

# Meath School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125478
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	359898
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 January 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Timothy Feast

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

The inspection of social care was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	49
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joe Eagle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janet Dunn OBE
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Brox Road Ottershaw Chertsey KT16 0LF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01932872302
<b>Fax number</b>	01932 875180
<b>Email address</b>	meath@meath-ican.org.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	5–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 January 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	359898

**Boarding provision**

**Social care Unique Reference Number**

**Social care inspector**

---

<b>Age group</b>	5–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 January 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	359898

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited eight lessons, taught by eight different teachers. The inspector also observed sessions led by speech and language therapists and by occupational therapists. Meetings were held with staff and pupils. Telephone conversations were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and with senior leaders of other organisations who work in partnership with the school. Pupils' work, information on their progress, behaviour and attendance, safeguarding information, and other documents were evaluated. Questionnaires from 37 parents and carers, 5 day pupils, 9 boarding pupils and 46 staff were scrutinised.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether the achievement of different groups of pupils is similar.
- Whether senior leaders have had a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and assessment.
- Whether school leaders promote levels of community cohesion effectively.

## Information about the school

The school is a day and residential school for pupils with severe speech, language and communication difficulties. Most pupils have a complex profile of needs including learning, medical sensory and motor coordination difficulties. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Over three quarters of the pupils are in Years 3 to Year 6 and from White British backgrounds. None are in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Almost a third of the pupils are girls. Four of the pupils are full time boarders and five others part-time, but nearly all other pupils stay in the residential accommodation on a rolling termly programme (about twelve children are resident per night. The school is owned and operated by a national charity, I CAN.

**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

Meath School provides an outstanding education for all its pupils, catering exceptionally well for the mixture of complex needs of the pupils. They make outstanding progress in both their academic and their personal development through the very effective partnership between education, therapy and care staff. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are right that this is an excellent school. One reflected the views of almost all by writing that, 'It pushes them to be independent and function to their optimum ... in a family-feel, efficient and progressive environment-outstanding!'

The school has successfully maintained and built upon outstanding performance since the last inspection. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher, in conjunction with other senior leaders, provides the drive and ambition to keep the school at the forefront of innovative provision to meet the particular needs of the pupils. School leaders, including the members of the governing body, know the school's strengths very well and what needs to be refined further. The school has an accurate view of itself. School leaders have created an ethos where all are focused relentlessly on improvement. As a result, the school's capacity to continue improving is excellent.

Pupils are placed in classes according to their speech, language and communication capacities rather than on a purely chronological basis. Pupils placed in the class for those with the least capacity initially, get off to an excellent start and make outstanding progress. Throughout the school, the overwhelming majority of pupils continue to make exceptional progress through a combination of outstanding teaching, effectively focused therapy work and exemplary care. Pupils benefit greatly from a wide range of therapeutic and medical strategies to meet their additional needs, including speech and language specialists and occupational therapists. The boarding provision is outstanding in its contribution to pupils' academic and personal development.

Pupils say they feel very safe at school and are kept safe through the school's rigorous vetting procedures and by the upgrading of facilities to maximise site security. Pupils enjoy the extensive range of activities that the school provides in offering a curriculum which is very effective in meeting their needs. The school does much to promote its place in the local community, particularly through the confederation of local schools. The promotion of community cohesion is underpinned by a careful audit and analysis of the various factors in the school's context. While links with the local and other communities are promoted well, opportunities are missed in some of the topics to raise pupils' awareness of, and preparation for, living and working in a culturally diverse United Kingdom.

**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

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

- Enhance pupils' understanding of their place in a culturally diverse United Kingdom and extend the school's provision for community cohesion by:
  - modifying the school's schemes of works by July 2011 so that the range of opportunities for pupils to experience and celebrate the diversity of cultures in the United Kingdom and further afield is increased.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Observations of lessons and other activities confirmed that, throughout the school, all groups of pupils make excellent progress with both their academic and personal development. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Pupils demonstrate increasing skills of working both independently and in collaboration with classmates. Pupils from Year 5 particularly enjoyed setting one another challenging number problems to solve and were really pleased when their classmates found the right answers. There were many examples of pupils helping one another, either with their work or when facing other difficulties. These positive attitudes help create an ethos for learning that was evident in all sessions. The outstanding progress is firmly rooted in meeting pupils' specific individual needs through a team approach to tackling underlying causes of pupils' difficulties.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They make excellent progress with their social and moral development as the school provides extensive opportunities to develop them, for example through off-site visits and visitors to school and through discussion of ethical questions. Pupils respond well to encouragement to maintain a healthy lifestyle, enjoying physical activities such as swimming and valuing the nutritious school lunches. Their self-esteem is raised considerably through opportunities to perform in public through school productions and cultural collaborations such as musicals through the confederation.

Pupils demonstrate excellent contributions to the school and wider communities through activities such as the school council. Their views are acted upon, for example the establishment of the 'happy shop' where reward tokens are exchanged. Pupils' attendance is in line with national figures; many of the absences are for medical reasons, linked to pupils' specific difficulties and disabilities and this makes it difficult to raise it to above national figures. Pupils' development of key skills of numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) is good; the development of their literacy skills is exceptional.

**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

*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	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<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>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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</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 sixth form schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

## How effective is the provision?

Staff have very high expectations of pupils and carefully plan the work and other support to meet pupils' specific individual needs. An integrated approach from the team is adopted within each class and all the team is deployed extremely well. Teachers use their specialist knowledge to great effect, building on the work of the other professionals in the team. Resources, including ICT, are used very well. Staff know their pupils extremely well, using this knowledge to build outstanding relationships with them. Where necessary, behaviour management strategies are used consistently and effectively. The systematic assessment of pupils' progress is accurate and used effectively to plan the next steps for their development. These assessments are used to minimise any underachievement or slowing down of progress and to identify the necessary strategies to rectify this. In the best lessons pupils were observed in both peer and self-assessment, although they were more confident when evaluating their own work.

The exciting and innovative curriculum meets the extensive range of needs well. Memorable activities include the enactment of 'The Wedding' and trips to local places of interest such as Bekonscot model village. Particularly effective enrichment activities include pupils being members of the local youth club and cub pack.

**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

Parents and carers are extremely appreciative of the care and support their children receive. They value the guidance given by the school to help them with their children's education. There is a seamless approach between education and care and the boarding provision significantly promotes the academic and personal well-being of the pupils, helping to raise their self-esteem and keeping them healthy and safe. Staff work very effectively with other agencies, including health professionals. All pupils are carefully monitored. Individually-tailored programmes are put in place to meet their specific needs. Pupils are given excellent support when joining the school. Older pupils told the inspector that they are given excellent guidance for the next steps in their education. The work of the family support worker and the daily contact books for parents and carers of day pupils contribute enormously to parental confidence in the support and guidance that pupils are given.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<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?

The headteacher provides outstanding drive and leadership, to sustain an excellent school and has the ambition to improve it even further. She has established a very effective leadership team across education, therapy and care, which has demonstrated its capacity to bring about improvement. Teamwork is the key to the school's success, morale is high and all staff feel valued. Their work is much appreciated by all concerned. Staff focus relentlessly on further improvement and work extremely well together. As one staff member wrote, reflecting the views of many, 'Staff are consistently raising the bar for themselves and for the learners.'

School self-evaluation is accurate. This information is used effectively to set new improvement targets. Promoting equality, tackling discrimination and removing barriers to learning are at the heart of the school's work. School leaders are exceedingly effective in getting the different groups of pupils to progress outstandingly well, both academically and personally. Governance is good; the governing body is positively involved in the process of school improvement, challenging decisions and requesting explanations where necessary. It holds the school to account in a challenging but supportive manner. Excellent attention is paid by school leaders at all levels to ensure the highest quality of safety and care for pupils. There are, for example, excellent procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils through the checks made on all adults who work in the school. Pupils' safety and well-being are paramount at all times. School leaders responded positively to parental views that the perimeter fence should be improved. The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is good and pupils get on noticeably well. Pupils have a clear understanding from a school and local perspective. This understanding



**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

reflects the school's effective plans for promotion in the school and immediate community. Local schools value the contribution Meath makes to the personal development of their pupils. The curriculum planning to celebrate diversity from a wider perspective is not sufficiently a key focus in some schemes of work. However, school leaders bring a national and international reputation of excellence in their specialism.

*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	1
<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>2</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

Over three quarters of the parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are happy with what the school provides and are particularly pleased with the quality of teaching and how the school keeps their children safe. One parent wrote, 'This school has exceeded all our expectations ? we thank God every day for this facility.' The inspector endorses the parents' and carers' positive views about the school and judges that pupils make outstanding academic and personal progress while at the school.

*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

**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

## Boarding provision

Children, parents and carers receive relevant and comprehensive information about the school and the services it provides. The school's admissions criteria and procedures are clear. Individual children receive key information about the residential unit in formats they can readily access.

The staff group is well established and highly competent. Staff development and training is comprehensive. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced; many having worked in the unit for several years. Care staff are committed to working effectively with children and are passionate about their work. The staff group are well supervised and they appreciate senior managers' 'open door' approach to support and advice.

The management and leadership of the boarding provision are strong and children clearly benefit from this. The school's quality assurance mechanisms are highly effective and its monitoring systems are sound. Staff maintain keen documentation of all key events. The head of care, senior managers and the Standard 33 visitor regularly review records to ensure the school continues to provide expert, high quality care. Children enjoy a highly efficient, well run boarding provision at the school.

### National Minimum Standards (NMS) to be met to improve social care

- All the National Minimum Standards have been met.

*These are the grades for the boarding provision*

<b>The effectiveness of the boarding provision</b>	<b>1</b>
--	----------

## Views of parents and carers

Over three quarters of the parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are happy with what the school provides and are particularly pleased with the quality of teaching and how the school keeps their children safe. One parent wrote, 'This school has exceeded all our expectations ♦ we thank God every day for this facility.' The inspector endorses the parents' and carers' positive views about the school and judges that pupils make outstanding academic and personal progress while at the school.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Meath 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 inspector received 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 49 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	62	13	35	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	76	9	24	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	70	9	24	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	59	12	32	3	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	78	8	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	65	12	32	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	68	12	32	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)	20	54	10	27	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	76	7	19	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	65	12	32	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	59	13	35	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	76	8	22	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	81	6	13	1	3	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	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.**



28 January 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Meath School, Chertsey KT16 0LF**

Thank you for helping me feel so welcome when I came to your school. I found Meath to be an outstanding school with excellent boarding provision.

You make enormous progress because all the staff teach you, care for you and support you really well. Your behaviour is excellent and you told me that you feel very safe at school. I could see that you all try very hard and enjoy your lessons. The school is a brilliant place and you told me all the things that make it so special. You get on very well with all the staff and like the activities such as swimming which help to make sure you are healthy. You enjoy breaks and lunchtimes and the good food that is provided. You told me how some of your suggestions are now happening, such as the 'Happy Shop' and friends, helpers and buddies in the playground.

The headteacher and other staff help to make this school so special and they want to make it even better. I have asked them to make sure that the teachers plan different work to help you understand and enjoy how some people live different lives in the United Kingdom.

You can help by continuing to be brilliantly behaved and supporting one another so well.

Yours sincerely

Tim Feast Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**