

Waverley School

105, The Ride, Enfield, EN3 7DL

Inspection dates 17–18 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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:

- Pupils make excellent progress in their personal development
- Most pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, make at least good progress overall, including in communication and in the early stages of recognising shapes and learning to count.
- The sixth form is good. Pupils maintain their good levels of progress and are well prepared for the transition to adult life.
- Teaching is good, and on occasions is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations and ensure that lessons are very well adapted to pupils' learning needs.
- Pupils enjoy school and are very well cared for in a secure environment. Their behaviour is outstanding and their attendance above average.
- The senior management team has developed a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement even though the members are too new in post to have secured further improvement. Nevertheless, together with governors, they have ensured that good teaching and achievement are being sustained.
- Assistant headteachers and middle leaders check each area of the school's work thoroughly.
- The governing body is well informed about the school's provision and future development and provides a good level of challenge to the school's leadership.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- On a few occasions, teachers do not record the small steps in each pupil's progress. Some target setting is thus less precise and activities are not as well adapted for each pupil's needs
- Although provision to enhance the pupils' communication is good overall, there are occasional inconsistencies which affect the pupils' ability to respond fully.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, all of which were joint observations with the executive headteacher or acting head of school. In addition, inspectors made short visits to several lessons.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher and head of school, as well as with middle and senior leaders and governors. A telephone discussion was conducted with a parent and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 21 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and of 39 returned staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documents, including development planning and the school's evaluation of its own success and performance. Inspectors looked at the school's records of pupils' progress, behaviour, safeguarding and personal development as well as attendance figures. The minutes of governing body committees and full meetings were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Melvyn Blackband, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sandra Teacher

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school provides for pupils with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties. Many of the pupils have complex and severe medical needs.
- The school's intake is ethnically diverse, reflecting the make up of the borough.
- About half of the pupils come from homes where English is not the first language.
- Twenty nine per cent of pupils, a higher than average proportion, are eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government).
- The previous long serving headteacher retired at the end of last term. Since September 2012, the school has been led on a temporary basis by the acting head of school, who was previously deputy headteacher, and by an executive headteacher who spends half the week at Waverley and is also headteacher of another special school in the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that every small step in each pupil's progress is recorded so that teachers are able to adapt learning activities precisely to enable the pupils to make even faster progress.
- Improve the consistency of teaching communication by:
 - ensuring consistency in the use of signing and symbols
 - ensuring adults take every opportunity to extend the pupils' communication through oral interaction or through the use of visual cues such as symbols and simple signs.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The progress of the overwhelming majority of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and pupils with profound and complex learning difficulties, is good. Most pupils make progress at rates which are comparable to, or above, those found in similar schools, irrespective of their learning difficulties. A minority of pupils make outstanding progress. There are no differences in the performance of pupils from different ethnic groups, those eligible for the pupil premium and those at the earliest stages of learning English.
- Children are taught well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress from low starting points in understanding adults through verbal and other communication strategies and they gradually learn to respond through early speech in some instances, and through smiles and eye contact and the developing use of switches to express choices.
- Thereafter, they continue to make good progress because of good teaching and generally good assessment, and because the curriculum has been well adapted to their needs.
- Older students in sixth form provision maintain their progress in communication, literacy and numeracy because the curriculum is well designed to encourage them to apply their emerging skills in a variety of real life contexts, such as shopping and work experience. All the students achieve a basic level of qualifications for their work in literacy and numeracy and also, for instance, for their learning about the world of work and leisure pursuits.
- In the best teaching all pupils, including those with profound and multiple difficulties, make particularly good, and sometimes outstanding, progress because of excellent recording of the tiny steps in their development which teachers build on consistently. Occasionally there is not such attention to detail and in those instances pupils' progress is slower.
- Very few pupils have any language but make good progress in communication by other methods. These include gestures or signs, recognising letter shapes, mark making, learning to discriminate between bigger and smaller and sometimes beginning the process of counting.
- Pupils make excellent progress in their personal development. Their communication and physical needs are analysed and very well catered for and they learn to confidently express choices to 'have a voice' in their learning. They enjoy school, concentrate well for relatively long periods and this has a good impact on their achievement.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching over time since the previous inspection has been mostly good. Lessons are characterised by sound planning which is adapted very well in almost every case to take account of the learning styles and needs of each pupil. Activities are well planned to build on the pupils' success and to challenge them to make even better progress. As a result, pupils enjoy their work, their attitudes to learning are excellent and they are consistently interested in their activities.
- Teachers and other adults have a very clear understanding of their pupils' abilities. The proportion of adults in each classroom enables staff to give each child a high level of personal attention and support. Adults take great pains to communicate effectively at the pupil's level and through the agreed procedures for each pupil, whether through gesture, symbol or oral language. This gives pupils the confidence to understand their activities and to respond appropriately. On occasion, however, staff do not fully exploit opportunities to ensure communication is effective, for instance by not always facing pupils so that eye contact can be maintained.
- The assessment of the very small steps in progress is almost always carefully and minutely recorded. This enables teachers to challenge pupils realistically to take the next small step and promotes their good progress. On a few occasions, this is less effective. As a result, the next learning step is less clear and sharply focused and this has an impact on the rate of the pupils'

progress.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Adults quickly get to know the children and through skilled teaching help them develop their communication and their curiosity about the world, about stories and number and creative and physical experiences.
- There is good teaching in the sixth form. The curriculum ensures students learn how to apply their basic skills appropriately. Adults provide very good support as students begin to experience the world of work, taster college days and placements, and interact with the wider community in their leisure pursuits and work experience.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils look forward to their day. They come into school alert and with smiles for the staff. They concentrate well and have excellent attitudes to their experiences and learning.
- Their behaviour is excellent. Where occasionally pupils become frustrated, adults deal with them sympathetically and follow carefully constructed care plans to ensure pupils are quickly calmed and learning can continue.
- Relationships are excellent. Pupils enjoy each other's company. There are many occasions when pupils respond to each other with looks and smiles. This was illustrated in an outstanding lesson for sixth form students who were experiencing the textures of different kinds of 'snow'. The students really enjoyed the experience of touching the different textures of powder and crinkly paper and smiled and laughed as their classmates experienced the same.
- The outstanding promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's work. Pupils learn through exciting sensory experiences to distinguish right from wrong and to develop tolerance, awareness and empathy with their classmates and adults.
- The school maintains excellent records of each pupil's behaviour. All have comprehensive care plans which are regularly monitored and updated. Bullying is unknown and there is an absence of any form of discrimination. There have been no exclusions for many years.
- Attendance is above average for the type of school because pupils feel safe and happy to meet with adults and other pupils. Some pupils have lower attendance because of chronic medical conditions and they and their families are very well supported.
- There is an outstanding level of care. Safeguarding arrangements, including the vetting of staff and child protection arrangements, are of a very high quality. Staff are well trained in a range of techniques to ensure basic medical interventions and the moving and lifting of pupils are managed safely. Parents appreciate the level of care given to their children and, without exception, would recommend the school to other parents.

The leadership and management are good

- The new senior leadership team has made a good start in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Assistant headteachers and other senior staff carefully examine the curriculum, the teachers' planning and assessment at least termly. The school has a long tradition of regular and consistent checking of teaching standards. There is a detailed school plan for development based soundly on priorities for improving teaching and the rate of pupils' progress.
- Although there are appropriate procedures for recording and checking pupils' academic progress over time, senior staff are well aware that their computer system for recording this progress has weaknesses, and this is being addressed. The recording and checking of pupils' personal skills development is very good.
- Appraisal arrangements are well managed and contribute effectively to sustaining good teaching and achievement through rewarding good performance. Teachers work towards challenging targets generated through the school's detailed and accurate evaluation of its own progress.

They are well supported by the management team and benefit from tailored training provided in-house or by the local authority. As a result, morale is high. The school is aware that there is a remaining need to enhance skill levels in some respects.

- The curriculum is appropriately broadly based and balanced. Communication and basic literacy and numeracy skills are given high priority within a well constructed topic-based programme which encourages pupils to understand the links between different parts of their learning. Considerable attention is paid to ensuring all pupils are treated equally and that there is no discrimination. The sixth form curriculum follows a well tried commercial scheme which ensures experience of a wide range of applied basic skills, vocational and leisure activities as well as aspects of physical and creative development.
- The school has a good track record of consolidating its strengths. Good standards of teaching have been maintained, with just a few inconsistencies remaining. The local authority provides light touch support to the school. There remains some uncertainty about the future leadership of the school as both the acting head of school and the executive headteacher are 'holding the fort' until a permanent headteacher can be appointed. As such, the capacity to make further improvements is good rather than outstanding.
- **The governance of the school: is effective**
 - Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through regular monitoring updates provided by senior staff, scrutiny of information on pupils' progress and well-being, and frequent visits to the school. This is illustrated by their effective use of the pupil premium to increase staffing in terms of extra occupational, speech and language therapy and physiotherapy.
 - Governors have well established policies and procedures for monitoring the safeguarding of pupils, which meet statutory requirements, and for the health and safety of all the adults and pupils at the school.

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	102170
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	403768

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

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	115
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	24
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Leach
Headteacher	Antonia Masson (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 June 2010
Telephone number	0208 805 1858
Fax number	0208 805 4397
Email address	p.derosa@waverley-school.com

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