

# Oak Field School and Sports College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135573
<b>Local Authority</b>	Nottingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	360730
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kathy Hooper

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	145
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	42
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Roberts OBE
<b>Headteacher</b>	David S Stewart OBE
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Wigman Road Bilborough, Nottingham NG8 3HW
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Thirteen lessons were observed and 13 teachers seen. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and members of the Governing Body. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at planning, evidence of monitoring, minutes of meetings and pupils' work and assessment records. They analysed 48 parent and carer questionnaires, together with those from 56 pupils and 33 staff.

The inspection team looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are there any differences in the achievement of groups of pupils represented in the school such as minority ethnic groups, or boys and girls?
- How well do teachers use assessment data to meet the needs of different groups of pupils?
- How does leadership and management use evidence of pupils' achievement to ensure consistent practice is implemented across the school?
- In what ways have pupils and the community benefited from the emphasis on sports and information and communications technology?

## Information about the school

This new school opened in September 2009, the result of an amalgamation of two schools. It has Specialist Sports College status with information and communication technology (ICT) as a second subject. It is housed in purpose built accommodation for pupils with physical disabilities and severe and profound learning difficulties. A higher proportion of pupils are girls than in special schools nationally. The majority of the pupils are from the City of Nottingham, the remainder being from Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and the City of Derby. The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic families, mainly from Pakistan and Poland, is also above average and three times higher than that represented locally. The school supports pupils with physical disabilities in mainstream schools across the City as part of the Inclusive Education Service. It has achieved a range of awards including International School Award, Arts Mark Gold, Active Mark and Sports Mark, Healthy Schools Gold, ICT Mark and Primary Quality Mark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?****1****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****1**

## Main findings

The school is outstanding in the provision of education for its pupils. The school's impressive developments over four terms, its accurate identification of priorities and outstanding leadership show that it has an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement. The rigour with which it promotes equal opportunities is reflected in parents' comments such as, 'I can't believe how a school with so many special needs children can treat every child as a person, not a number'. There is no evidence of any inequality between groups, or of differences in the performance of boys and girls, or minority ethnic groups. Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development and good progress in their academic work. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress and they continue to make good progress as they go through school, although in Key Stage 4 levels of achievement dip slightly. They are confident and have made excellent progress in developing their personal and social skills. Students in the Sixth Form make outstanding progress. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Specialist college status has provided pupils with huge benefits in terms of the range and quality of their experiences. The modern, purpose built accommodation allows an impressive range of physical and cultural activities. The school's innovative work benefits the community and other local schools as a result of Oak Field's Specialist College status.

Teaching and learning are good. The best lessons are characterised by pupils' high levels of engagement and enjoyment, supported by the teachers' effective use of assessment data that individualises the curriculum. New technologies are used to excellent effect to support pupils' ability to learn very effectively. In occasional lessons teachers dominate and activities are not sufficiently closely matched to pupils' individual needs and abilities. The curriculum is outstanding because it provides exciting opportunities that pupils remember well. The quality of care, support and guidance is exceptional. Outside agencies are skilfully utilised to ensure each pupil receives the best possible support. Attendance is outstanding.

Overall, the quality of leadership and management is outstanding. The founding of the new school has been accomplished and the two previous schools have been combined successfully without compromising high-quality provision for pupils. Issues relating to unevenness in teaching and learning, which are a legacy, are being addressed vigorously, to ensure the highest possible quality of teaching. Leaders and managers seek to ensure that achievement data are used consistently to promote consistency of practice. The governing body is exceptionally active, able, and supportive. The school has been extremely successful in ensuring that all parents are engaged with their child's progress. A plethora of partnerships make the school a vibrant and enriching place for all pupils. The school provides outstanding value for money. Oak Field is a large and complex organisation that manages its environment and resources very efficiently and

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economically. Excellent development planning is firmly rooted in objective self-evaluation and designed to ensure continuous improvement of provision.

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

- Ensure that teaching in all lessons promotes high achievement and engagement by expanding the range of teaching strategies in some lessons, so that all achieve the standard reached by the best.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**1**

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. They make good progress in their lessons because of teachers' consistent reinforcement. Key Stage 2 pupils made extra-ordinary efforts to reach and grab a toy because encouraging adults generated great excitement, introducing a competitive element. Pupils in Key Stage 4 make the best progress in lessons where they are actively engaged. Performing African music ensured rapid learning of new beats and great enjoyment. Improved use of up- to- the- minute information and communications technology has supported the achievement of pupils, particularly in their communication skills.

Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development. They know how to keep themselves safe and healthy, their spiritual, social, moral and emotional development is excellent and their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils flourish because they feel valued and secure. Their excellent relationships and varied real-life experiences help them to contribute well to the school community. Residential experiences promote independence skills powerfully. Pupils enjoy physical activity, learning to understand their disabilities. They gain great confidence when working with members of a local care home and performing at a local theatre. Sensitive and ethical issues are addressed squarely. Pupils learn to consider different cultures through foreign travel. They become tolerant of differences in their dealings with their peers.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	*
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

## How effective is the provision?

Pupils make outstanding progress in lessons, where teachers use imaginative ways of reinforcing learning, acknowledging pupils' preferred method of communication, using relevant contexts and maximising multi-sensory resources. The best lessons are planned to extend pupils' experiences and identify individually tailored outcomes. In occasional lessons, where the pace is less challenging, pupils' previous learning and achievement are not used to focus planning. Records of pupils' progress are full and generally very informative, but not always analytical in terms of what pupils have achieved and the next steps.

The curriculum is outstanding because it is rich and wide. It is innovative and at the forefront of developments in personal, social and health education for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties. The emphasis on physical education, expressive arts and information and communication technology make it highly relevant for pupils. The immersion room is an excellent resource for pupils and well used. There is an exceptionally wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities related to poetry, dance, theatre and sports on four days of the week and at the weekends. The resources utilised through Specialist College status make the school a focus for activities in the local community and other local schools.

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The quality of care, support and guidance of pupils is second to none. The school puts the child within the family at the centre of all its work. A parent observed, that staff, 'keep you in the loop about everything no matter how small'. Other indicators are excellent safeguarding procedures, sensitive and enabling transitions, and some exceptionally high attendance of parents at annual reviews. The school goes to extra-ordinary lengths to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged, for example, some teachers have learned Polish in order to communicate more effectively with children.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are outstanding. Despite differences in the ethos of the amalgamating schools, Oak Field has been melded into a coherent whole through the skill and energy of the headteacher, ably supported by his deputy. The school's management have established systems for monitoring pupils' progress that are rigorous and comprehensive, and a robust baseline has been established. Middle managers are effective in addressing inconsistent practice in teaching, which is driving up standards. The governing body is outstanding. It is exceptionally well-informed and active, and discharges its statutory duties with great insight and integrity. The school has excellent relationships with parents. This is reflected in comments such as 'the school has empowered our child beyond our expectations'. Parent working groups have been established, for example to address issues such as sex and relationships education. A Muslim parents' group has recently been formed. A partnership with like schools has enabled productive discussions regarding expectations and common issues. Safeguarding is energetically and regularly monitored. Staff and governors are well trained and have an extremely high level of awareness. The school is working with a local university and is at the forefront in the use of new technology to better meet the needs of its pupils. Sporting partnerships are excellent, while lessons in expressive arts are the highlight of the week for many pupils joining from other schools. The school makes a strong contribution to promoting community cohesion, as is evidenced in pupils' outstanding personal development. It has not yet monitored the impact of its work on the local community.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision is outstanding. The needs of the children joining the school are becoming increasingly complex. Nevertheless, they make rapid progress in their ability to respond, in their movement and their awareness of the world around them. A parent of a child in the Early Years Foundation Stage says that her daughter has 'developed beyond belief in the short time she has attended Oak Field'. Staff are sensitive, respectful and informed. Their high expectations are tempered by great good humour and encouragement. Children were included in discussion about their progress following a movement session. A child reluctant to walk was encouraged to walk part of the way to the toilet, despite her protests. Leadership and management of the key stage are outstanding and enable seamless high-level support for children. Comprehensive records of children's progress in relation to their needs are minutely observed and recorded and activities are exactly matched to needs. Development planning is sharply focused on the basis of rigorous monitoring.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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## Sixth form

Students excel in the sixth form because the learning is extremely well linked to vocational skills and to personal and social development. More-able students demonstrated excellent understanding of health issues by taking part in a game in the style of Who Wants to be a Millionaire. Others demonstrated the immense anger and bitterness experienced by the king when acting scenes from Scheherazade and gave each other critical feedback. Those with the most extreme barriers to learning actively responded to the stimulus of planting bulbs and one was able to read a poem with the aid of computer technology. They run an extremely successful gardening cooperative where past students return to work as 'experts'. The teaching is outstanding because it ensures that all students are stimulated to become actively engaged in challenging activities. The curriculum is well conceived, based on entry-level vocational courses, and includes work experience with local businesses. All students leave school with a range of external qualifications and an increasing number are gaining a GCSE in expressive arts. The success of the sixth form is due to exceptional and highly informed leadership and management, rigorous monitoring of the inspiring individualised provision.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

## Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly complimentary about the school, often referring to the high standard of provision, the commitment of the staff and the leadership and management of the school. The inspection team concurs with their views. The response rate is similar to that of other special schools.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oak Field School and Specialist Sports College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 146 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	73	9	23	2	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	83	5	13	2	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	70	7	18	3	8	2	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	60	12	30	2	5	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	29	73	8	20	1	3	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	65	9	23	3	8	2	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	68	10	25	1	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	55	11	28	2	5	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	75	7	18	2	5	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	63	11	28	3	8	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	75	6	15	2	5	2	5
The school is led and managed effectively	27	68	10	25	2	5	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	78	5	13	3	8	1	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and 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 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.

**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.**



17 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Oak Field School and Specialist Sports College, Nottingham, NG8 3HW**

Thank you so much for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed finding out about all the good things that happen at Oak Field. We enjoyed talking to you, taking part in your lessons and looking at your work.

We found your school to be outstanding, one of the best. This is because your teachers are helping you to develop so well as young people. We were delighted to see how much you understand about being safe and healthy, and how much you want to learn. You work very hard in lessons, especially those where you have active enjoyable experiences to help you remember. You have such an effective and attractive new school. It was good to see you enjoying all the different activities that the teachers provide for you. We were most impressed by your immersion room.

We have asked your teachers to make your lessons even better by ensuring that all your lessons are as exciting and engaging as the best, so that you have the opportunity to achieve your targets in all of them.

You might help them to do this by asking the school council to explain to teachers which lesson you most enjoy.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Hooper

Lead inspector

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