

# Ivy House School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113047
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	357251
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Melvyn Blackband

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 special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	73
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	13
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sandra Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pippa Sillitoe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Moorway Lane Littleover, Derby DE23 2FS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 777920
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Fourteen lessons were observed along with nine teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation about the school's safeguarding, curriculum and developmental school planning. Inspectors also looked at 18 parent questionnaires and 11 pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- What is the quality of the school's procedures for assessing pupils' performance and the consequent accuracy and challenge of target setting?
- What is the quality of additional provision to promote the pupils' communication and whether this provision ensures that pupils make good progress?
- What are the standards of pupils' personal development?
- How effectively do the school's leaders and the governing body monitor and evaluate the work of the school?

## Information about the school

Ivy House provides for pupils with complex learning needs, many of whom have a severe physical/sensory disability. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Some pupils have severe learning difficulties whilst a great majority have profound and multiple learning difficulties. About one third of pupils have complex medical needs which include chronic and degenerative conditions. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds with a minority of Asian origin. Almost half of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Because of pupils' difficulties, their attainments are exceptionally low with many remaining at an early stage of development.

Since the previous inspection the school has relocated to purpose built premises and shares a campus with a mainstream secondary school.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Ivy House is a good school where the pupils receive the highest standards of care and support. The safeguarding of pupils is excellent. As a result, the pupils, many of whom have immensely complex and debilitating learning difficulties, are happy and relaxed and thoroughly enjoy school. Relationships with parents and carers are very good. Parents and carers are confident that their children are well looked after and that the school is meeting their needs. One parent reflected the views of the vast majority in stating, 'I am very impressed by the care and support given to my child by every member of staff.' There are very productive partnerships between teachers, support assistants, nursing and other health professionals and therapists. These partnerships ensure that pupils with the most complex needs are able to benefit as much as possible from the school's teaching.

Despite their learning difficulties, the pupils make good progress in their basic skills and physical development. As a result, their self-confidence and desire for independence grows and they make good progress also in their personal development. They behave very well and attendance for this type of school is above average. The pupils have a good understanding and appreciation of their school community. They unfailingly support one another and try their best to be helpful to teachers and other pupils. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The pupils have a high level of tolerance and respect for each others' disabilities and for the cultural and religious diversity in their school. The school is aware, however, that it is at the early stages of auditing and planning provision to promote community cohesion beyond the school. As a result, the pupils, although they have a very good understanding and respect for the diversity of races and cultures at their school, do not apply this to the wider British society.

The pupils' development is underpinned by good teaching. Since the previous inspection, teachers have substantially improved the process of assessment of the small steps in progress which pupils make. All the adults in classrooms take a full share in observing pupils' reactions and responses. They note any element of progress and teachers use this information to ensure they focus their teaching on each pupil's next step in learning.

The curriculum is good because teachers consistently adapt learning activities to meet the needs of each pupil. The relative weakness in numeracy, for instance, noted at the previous inspection, has been successfully dealt with. The pupils are challenged to do well by the teachers' high expectations of their progress. Their communication is generally well supported, although very occasional inconsistencies were noted during the inspection. The staff have considerable expertise in using alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) strategies. Pupils use symbols, switches and signing and this effectively enables them to have a 'voice', to express choices and to assert their independence. The pupils with additional communication difficulties such as autism find this support especially helpful and beneficial.

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The headteacher and senior staff manage the school well. They lead by example, supporting pupils and staff. Staff, parents and carers have confidence in their leadership and morale at the school is high. There are comprehensive systems to collect and track information on the pupils' progress. The senior team is aware, however, that the procedures for interpreting and presenting this data should be made more straightforward. The monitoring of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The senior team are active and knowledgeable in monitoring the work in classrooms, but they have not yet sufficiently involved coordinators of subjects in supporting their efforts. The monitoring by the governing body has improved since the previous inspection. The school has a clear process for self-evaluation which provides an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for future development. There is no complacency and staff at all levels are determined to provide the best for the pupils. The leaders' sharp focus on improvement, combined with the good progress made since the previous inspection demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve further.

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

- Ensure effective monitoring of teaching and learning, by:
  - extending and strengthening the role of subject co-ordinators
  - improving the procedures for interpreting and presenting the data on pupils' achievements so that the school is in a better position to evidence the progress that pupils have made.
- Develop the school's work on community cohesion to extend pupils' understanding of diversity beyond the school community.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Due to their extremely complex learning needs, the pupils remain at the early stages of academic development. They make good progress, however, in their basic skills, especially in communication and in their physical and personal development. The school's records show that at each stage in their education most pupils are making at or above the levels of progress expected nationally. A minority of pupils make little progress or even regress because of serious medical conditions. The school does everything it can to support these pupils. There is no evidence that any pupil or group is underachieving. The small steps in progress pupils make is carefully recorded and this leads to clear targets in communication and other basic skills and in a range of physical, personal and independence skills appropriate for each individual. The evidence from scrutiny of the teachers' reviews of individual education plan targets and from observation in the classroom during the inspection, confirms that pupils make good progress in these targets and thoroughly enjoy their work. This was seen for instance in a secondary classroom where pupils experienced all sorts of activities to teach them about India. Pupils looked at, touched and smelled artefacts associated with the country. One girl dressed in traditional costume to the delight of the others. 'Wow!' she said when she looked in a mirror. During the lesson, each pupil's reaction was carefully recorded and the teacher and her assistants skilfully used their teaching to focus on and reinforce the pupils' specific learning targets.

Pupils feel very safe at school since routines for personal care and interaction in lessons are very good and pupils develop excellent relationships with staff. They really enjoy

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school and the companionship of other children. This ensures their behaviour is excellent and plays a significant role in motivating them to come to school as regularly as they can. The provision for the pupils' medical care is first rate. As a result, pupils eat or are fed healthily and they take enthusiastic advantage of the range of occupational therapy and physiotherapy on offer. Pupils make the school a vibrant community. Pupils make choices and express their views about issues which concern them through the many opportunities provided.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</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>	2
<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?

The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers ensure that lessons are exciting and interesting and that individual pupils are given just as much help and support as they need. This was seen to good effect in a lesson for older pupils where they chose which 'pop' video to watch. All the pupils joined in enthusiastically and through the good use of aids such as symbols and switches, they were able, with varying levels of communication, to successfully direct staff to play the one they wanted. As a result, the pupils enjoyed the lesson and all made good progress in developing their ability and confidence in using these aids to make their voice heard. Adults work well in teams and because they know the pupils so well and record all their small steps in progress, they are

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able to adapt each pupil's activities to ensure they make good progress. Teachers pay careful attention to the pupils' positioning and comfort to ensure they can concentrate fully. Pupils are confident in the support of every adult and because of this, they try their best.

The curriculum is broad and balanced to ensure that the pupils develop their academic, physical and personal skills in each activity. Teachers have planned good schemes of work and monitor provision carefully. To supplement their learning, pupils experience a range of therapies, including aromatherapy and holistic massage, for example. Teachers successfully use individual education plans to plan for pupils' progress in each area. Occasionally however, planning is insufficiently detailed to give support staff a completely clear idea how to proceed and this can slow down the pace of learning. Pupils experience a variety of integrated learning in topics, for instance in a range of sensory art, drama, cookery and music activities. This helps to reinforce their learning. Pupils have exciting opportunities to enhance their learning through visits. The residential trips to Normandy and to Skegness help them develop their personal skills and independence.

The pupils receive the highest quality of care and support. Health, social care and school staff work in very effective teams to ensure that provision for the pupils' medical and care needs is outstanding. There is an excellent impact on pupils' health through the Mobility Opportunities Via Education (MOVE) programme. For instance, the pupils took part in international celebrations and in a 'Strictly Come Dancing' competition between classes. There are very good arrangements to ensure pupils make the transition between classes without anxiety and the annual review process takes full account of pupils', parents and carers wishes, particularly when the pupils are ready to leave school.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The experience and expertise of the headteacher and senior staff have enabled them to 'hold the ship steady' while going through a period of upheaval as the school moved to new premises. The governing body has provided strong support during this period. It is gradually developing robust procedures to hold the school to account. The school evaluates its own progress effectively. The pupils' performance in the basic skills of communication, numeracy and science are tracked securely, although relevant data, because of a major change to the system of assessment, are not presently interpreted and presented in a way which provides an entirely clear picture of progress. Senior staff have a good general overview of pupils' progress because of their regular monitoring. They have not yet developed the supervisory role of subject coordinators sufficiently to ensure

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that pupils' progress is closely tracked in every area of the curriculum. As a result, the promotion of equal opportunities is good rather than outstanding. There are beneficial partnerships with health and social care agencies and there are developing links with the co-located high school, although the school's leaders see the advantages of forming stronger ties. The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are excellent and exceed national guidelines. All policies and procedures for child protection and staff recruitment are rigorous and thoroughly monitored by senior staff and the governing body. Pupils develop a good understanding of their own community. However, the school has not yet securely audited its provision or constructed relevant action plans to give pupils a clear enough understanding of the diversity of British society.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their learning and make good progress. They are made as aware as possible of how to stay safe and keep healthy. They quickly form trusting relationships and learn to communicate their likes and dislikes to staff. The quality of teaching is good. Staff work in effective teams with health and other agencies to ensure children learn effectively. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned and meets the children's differing needs and interests. The assessment of the children's progress is effective and very thorough but is not presented clearly enough to show easily how well the children are making progress in every area. The provision is well managed. Leaders have successfully conveyed their high expectations to staff. There is good communication between all adults and robust monitoring ensures that teaching and the care of children is focused on their needs.



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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Sixth form

Pupils aged from 14 to 19 benefit from well designed personalised programmes, geared to their interests and ability. They are involved in a developing range of activities outside school, which have a substantial impact on their personal skills and self confidence. As a result, they greatly enjoy their learning. Their behaviour is outstanding and their attendance above average. Through sensitive teaching, they make good progress in basic skills and in programmes to help them adjust to adult life. This results in all the students gaining accreditation through the 'Moving On' programme. Teachers and other staff are well led and managed and this has a positive impact on the pupils' achievement. Teaching builds on their previous learning and challenges them by adapting their activities to take account of a range of practical skills. As a result of excellent transition planning, pupils are well prepared for life after school. They make good progress in all aspects of their personal development. They mature in confidence and in their ability to help plan and carry out a range of activities.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many parents and carers drew attention to the dedication of the staff and how well their children have progressed since joining the school. They report that their children are happy and secure and that they have every confidence in the school's care. A very small number of parents and carers disagreed that pupils were well prepared for changes such as leaving school but the inspection evidence confirmed that arrangements are secure and have a positive impact on the pupils' wellbeing.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ivy House School 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 18 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 73 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	67	6	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	14	78	4	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	12	67	6	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	72	5	28	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	78	4	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	72	5	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	72	5	28	0	0	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)	11	61	4	22	1	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	78	4	22	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	67	6	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	61	7	39	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	72	5	28	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	83	3	17	0	0	0	0

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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.**



7 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Ivy House School, Derby, DE23 2FS**

We recently visited your school to see how you were getting on. Thank you for making us welcome. After we looked round, we decided that you go to a good school. Here are some of the things that stood out as being good about your school.

You work hard and make good progress in your work and in your personal development. Your behaviour is excellent.

The many different people at the school look after you very well.

You do lots of interesting activities, including those that help you to become independent and make choices.

All the adults work very hard to give you as much help as possible and they are good at preparing interesting work for each of you.

Your headteacher and the senior staff run the school well and everyone, including your parents and carers, gives them strong support.

We have asked your headteacher and the governing body to make the school even better by doing the following things.

Keep a clearer record of how much progress you make.

Help you understand better about all the different kinds of people in Britain.

You can help too by working hard.

Yours sincerely

Melvyn Blackband

Lead inspector

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