

Stubbin Wood School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113036
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378631
Inspection dates	8–9 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Martyn Groucutt

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Brickles
Headteacher	Lee Floyd
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2009
School address	Burlington Avenue Langwith Junction Mansfield NG20 9AD
Telephone number	01623 742795
Fax number	01623 742122
Email address	info@stubbinwood.derbyshire.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who observed 11 lessons taught by 11 different teachers. They held meetings with senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, pupils and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, teachers' planning and marking, information on pupils' progress, and policies and procedures including arrangements for safeguarding pupils. A total of 28 questionnaires from parents and carers were taken into account, together with 39 from staff and 47 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Is data collected on individual pupils' performance used effectively enough to inform classroom teaching so that each pupil's progress is maximised?
- How effectively does the school use its expertise in supporting other schools and institutions?
- To what extent do staff across the whole school share and reflect the clear vision of the school's leadership?
- How well does the school work with parents and carers and a range of external professionals to maximise its care and support for pupils.

Information about the school

Stubbin Wood is a special school that provides education for pupils with moderate, severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties, or who have an autistic spectrum disorder. Many have associated needs such as language and communication disorders, or behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. In recent years the numbers with more severe or complex difficulties has increased markedly as a percentage of the total number of pupils. Virtually all pupils are White British and none are learning English as an additional language. Around two-thirds of the pupils are boys and the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The school provides Early Years Foundation Stage provision for the neighbourhood, which contains a number of places for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This allows specialist assessments of their needs to be undertaken to facilitate the best future placement to meet their needs.

The school has a number of awards including the Investors in People, International Schools, Sports Mark, Careers Mark, Arts Mark and Basic Skills Mark awards, and has Healthy Schools status. It is currently awaiting the completion of new buildings which will see it co-locate with the local mainstream secondary academy on a new site. Planning is at an advanced stage to facilitate this transition.

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

Stubbin Wood is an outstanding school. Pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points because their needs are so well understood and catered for. Since its last inspection it has continued to improve. Most notably the school now captures data on individual pupils' performance and uses it exceptionally well to set very high expectations and track individual progress very robustly. As a result, pupils are constantly challenged to do their very best within a 'can-do' approach. As one parent put it 'My child has come on so much, he is growing in confidence, and enjoys going to school and being part of it all, which we never thought possible a few years ago'.

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and his style of leadership gives the whole staff a sense of being valued. Staff, consequently, understand and share a common vision and display total commitment to the success of the school. Governance is good and the expertise of governors supports and challenges the school in promoting excellence. The governing body is playing a prominent and effective role in the co-location of the school to a new site.

The school has established a national and international reputation through its links, which include twinning with a similar school in Shanghai. This has led to reciprocal visits which have promoted positive understanding amongst pupils of people from other cultures and communities. This international understanding has been further enhanced by visits to other places around Europe. Excellent links within the United Kingdom also do much to foster pupils' understanding of people from backgrounds different to their own, or enable pupils to benefit from chances to challenge themselves through wide ranging opportunities for residential and adventure visits. There are some limitations in the facilities for pupils with complex/severe learning disabilities.

Overall, the quality of teaching is outstanding. The high ratio of staff to pupils helps to support progress because the class-based teams are so very effective. They plan together and lessons are delivered that ensure that the needs of every individual pupil are addressed outstandingly well. Teachers and teaching assistants are expert practitioners because their professional development needs have been so well addressed. Professional development opportunities have enabled several staff to gain appropriate qualifications in higher education, but equal emphasis is placed on developing and using in-house expertise for the benefit of the whole school and other local schools. For example, there are opportunities for local mainstream pupils at risk of permanent exclusion to succeed in gaining external qualifications.

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The curriculum is outstanding and meets pupils' individual needs. Because they are so effectively engaged, pupils enjoy coming to school, attendance is above average and behaviour is exemplary. For those displaying challenging behaviour, detailed behaviour plans support them in dealing with their difficulties very effectively. Pupils feel safe and are strongly supported in living healthy lifestyles. Physical education and sporting opportunities are outstanding. A high proportion of pupils gain the qualification in sport leadership. Outstanding care, guidance and support, coupled with the detailed understanding of individual needs, ensure that pupils are exceptionally well cared for and prepared for the next phase of their lives when they leave school. This is a reflection of the excellent links with a range of other professionals. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are excellent.

The pursuit of excellence has built on the previously outstanding elements. Detailed and highly effective systems for self-evaluation enable the school to demonstrate an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the existing provision to ensure that the school always has the learning resources available to meet the needs of pupils who have profound and multiple difficulties.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils make outstanding progress. They really enjoy their work. Reception pupils with challenging behaviour were seen focussing on learning rhyming sounds during a lesson on letters and the sounds they make (phonics). Children were extremely effective in using technology in the form of hand microphones, so they were able to record and hear themselves. They were highly focussed on successfully learning patterns of language. Year 11 pupils with moderate learning difficulties read out the pieces they had written for an English assignment and the class used peer assessment to discuss and strengthen their understanding of the topic. Inspectors observed similar successful learning throughout the school. Those pupils with more profound difficulties maximise their skills through a sensory curriculum that maximises their senses of sight, sound, touch and smell as a tool for learning.

Because pupils are so engaged in learning their behaviour is outstanding. Their enthusiasm to contribute to the life of the school, such as through the school council, is exceptional, as is their contribution to local activities such as the Bolsover Voice, an opportunity for adolescents to debate current issues. Pupils from the school participate fully alongside teenagers from the mainstream secondary schools. Wide levels of participation in a variety of sports and adventure activities, often promoted through residential experiences, challenge and stimulate pupils' physically. They also contribute to pupils' excellent adoption of healthy lifestyles and the opportunities for

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adventure activities add a lot to the process. One outcome is enhanced skills of independence and confidence. Pupils gain in literacy, numeracy and technology skills, which provides outstanding support for developing their future economic well-being. Pupils develop a strong sense of morality, frequently helping each other. They have seen at first-hand how people in other societies and countries live and learn to treat everyone with respect and understand diversity at a very practical level.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	*
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils’ behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is at least good and much is outstanding. Teachers have a detailed understanding of their pupils and use data to ensure that learning is always challenging. The teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is exceptional. There is a mutual respect and rapport between adults and pupils that stimulate pupils to do their very best. Lessons are extremely well planned, a process done in conjunction with teaching assistants so that all the adults know what the lesson is about, how they will contribute to it and what the expected outcomes will be. Teachers take full account of targets in individual education plans. Adults have high expectations that pupils will do their very best, and, as a result, pupils respond positively and enjoy learning.

Development of the formal skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is given strong emphasis, while teachers use their wider

¹ 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 for the pupils’ age.

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subject specialisms to excellent effect. Pupils with profound and multiple difficulties and/or disabilities are challenged and stimulated, and opportunities to touch, smell and engage in sensory experiences are utilised well.

The wider curriculum helps pupils to develop confidence, independence, a sense of morality and an ability to enjoy the arts or physical challenges. Often the curriculum is strengthened by exceptionally effective partnerships, which sometimes includes other local schools with whom Stubbin Wood has strong links. A wide range of partners include psychology, psychiatry, therapists and social care professionals, help to maximise the opportunities and support for pupils. In return, the expertise within the school is used to very good effect to support colleagues in other local special and mainstream schools. A good example is the support being given to a partner school in developing the use of the computer package that enables so much information on individual progress to be tabulated.

As a result of the detailed knowledge of every pupil, and the detailed information on the progress they make through school, the care, guidance and support offered to all are outstanding. This includes working with a range of other professionals such as the dedicated Connexions officer, to ensure that transition to college is smooth and that Key Stage 4 courses reflect the type of provision into which the pupil will move after leaving school. It also ensures that pupils are safe throughout their time in school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

It is clear that staff enjoy the opportunities they have to take on areas of responsibility. There is a strong culture of sharing leadership roles. Staff at every level are proud of their school and show outstanding commitment and ambition to make it even better. Governance is effective and members of the governing body have given strong support to ensure the school's smooth progress towards moving into the new location.

Links with parents are very positive. However, while parents' views are often sought by teachers and governors there is currently no way of doing this through, for example, the provision of an interactive web-site. A new web-site, currently under development, is set to improve on the already good links through becoming interactive. When it comes to ensuring outstanding arrangements for safeguarding pupils, the school is proactive in ensuring excellence. It is able to point to several

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examples where it has changed existing practice in order to enhance provision. All staff are fully trained in, and have a strong appreciation of the importance of, safeguarding. Because of careful analysis of any differences between groups the school ensures that no one suffers any inequality of opportunity. Community cohesion is strong at the local level and links with other schools and communities strengthens wider understanding. What is outstanding is the ability of pupils to experience different cultures and countries at first hand, and many can describe the impact this has had on their perceptions.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make outstanding progress. Some places are reserved for children whose special educational needs and/or disabilities are being assessed for later placement. The other children interact with them in positive ways and they learn together side by side in a very safe environment. The Nursery is very well resourced, providing rich and imaginative learning. These enhance the overall quality of provision so that it is outstanding. Strong leadership and management make certain the children’s progress is monitored exceptionally effectively to ensure all achieve outstandingly well. Parents are very appreciative of the pre-school experience enjoyed by their children with outcomes that are exemplary.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers show overwhelming support in all their responses. This reinforces the inspectors' view that this is an outstanding school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stubbin Wood 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 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 133 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	71	6	21	2	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	71	8	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	17	61	10	36	0	0	1	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	64	8	29	0	0	1	4
The teaching is good at this school	19	70	6	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	18	64	8	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	61	10	36	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)	15	54	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	21	75	5	18	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	68	5	18	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	68	8	29	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	71	5	18	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	23	82	2	7	2	7	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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 school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



10 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Stubbin Wood School, Mansfield, NG20 9AD

I am writing to thank you for the wonderful reception you gave us when we visited recently. I am delighted to say that you go to an outstanding school. You told us how much you enjoy school and it is clear that your teachers and teaching assistants work very hard and successfully to enable you to do your best. Mr Floyd and the governors help everyone to do their very best, so all the adults combine to make a great team. You all get on very well together and you enjoy your lessons immensely, behaving so well in a school that keeps you safe.

Because your teachers have lots of information on how well you have been learning they can make sure that they give you work at just the right level. We saw how you like to rise to challenges and this is the main reason why you are able to do so well. You know how to live healthy lives and we were delighted that so many of you are involved with a range of sports and exercise, and have opportunities to enjoy exciting trips away from home, sometimes to other countries. All of the things you learn help you enormously in getting ready for your next steps in life.

Even the best schools can do things to ensure they remain excellent and we are asking Stubbin Wood to ensure that pupils who have very severe needs, who make up a growing number of the total, have enough resources to ensure that they can still be well provided for.

Continue to do your very best at school to gain the qualifications of which you can be proud. I would like to wish you all the very best for your futures.

Yours sincerely

Martyn Groucutt
Lead inspector

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