

Chapel Road School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121260
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	358968
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Godfrey Bancroft

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	8
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Hickman-Smith
Headteacher	Karin Heap
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2007
School address	Chapel Road Attleborough NR17 2DS
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by seven teachers. In addition, they observed parts of seven other lessons. Discussions were held with staff, including the headteacher and senior managers, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors looked at documentation about various aspects of school improvement, the safeguarding of pupils and about the progress that they make. They considered the evidence contained in 18 questionnaires from parents and carers, 37 from pupils and 45 from members of staff.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at a number of areas.

- What is the impact of the school's specialism (communication and interaction) on pupils' learning and progress?
- How effectively does the school use information gained from assessments to plan the next stages of pupils' learning and to meet their individual needs?
- How effectively are the needs of pupils identified as being 'gifted and talented' addressed?
- How does the school's outreach and partnership work contribute to pupils' learning?

Information about the school

Chapel Road School provides for pupils who have a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including profound and multiple learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders. The range of needs supported by the school is always changing and widening. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Many travel significant distances to attend the school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free meals is broadly average. A below average percentage of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small number speak English as an additional language. The school offers inclusion and outreach support for other primary and secondary schools, providing opportunities for some of the pupils to attend mainstream schools. The school has National Healthy School status, the TITAN Excellence Award for promoting pupils' independence and specialist status for communication and interaction.

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	1
Achievement	1
Teaching	1
Leadership and management	1
Behaviour and safety	1
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

- Chapel Road School gives its pupils an outstanding quality of education.
- The responses to the inspection questionnaire show that parents and carers are very pleased with the education the school provides for their children.
- Parents and carers and members of the community are very supportive of the school. Strong links between the school and pupils' families contribute very effectively to their learning.
- Teaching is outstanding, ensuring that pupils make excellent progress and achieve exceptionally well academically and in their personal development. This is particularly true of the progress they make in developing their communication skills. Lessons are exciting and capture pupils' enthusiasm and interest. Teachers skilfully tailor every step in learning closely to the needs of each pupil.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher, senior managers and the governing body are always seeking ways of making the school even better. The school is providing for an ever-changing and widening range of complex needs and it provides for these exceptionally well. Even so, senior leaders are, rightly, modifying the curriculum to ensure they continue to meet pupils' needs as precisely as possible.
- The school's outreach work helps staff in other schools to provide high quality support for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Staff work very effectively to ensure that pupils are safe.
- The school works very effectively to promote pupils' well-being. Pupils work hard during lessons and invariably try to do their very best. They behave exceptionally well. The strong focus on personal development and life skills helps pupils to become mature and increasingly independent. It begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage and provides an effective focus for development all the way through to the sixth form.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In response to the changing intake and widening range of complex needs, embed the revised curriculum to:
 - give added focus to linking pupils' learning across different subjects in the primary phase
 - extend opportunities for developing work-related learning to younger pupils.

Main report

The work of the school is highly valued by parents and carers, the community and especially by pupils. One parent typified the views of many, saying, 'This school is exceptional and has done wonders for our son.' Another, rightly, said, 'All the staff are extremely dedicated to their specialist work. They are supported by an excellent leadership team and an inspirational headteacher.' There is very effective liaison with partner schools, both when pupils start and when they reach the stage where some are ready to re-integrate into mainstream schools. When pupils transfer to other schools, their progress is tracked carefully and excellent support is provided for mainstream staff. As part of the school's commitment to preparing pupils for rejoining mainstream schools, several pupils spend much of their time being taught at the nearby junior school and working alongside classmates from that school. The school provides highly successful courses for staff from other schools to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. During the inspection, the senior manager in charge of outreach activities provided a signing course for bus drivers and escorts who are involved in bringing pupils to school, serving to illustrate the commitment of the school to providing professional development for all the staff.

Pupils achieve outstandingly well and make exceptional progress, invariably from low starting points, given the complex learning difficulties they face. Children are provided with an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they experience a carefully-structured programme of learning. From their various starting points, primary-aged pupils make excellent progress in their reading. Progress in the sixth form is also outstanding, especially the way in which students are prepared for adult life and become increasingly independent. Teachers focus particularly on developing pupils' basic skills in communication, literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. They do this very successfully, enabling pupils to make outstanding progress in literacy and numeracy. The school's specialism of communication and interaction is part of each lesson and every activity. It has a very positive impact on the development of every pupil's communication skills.

Pupils make excellent progress in their personal development. The school puts a strong emphasis on enabling pupils to become increasingly mature and independent. This is especially notable for those pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders. It

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also prepares them very successfully for adult life and, wherever possible, the world of work. In this respect, life in the sixth form for the oldest students makes a very positive contribution. During the inspection, several students, as part of the school's carefully-structured life skills programme, visited the nearby supermarket. Some were able to walk there independently, shop for the products they required for their planned cookery session and pay for their goods at the checkouts. The life skills programme is so successful that some pupils travel independently by train to Norwich to use the municipal swimming pool. Pupils are well prepared for such events, having first learned to swim in the school's pool and having made increasingly long train journeys.

The high quality of continued professional development for all staff underpins the outstanding teaching and support provided for pupils. Teachers plan every lesson precisely to meet the needs of each pupil. The progress of individual pupils is assessed accurately, frequently and thoroughly. This provides the basis for teachers to plan the next steps in learning. Learning opportunities are then split into short, manageable sections that pupils can cope with. However, teachers are always alert to the need to modify their approach in the light of pupils' responses. Many lessons are typified by short bursts of learning that are revisited in order to consolidate and reinforce important points. Throughout this process, teachers maintain pupils' attention and interest very skilfully and every opportunity is taken to promote pupils' communication skills effectively. The support that teaching assistants provide for pupils is outstanding. Pupils develop trust in the work of their teaching assistants, who in turn take great care to ensure that pupils do not become overly reliant. The school has identified several pupils who have particular gifts and talents, for example, in mathematics, music and information and communication technology. Expectations of what these pupils can achieve are high and suitable challenges are prepared as part of each lesson. The theme of high expectations and challenge extends to the work set for every pupil and is evident from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to the sixth form.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development also has a high profile. Pupils develop great respect for each other through the encouragement of staff and the ways in which adults act as excellent role models. Pupils also work together well in groups. Assemblies, drama, music, and sensory development activities all contribute greatly to pupils' excellent spiritual development. During the inspection, an assembly about bee-keeping enthralled pupils and enabled them to reveal their considerable knowledge about the topic. The school promotes community cohesion exceptionally well. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school and local community and are knowledgeable about the wider world, especially in the sixth form. This is apparent for younger pupils from their recent project about Scotland and other places further afield. The local community provides an excellent resource for supporting pupils' learning. Many local business people are delighted to provide work experience opportunities for pupils, and they are frequent and popular visitors at local shops.

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The school makes excellent provision for the full range of needs it supports. Even so, it is facing the ongoing challenge of meeting the needs of pupils who have a changing and ever-widening range of complex learning difficulties. With this in mind, the curriculum is being modified to link learning in different subjects, where there are overlaps, even more closely. This is targeted particularly at the learning of the younger pupils. There is already a very effective and wide-ranging programme of work-related learning for older pupils that is being extended to meet the needs of younger pupils even more effectively. These changes are typical of how the headteacher, senior managers and the governing body are constantly seeking to make provision even better. Members of the governing body are knowledgeable about all aspects of the school's work and are central to challenging senior managers to sustain the high quality of provision. They are also great advocates for the school's work. The last inspection challenged the school to promote a more consistent use of signing across all aspects of its work. As part of its specialism of communication and interaction, it has addressed this very successfully, serving to illustrate the school's outstanding capacity to sustain improvements and develop further. Some of the buildings on the school site are far from ideal for their intended purpose. With this in mind, the governing body has begun negotiations to move to a new site.

Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and talk with great enthusiasm about their experiences. The school goes to great lengths to ensure that all pupils are treated equally, no matter what their background or circumstances. Attendance is broadly average. The school is rightly strict in its approach to any unacceptable reasons for pupils' non-attendance. However, many pupils experience poor health and this, through no fault of their own, has a detrimental impact on the attendance of some. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Occasionally, because of the challenges they face, the behaviour of some pupils can become challenging. However, at such times the support provided for pupils is outstanding and invariably has a calming effect. Pupils and their parents and carers are very positive about the behaviour in school. Parents and carers also express their confidence about their children's safety while at school. Bullying is almost non-existent and isolated incidents are handled with care and sensitivity. One pupil said he was unable to answer the question (on the pupils' questionnaire) about how the school handles instances of bullying, because he had never been bullied in any way. Great care is taken to ensure that pupils are safe and the safety of pupils who, because of their learning difficulties, are potentially vulnerable is given a particularly high profile. The school is very successful in raising the awareness of all pupils about the possible dangers they might face. This applies to everyday activities, from crossing the road to understanding the important differences between right and wrong and acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for themselves and others.

Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive. Pupils greatly appreciate the celebration of their successes and consistent recognition of their efforts which helps to raise their self-esteem and confidence.

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Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chapel Road 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 18 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 58 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	16	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
Q2 My child feels safe at school	16	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	16	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	15	83	3	17	0	0	0	0
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	17	94	1	6	0	0	0	0
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	17	94	0	0	0	0	0	0
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	15	83	3	17	0	0	0	0
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	11	61	7	39	0	0	0	0
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	15	83	1	6	0	0	0	0
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	15	83	3	17	0	0	0	0
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	16	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
Q12 The school is well led and managed	17	94	1	6	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

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"> ■ The achievement of all pupils. ■ Behaviour and safety. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The effectiveness of leadership and management. <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
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.



25 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chapel Road School, Attleborough, NR17 2DS

You may recall we visited the school recently for its inspection. We were very impressed by many of the things we saw and found that your school gives you an outstanding education. We greatly appreciated your help in telling us all about the things you do. My thanks go especially to the sixth form for letting me go to the supermarket with them. I hope that one day I will be able to manage the automatic checkouts as well as you do.

Your teachers and teaching assistants take great care to make sure you do work that is exactly suited to your needs. They also do everything they can to make sure you are safe. We were particularly impressed by the ways in which your teachers help you to communicate with them and with each other and by the ways they help those of you who are a little older to prepare for adult life. You behave exceptionally well and work very hard in lessons. This is excellent, because we know that for many of you learning is not always easy, but you always try to do your best. You, rightly, deserve great credit for this and we know you and your parents and carers appreciate the help you receive.

Your headteacher, the staff and the governing body are always looking for ways of making Chapel Road an even better school. In trying to find the best possible ways of meeting all your learning needs, they are going to look closely at linking your learning in different subjects, which we are sure you will find helpful. They are also going to extend the programme for learning about the world of work so younger pupils may be involved even more.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Godfrey Bancroft
Lead inspector

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