

Blanche Nevile School

Burlington Road, Muswell Hill, London, N10 1NJ

Inspection dates 2–3 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school because

- The majority of pupils make at least good progress particularly in their communication and literacy skills. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress.
- Since the previous inspection the rate of progress which pupils make has been improved consistently.
- The pupils make excellent progress in their personal development and self-confidence.
- Teaching is good throughout the school and especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the primary department where there is some outstanding teaching.
- Pupils enjoy school. They feel safe and happy within a very caring environment. Their behaviour is excellent given their learning needs. Their attendance is above average. Relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are very positive and supportive.
- The headteacher has led the school well since her appointment after the previous inspection. Together with an able management team, she ensures that every aspect of the school's work is rigorously monitored and improved on, especially the standard of teaching. The school is well supported by an active governing body which provides a good level of challenge to maintain improvements.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are inconsistencies in the recording of the small steps in progress which pupils make. Occasionally some of the resulting target setting is less effective and this slows down the pace of learning.
- There are occasional inconsistencies in the level of monitoring and training received by support staff. This sometimes affects the pupils' opportunities to make good or better progress in communication.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons across both sites, all of which were joint observations with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, middle leaders, the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of parental views expressed in questionnaires issued by school over the previous year. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including development planning and the school's self-evaluation, performance management information, records of the pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance, a sample of the pupils' books and documents relating to the care and safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Melvyn Blackband, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jackie Blount	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school provides for pupils with hearing impairment, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs. The school draws pupils from across 12 London boroughs.
- The majority of pupils are at the early stages of English language acquisition and have associated problems in speech and language development.
- Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds reflecting the make up of the 12 boroughs. Three quarters of pupils are from families who do not speak English as their first language.
- The primary department is based on the site of a local mainstream primary school and the secondary department on the site of a mainstream secondary school. Both departments work in partnership with the mainstream schools and pupils receive some lessons, where appropriate, in the mainstream schools.
- At present, there are no pupils of sixth form age at the school.
- Half of the pupils are eligible for support under the pupil premium initiative, a higher than average proportion.
- The headteacher was appointed in April 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure there is consistency in the recording of the small steps made in the progress of each pupil so that teachers are able to plan focused individual daily and weekly targets to promote even faster progress.
- Ensure there is consistency in the work of all support staff by:
 - managing their performance more effectively and regularly
 - providing supportive and tailored further training to meet the needs of the pupils, and to enhance the effectiveness of individual staff in communicating with pupils, and thus to enhance their knowledge and understanding.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- A large majority of pupils make progress at nationally expected levels and a growing minority at above nationally expected levels. The rate of progress has improved year on year since the previous inspection.
- Pupils enter the school with low attainment levels as a result of their disabilities. The children make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this prepares them well for their school career.
- This rapid progress is continued in the primary department and there is further good progress in the secondary department. Almost all pupils make good progress in communication, either in signing or in oral speech and often in a combination of both. As a result, by the time they leave they have developed into confident communicators.
- By the end of Year 11, all the pupils gain qualifications in a range of areas. The higher ability pupils achieve GCSE passes in mathematics, science and art, whilst others gain accreditation at Entry Level. All the pupils achieve success in a range of vocational areas. From low starting points, the pupils begin to narrow the gap with mainstream pupils, although their attainment in Year 11 remains below that expected of mainstream pupils nationally.
- Progress in reading and writing is good. The pupils are encouraged in each lesson to apply their skills. Their confidence in reading grows quickly and teachers, by careful marking and support, ensure that writing remains a priority in each lesson.
- The pupils from differing ethnic groups, those eligible for the pupil premium and those at an early stage of learning English make equally good progress as a result of carefully adapted work for each individual. Very few pupils, on entry, have any language skills but develop these consistently through the school. As a result, the school is successful in avoiding discrimination and in promoting the equal opportunities of each pupil.
- There is excellent progress in personal development. The pupils gain effective communication skills and practise these skills in a wide variety of situations both in and out of school. This has a positive impact on their achievement. The well-established integration with mainstream schools ensures that pupils frequently mix with hearing pupils. Work experience for older pupils is very well organised and gives the pupils significant opportunities to gain confidence in adult situations.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good. Standards have improved consistently over time as a result of substantial and supportive monitoring by senior staff. Almost all lessons are well taught and both the school's records and observation during the inspection confirmed that a growing minority of lessons are outstanding. This was particularly so in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the primary department.
- Teachers and other adults know their pupils and their individual learning needs very well. This enables them to adapt activities successfully for each pupil. The high proportion of adults in each classroom ensures that all pupils receive a substantial amount of individual tuition and support.
- Teachers manage their classrooms effectively. Resources are well thought out and of a good standard and there is a substantial and appropriate use of information and communication technology to support learning. Support staff, including a significant proportion of skilled 'signers', work generally effectively with individual pupils. On occasion, however, through a lack of specific training, their work is less effective and the pupils' progress in communication, knowledge and understanding is less well promoted.
- The assessment of pupils' work is well organised and effective. The progress of pupils is tracked efficiently and interventions are made swiftly should a pupil start to fall behind. In almost every lesson, the progress of pupils is carefully noted and this information is used effectively to plan

the next step in learning. This enables teachers to promote high expectations of the pupils' achievements. On occasion, however, adults do not record progress as efficiently. This can lead to less precise targets and pupils in these situations are unclear as to how to improve their work. This slows down the pace of learning.

- The teaching of communication and literacy is good. Every teacher ensures high levels of oral language or signing in each lesson. The specific emphasis on reading and writing in, for instance, the effective teaching of the letters and sounds of words, often through innovative visual techniques, has a significant impact on pupils' understanding and progress.
- Pupils respond very well to teaching. They enjoy their lessons and have excellent attitudes to their learning. There are very good relations between pupils and adults.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding throughout the school, both in the classroom and outside. Lessons are characterised by good attention, politeness and a willingness to work hard and concentrate well. Pupils develop outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills. They have unbounded curiosity about the world and they support their classmates instinctively as they strive to communicate effectively. The many instances observed during the inspection of pupils smiling at each other, or 'thumbs up' to encourage a friend, help provide a happy and supportive atmosphere within the school.
- The pupils understand and follow the simple behavioural code of the school. Their behaviour is managed very well. Staff deal quickly and sympathetically with occasional instances of challenging behaviour. In this way, the pupils develop a clear understanding of right from wrong and the benefits of supporting each other.
- The school's records over time show that there have been no exclusions and very few incidents over a substantial period. Bullying is almost unknown in any form and pupils are secure that any incident would be quickly dealt with. Attendance is well above average.
- The care of pupils is outstanding. Parents and carers and the pupils agree that they feel very safe at school. The arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including the vetting of staff, are secure. The governing body has developed robust procedures to monitor child protection protocols and the pupils' health and safety. Risk assessments are detailed and accurate.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has had a significant impact on raising standards in both the quality of teaching and the pupils' progress. She has been well supported by a committed management team.
- The school plans well for its own development. Staff and the governing body are fully involved in this process. As a result, all adults at the school are fully committed to improving provision continually. Morale is extremely high and the staff exude confidence and enthusiasm.
- Monitoring of teaching and the pupils' progress is well organised. Good assessment practices ensure that pupils' progress is carefully tracked and intervention is made where necessary. The school uses procedures for the performance management of teachers robustly. All teachers are well aware of their targets and look forward to having their work regularly reviewed and supported. The monitoring of the work of other staff is not yet as established and the school acknowledges that there is a remaining need to enhance skill levels in some areas of work.
- The school evaluates its work accurately. The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure its relevance and to ensure it is broad and balanced and appropriate both to promoting communication and literacy and in providing opportunities for pupils to integrate into mainstream lessons. Pupils have many opportunities to receive visitors and to visit other schools and places of interest. This teaches them confidence and awareness of a variety of situations.
- There are well-established links with parents and carers, all of whom speak highly of the school.

Home-school books, informative reports with annual reviews and the accessibility of school staff all contribute well to teamwork between parents, carers and staff for the benefit of the pupils.

- The school has a good track record of improvement since the previous inspection. The progress of pupils has accelerated, and teaching has shown consistent improvement over time with just a few inconsistencies remaining. The school evaluates its own work effectively. There is good teamwork involving staff, the governing body and the local authority who provides a light touch in supportively monitoring the school's progress.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- the governing body has grown significantly in confidence and effectiveness since the previous inspection. Governors provide an effective level of challenge to the school's leaders, based on secure knowledge of the school's systems and awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and through informed first-hand monitoring in regular visits and scrutiny of information
 - the governing body ensures all statutory obligations are met effectively, especially relating to the safeguarding of children and are using performance management procedures to hold staff, including the headteacher, to account.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	102175
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	400535

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community Special
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Lewis-Williams
Headteacher	Veronica Held
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 March 2010
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