

# Coppice School

Ash Hill Road, Hatfield, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN7 6JH

**Inspection dates** 23–24 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Students make good and sometimes outstanding progress in the development of their communication skills. This has a positive effect on their learning because students are increasingly able to manage their own behaviour.
- Teaching is good; some is outstanding. In most lessons, teachers plan activities that students find enjoyable and interesting.
- The range of subjects and courses offered is carefully designed to meet each individual student's needs. It is enriched by learning opportunities in the community and through experiences beyond the school day.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start to their learning because good partnership with parents means that there is a smooth transition from home to school.
- Partnerships with other schools and colleges have a good effect on achievement.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress in the sixth form because the courses offered meet their needs and they are well taught.
- Students feel safe and secure. This is because staff are very skilled in maintaining a positive learning environment.
- The headteacher has very high expectations for the effectiveness of the school and staff are encouraged and supported well to improve their teaching. This is helping the school to improve very rapidly.
- The governing body is clear about its vision for the future. It bases its decisions on this and the first-hand evidence it gathers from involvement with the students and their parents.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in literacy is not as good as it is in numeracy.
- In a few lessons, more-able students are not challenged as effectively as other students.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors examined the school's procedures for safeguarding. They also looked at headteacher's reports to the governing body, the development plan, records of lesson observations, targets set for teachers, and documents that track students' progress.
- The inspectors observed eight lessons including two jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher and made short visits to three other lessons. They listened to students read in lessons and examined students' work. Inspectors held discussions with staff, the Chair and the vice-chair of the Governing Body, as well as a parent governor and a member of the local authority.
- The inspectors spoke with students and the lead inspector took account of eight responses from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

## Inspection team

Pauline Hilling-Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Barbara Martin

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The vast majority of students have severe learning difficulties and the majority of these students have challenging behaviour as a result of autistic spectrum conditions. A minority of students have either moderate or profound and multiple learning difficulties, in addition to challenging behaviour. Additionally, a few students have hearing impairment.
- The majority of students are boys.
- All students have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average.
- The proportions of students eligible for the pupil premium , which is extra funding from the government to schools, based on the numbers of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils in the care of the local authority and those from families in the armed forces, is well above average.
- The school runs an off-site charity shop five mornings each week, selling second-hand children's toys, games and clothing. It also sells goods produced by students as part of their enterprise work.
- The deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have been appointed from within the school since the last inspection.

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

- Improve achievement in literacy by:
  - providing more planned opportunities for students to develop and practise their skills in reading and writing in all subjects and throughout the day.
- Improve teaching for more-able students by:
  - ensuring that teachers always use what they know about what students have achieved in a lesson to help them plan what they need to do next
  - allowing more-able students to be as independent in their learning as they can be
  - making sure that lesson observations check that more-able students are being extended enough.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- All students are working below the levels expected nationally when they start at the school, as a result of their disabilities and special educational needs. The vast majority of students make good progress in school subjects when compared to pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- All students make good or better progress in the development of their communication skills. This is because all staff make sure that they use signs, gestures and facial expressions, as well as words when speaking.
- Students, especially those with autism and behavioural, social and emotional difficulties make good and occasionally outstanding progress in managing their own behaviour. This enables them to make good advances with their general learning.
- All students leave the school with qualifications which prepare them well for their destinations after they leave school.
- Students in the sixth form make good headway, with additional progress in vocational skills and personal development to enable them to be successful in their destination after leaving school.
- Students make good progress when they have opportunities to apply their skills. For example, they apply skills effectively when they learn in the off-site shop by pricing and selling items.
- There are still some inconsistencies in achievement. Progress in literacy, although good, is not as strong as progress in mathematics or science. However, these inconsistencies are being tackled.
- Students known to be eligible for free school meals learn at the same good rate as other students in the school and their attainment is similar. Pupils speak English as an additional language develop communication skills well and are able to make as much general progress as others. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls. However, more-able students with moderate learning difficulties do not always make the progress they are capable of because targets set for them in lessons do not always challenge them.
- Students make good or better progress when they spend most of the lesson working on tasks at just the right level of difficulty. In an outstanding design and technology lesson, students made kites and went on to test them to see if they would fly. This was accomplished through skilful questioning, clear communication and an excellent understanding of how well the students were learning.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The majority of teaching observed during the inspection was good and occasionally outstanding. Teaching enables most students to make good progress overall and some to make outstanding progress in developing communication skills and in their personal development.
- Signs, facial expressions and gestures are used by all staff in lessons and this means that students understand clearly what they need to think about and do. This is because staff have a good knowledge of alternative ways of communicating and they understand each student's preferred way of responding.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very well to keep students' interested. It is also used very well to develop individual students' understanding. For example, in a mathematics lesson, students used tablet computers to explore the features of the shapes of a sandwich they had just made.
- The teaching of mathematics is a strength because teachers have a good knowledge of this subject. However, the teaching of literacy is not as extensive as it needs to be and there are not sufficient opportunities planned for students to read and write in all subjects.
- Parents agree strongly that students are well taught and are particularly pleased by progress in personal development.

- Occasionally, a few more-able students are not challenged as much as they could be, because teachers do not always plan their next steps in learning carefully enough and based on what they achieved in the previous lesson.
- Teaching assistants contribute a lot to the achievement of the students through good support, for example, by offering additional guidance on how to complete a task. However, sometimes more-able students are given too much help.
- The school is making adjustments to the teaching of more-able students, for example, by arranging for students to work at a faster pace in small groups on more challenging tasks. This is having a good effect on their progress but there is more to do.
- The teaching of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is sensitive to their needs and children are well supported. For example, staff hold children's hands when they walk across 'stepping stones' and help them to think about how big their stride needs to be.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The vast majority of students, especially those with communication and interaction difficulties and those who have emotional and behavioural difficulties, make at least good progress in learning how to manage their own behaviour. This is because they are supported very well to do so. However, because students are at different points in their understanding of what is going on around them, there are some difficult times for some students during the day.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. They open doors for adults and acknowledge with pleasure the thanks they receive for this. They work hard to have good attitudes to learning and this helps them learn well and make good progress.
- Students show the support they have for each other when they wait patiently to make sure that everyone is given time to complete their work and respond to questions. Even when others' challenging behaviour is disturbing them, they try to attend to their own tasks as well as they can.
- Staff manage students' behaviour well and understand the needs of individuals. They are skilled in supporting and calming individual students and maintaining a good working atmosphere for the vast majority of the time. This is because there are strong relationships between everyone in the school community.
- Students learn about how to keep safe when they are out in the community especially when they follow a course designed to enable them to travel as independently as possible.
- Pupils feel safe and cared for well. All parents who responded to the on line questionnaire strongly agreed with students that bullying is rare and any issues are dealt with effectively. Parents are exceptionally pleased with the progress the students make in their personal development.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher has driven the improvement of the school exceptionally effectively since the last inspection. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. The future plans are communicated to, and by, everyone throughout the school. Consequently, students do well, although there is more to do to ensure that all more-able students make the impressive progress made by other students.
- Subject coordinators have a good impact on school improvement because the collection and analysis of data is now very effective. Staff are keenly aware of how well students are progressing and how this compares to students in other schools.
- The staff support each other well. All staff are committed to working together to ensure that students achieve their potential. They ensure that additional funds, such as the pupil premium

are used to good effect, for instance by providing access to computers or additional staff during visits and when students go out into the local community.

- The school has an accurate view of its own performance and knows that more priority needs to be given to students' achievement in literacy and to extending challenge. Plans made are effective because they are detailed and clearly understood by everyone.
- The range of subjects and courses on offer is very well suited to the interests and abilities of individual students. It is well organised and capitalises on the many learning experiences out in the community, such as in the school shop and in partner schools and colleges.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because relationships are strong. The productive relationships established in the school provide good opportunities for students' personal development. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work, as is the promotion of good relationships with the community served by the school.
- The local authority supports and challenges the school well through an adviser with specialist knowledge who knows the school well. He has worked with the school particularly effectively to ensure that the evaluation of data contributes strongly to priorities for school improvement.
- The leadership of teaching and the management of teachers' work are effective. The work of the headteacher is monitored well by the governing body to ensure it has a good effect on school improvement.
- Procedures to check on the quality of teaching are detailed, extensive and thorough. However, lesson observations do not always check that students of all abilities, especially more-able students, are challenged enough.
- Partnership with parents is very effective. Members of the governing body are active in helping parents develop skills and understanding about the students' specialist needs. For example, the vice-chair of the governing body runs workshops for parents in school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body have a good knowledge of what is happening in school, including how much progress students are making and that this is a good school. Governors are clear about how the pupil premium funding is spent and can identify the positive effect this is having on those students eligible for that funding. The governing body makes sure that statutory requirements, including safeguarding, are met and manage the budget effectively. They have a clear understanding of how the school's leadership is driving the rapid improvement and ensure that they provide the necessary challenge and support for this to continue. Governors have a good knowledge of how well teachers are performing and ensure that there is a good link between the quality of their work and salary progression.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135546
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	402716

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	94
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	17
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carleen Poppy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynne Jarred
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01302 844883
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