very good teaching and the excellent range of communication aids used at the school. For example, a Year 11 student working with two adults on the trampoline was able to make valid choices as he asked for more time and more 'bouncing' as he enjoyed his rebound therapy. Similarly, students in the sixth form were able to make good progress in English as they used communication aids to identify the date and the weather at the start of their session. They responded well to questions and staff were prepared to wait as long as necessary for students to find answers. More-able students make good progress towards their early reading, writing and mathematics goals.

Students across the school develop good confidence, self-esteem and decision-making skills and are keen to take responsibility. This was evident during a discussion with the school council. Students were keen to talk about their school and explained how the school has helped them to improve. When asked by the inspector if there was anything they would like to be improved at the school, they showed their good sense of humour. One student took many, many minutes to programme his communicator to suggest that the school might like to let them have Mondays off! Others appreciated his comments and dedication to the task. Students' expertise in communicating is evident in the way that one student recently gave a presentation to Members of Parliament in the House of Commons about communication aids. Throughout the school, highly flexible provision enables individual programmes of learning, well matched to students' needs, to take place. For example, these may consist of extended sensory awareness sessions or structured speech and language or physical therapies. Communication is a focus for all students and this is promoted at every opportunity in formal lessons or more social situations such as lunchtimes.

### **Quality of teaching**

Parents and carers have an accurate view of the good quality of teaching within the school. Teachers regularly enthuse and inspire students. This was exemplified by students in the sixth form working with therapists in the new 'environmental control zone'. Because of skilled teaching, two students successfully used different aids to

switch on the television, the lights and the MP3 player. They showed high levels of excitement and enthusiasm at the new equipment and were both very eager to try everything, benefiting from high levels of expertise and excellent resources. Equally, in Years 7 to 11, students have opportunities to benefit from individualised learning programmes as they develop their skills in using their communicators, signs or symbols to talk to others and respond to questions. The curriculum also supports students' outstanding behaviour and safety with key emphases on independence, decision making, self-management and how to stay safe. A strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural ethos permeates the school and is regularly demonstrated through activities, assemblies and circle times. Questioning is a particular strength in many lessons. Teachers encourage students to think for themselves and to develop confidence in offering opinions and ideas.

The experienced staff team works very well together. School staff have a clear focus on improving students' communication and independence, and work in close collaboration with staff from the on-site children's home. Their effective behaviour-management techniques and secure knowledge of each individual student lead to positive relationships, ensuring that lessons are calm. Just occasionally, the pace of learning slows when teachers do not provide enough tasks to encourage students to work at a faster pace and achieve more in the time allowed. While there are many accurate, and some new and helpful, procedures for assessing students' skills, these are not always used regularly enough to show students' rates of progress over time.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Students' behaviour was judged as outstanding at the previous inspection and has remained so since that time. Evidence to support this can be seen in the views of parents and carers who are highly positive about behaviour and safety. The students say overwhelmingly that they feel safe in school and that adults are always there for them if they have any concerns. A focus on very positive behaviour is reflected in the praise assemblies, particularly in the way that students are pleased for each other. The quality of relationships within the school is exceptionally good. All staff have high expectations of exceptionally good behaviour. Students say that there is no bullying of any kind at the school. If students misbehave, they say that staff deal very well with this. Students themselves make an outstanding contribution to a safe, positive learning environment. They behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school. They are considerate and supportive of each other, often waiting patiently while a classmate struggles to communicate or make a decision. They listen carefully to others. Although attendance varies because of the number of students who have acute medical conditions, it is improving rapidly and, for the vast majority of students, attendance is above average. Teachers regularly plan tasks to enable students to make and market goods such as cakes to raise money for different charities. Students are encouraged to use these activities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in context.

## Leadership and management

There has been significant improvement since the last inspection. The accommodation and resources for learning have grown and leaders and managers, including the governing body, are strongly focused on further improvement. This is demonstrated by good quality self-evaluation which identifies clearly what has already been achieved and what still needs doing. For example, in 2011, the range of therapeutic areas was increased through lottery and other funding to create additional sensory and physical experiences for students and the community. These provide some relaxing and some exhilarating opportunities for students who otherwise would have difficulties undertaking any physical activity. Additionally, senior leaders have recently been working closely with local schools and facilities to develop extended provision for students and help prepare them for their futures. The impact of professional development is evident in the high levels of skill that staff exhibit and their expertise in promoting learning for all students, regardless of their need, showing a strong commitment to equal opportunities. This consolidation of strengths and improvements since the previous inspection indicate the school's strong capacity for continued improvement.

The curriculum is personalised to the individual needs of each student ensuring the good promotion of academic and personal skills. The wide range of age-appropriate activities and resources to make learning fun, interesting and relevant is valued by students. Very good partnership work with parents, carers and external agencies promotes the well-being and achievement of students. The effective promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is evident in students' positive learning attitudes, their good cooperation across different classes and with different staff, and their understanding of their responsibilities both in school and in the world beyond. Parents and carers comment favourably on the difference the school has made to their own and to their children's lives with typical comments such as, 'We couldn't be happier with the level of care, attention and input that our child receives from all staff.' This can be seen in the extensive and highly personalised programmes of learning that each student follows. Leaders and managers ensure that they are effective in tackling discrimination in school. A strong commitment to the individual is at the heart of the school's ethos enabling students to feel that they have a part to play. All students are carefully and individually monitored to ensure that there is no discrimination, and all students achieve and progress equally well. The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements and give no cause for concern.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons, and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



1 February 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of Dame Hannah Rogers School, Ivybridge PL21 9HQ**

Thank you for the welcome you gave me when I inspected your school recently. It was lovely to meet and talk with you. You told me many things about your school, such as what you like doing, how well you are achieving and the many good things that you do, including fundraising for charities. You also told me that you feel safe and secure at school.

It was very clear from our discussions, and from the answers to the questionnaires that I received from you and your parents and carers, that you are happy at school. There are lots of good things in your school, such as your good achievement and the good teaching. Your headteacher and the other managers are also doing a good job. Your behaviour was outstanding. Well done for that!

Sometimes, there are not enough tasks for you in your lessons. I am asking your teachers to provide more for you to do so that you all achieve even better. You can help with this by trying to do a bit more in each lesson. I know that your work is checked by your teachers but sometimes this is not often enough to show how quickly you are improving. I am asking your teachers to check your work more often. I am sure you will want to help with this.

Thank you again for your welcome.

Yours sincerely

Denise Morris  
Lead inspector

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