

# Cann Bridge School

Miller Way, Estover, Plymouth, PL6 8UN

**Inspection dates** 5–6 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- The headteacher and senior leadership team have managed the school's move to the Tor Bridge campus very well. As a result, the pupils are already happily settled and say that they like their new school very much.
- Pupils achieve well in key areas such as literacy and numeracy. They make excellent progress in learning to communicate because staff are very skilled in using symbols and signing to support communication.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress. Extremely detailed records demonstrate very clearly their pride, concentration and enjoyment in learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They try very hard in lessons and are kind and friendly. Excellent management of problematic behaviour, including exemplary behaviour plans, enable pupils to make outstanding progress in learning to manage their own behaviour.
- The sixth form is good. Students in the sixth form access a good variety of practical activities which enable them to make good progress in developing independent living skills.
- Teaching is good with some outstanding practice. Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well and relationships are excellent. Teamwork is very good and all pupils, including those with more complex needs, are given good individual support.
- Leadership and management are good. Planning for school development is very strong. Procedures to monitor the work of teachers and support staff are good. Consequently, the contribution of support staff in lessons has improved well since the previous inspection. Links with the other schools in the Tor Bridge Partnership are developing well.
- Governors know the school well and provide good support. They challenge senior leaders where necessary. Governors have very good expertise in financial management and monitor the school's budget extremely well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always set clear, individual targets for learning which pupils understand.
- In a small minority of lessons, pupils are not involved enough in whole-class activities.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 11 lessons, of which two were joint lesson observations with members of the senior leadership team. Every class was observed. Inspectors also conducted several shorter visits to classrooms with the headteacher to look at the work of the support staff.
- The inspectors visited the two off-site centres with the headteacher and the outreach teacher to observe the provision made for a few pupils with complex needs.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body, the local authority’s leadership advisor for special educational needs and vulnerable groups, the headteacher and the senior leadership team. Inspectors also met with two groups of pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 10 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and also looked at the school’s survey of parents’ views.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a wide range of documentation including that relating to safeguarding practices, improvement planning, pupils’ records, assessment information on pupils’ progress and documents related to the performance management of staff (the setting and reviewing of targets to help them to improve their work).
- The inspectors analysed the 35 questionnaires which were returned by staff.
- The inspectors looked at pupils’ work and watched them working to develop their literacy skills, including reading.

## Inspection team

Christine Emerson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fran Ashworth

Additional Inspector

Mary Usher-Clarke

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Cann Bridge School is a special school for pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD). A minority of pupils have autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and a few pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority, and the children of service families) is around the national average.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. A large majority of pupils are boys.
- The school takes pupils from Plymouth Local Authority as well as from Cornwall and Devon.
- The school holds the Healthy Schools award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark for both primary and secondary.
- Since the previous inspection, the school no longer manages a class in a local primary school or any residential provision. However, the age range has been extended to 19 years with the creation of a sixth form in September 2011. The school has also established two off-site provisions for a few pupils with complex needs.
- The school, which was previously known as Downham School, became part of a federation in July 2011. There are currently two schools in the federation, Cann Bridge School and Tor Bridge Primary School. The school moved on to a brand new campus in September 2012 along with Plym Bridge Nursery School and Children's Centre, Tor Bridge Primary School and Tor Bridge High School to form the Tor Bridge Partnership. The headteacher of Cann Bridge School is Executive Principal of the four schools in the partnership. A company, which involves governors from all the schools in the partnership, has been created to oversee the strategic direction of the campus.
- Talks are underway with the Department for Education to establish, in September 2013, a multi-academy trust to include Cann Bridge School, Tor Bridge Primary School and Tor Bridge High School.

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

- Make all teaching as good as the best by:
  - making sure that each activity is clearly linked to individual learning targets which pupils understand
  - making sure that, in all lessons, pupils have enough opportunities to be fully involved with whole-class learning activities.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with low attainment because of their complex needs. However, they make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage in relation to their starting points. Children make excellent progress in learning how to communicate and become active learners, for example using a wide variety of equipment to investigate cause and effect.
- Because they are given good support, pupils with different special educational needs, including those with complex needs, such as autistic spectrum disorder and profound and multiple learning difficulties, make equally good progress. Pupil premium funds help to provide well-targeted support sessions such as music therapy. This ensures that pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority achieve well. Pupils who are taught off site have very detailed records which demonstrate clearly the good progress which they making.
- Developing pupils' numeracy skills has been a whole-school focus. This has been very successful, with a large majority of pupils now exceeding their numeracy targets. In 2012, girls did not achieve quite as well in literacy as boys. However, the school has addressed this issue by putting in place effective strategies to raise attainment in reading and writing which are now beginning to have an impact.
- Pupils throughout the school make excellent progress in developing their communication skills because staff are highly skilled at promoting speech while also teaching pupils to use signs, symbols and communication aids.
- Pupils in Year 11 achieve the 'Transition Challenge' award, a nationally recognised award in personal development. Students in the newly established sixth form have good opportunities to practise important life skills such as planning and cooking simple meals. As a result, all students are on track to achieve modules in a national award, 'Towards Independence'. Sixth form students also gain work-related skills through working on the 'cake pops' enterprise scheme and through supported work experience. There is no early entry policy for qualifications.
- Progress in the majority of lessons is good. Where it is outstanding, work is tailored exactly to the particular needs of individual pupils and they are very actively engaged in learning. An example of this was in an outstanding lesson for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage where very detailed assessment and planning ensured that every activity was at just the right level. Children hugely enjoyed working with staff in the 'garden centre' role-play area and on the outside play equipment, and made excellent progress in improving their social skills, communication and physical co-ordination.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers and support staff work as seamless teams and provide strong support for pupils so that all pupils, including those with the most complex needs, make at least good progress in lessons. Support staff have good skills in helping pupils to communicate and they deliver good quality, small group, activities which promote learning well. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection when the work of teaching assistants was identified as an area for improvement.
- A strength of teaching is in the excellent relationships between staff and pupils and the good understanding which staff have of the particular needs and interests of individual pupils. As a result, lessons are interesting and pupils are keen to learn. However, teachers do not always set clear, individual targets for learning which pupils understand. When this happens it is harder for pupils to know exactly what is expected of them and more difficult for the pupils, and staff, to judge how well they are doing.

- Teachers enable pupils to make good progress in developing key skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) because activities are well planned with a good focus on practical learning. For example, pupils in the sixth form make good progress in understanding how to use money through going shopping to purchase materials to decorate their common room.
- In a small minority of activities, where teachers involve each pupil one at a time, pupils sometimes have to wait too long to have a turn and learning time is lost. However, where teaching is outstanding, teachers engage all pupils in very active learning throughout the lesson. An example of this was in an excellent ICT lesson for pupils in Years 9 and 10 where the teacher very successfully incorporated the class history topic. There was a very exciting variety of activities and the pace of learning was rapid so pupils were really interested and highly motivated to learn. They made outstanding progress in using computers and cameras independently to make invitations for their parents to attend a coffee morning. Midway through the lesson, an air raid siren went off which alerted the students to shelter under the tables and led to some excellent learning about what it would have been like to live through the Second World War.

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

- Parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire say that their children are very safe at school and that behaviour is very good. Both boys and girls say that there is no bullying, that school is 'all nice', that there is 'no fighting' and that they are 'all friends'. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the reward systems which enable them to earn points and win prizes. This gives them a real incentive to behave well and contributes strongly to their excellent attitudes to learning.
- The quality of support plans for pupils and students who exhibit problematic behaviour, as a result of their particular needs, is exemplary. Pupils make excellent progress in understanding the consequences of poor behaviour because the plans are followed very consistently. As a result, they make great strides in learning to manage their own behaviour and to tolerate things that they do not like. Any incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively so that lessons are not disrupted.
- Attendance is good and the majority of absences are due to illness and pupils' medical needs. There are no exclusions.
- Very high expectations for behaviour and learning are evident throughout the school and at the off-site provision. Pupils of all ages respond very well to this. They demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning and try very hard. They are proud of their effort, with one pupil telling the inspectors 'we're all working hard'. Pupils in the sixth form grow in confidence and learn good team-working skills through running a very successful weekly coffee shop.
- Pupils make good progress in learning how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn how to use sharp knives safely when preparing simple snacks.

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

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and, in his role of Executive Principal of the Tor Bridge Partnership, is highly ambitious to create a campus where pupils from the different schools benefit from strong links and shared activities.
- Partnerships with the other schools on the campus are developing well. There are very strong links and relationships with parents and agencies to promote pupils' welfare and achievement.
- Procedures to monitor teaching are effective. The senior leadership team has an accurate view of the quality of teaching in the school and what needs to be done to make it outstanding. The leadership team has invested heavily in staff training, including in specific methods to support

pupils to communicate. This has been effective and is particularly evident in the good contribution to lessons which is now made by support staff. Performance management of teachers is rigorous and salary progression is linked to performance.

- Improvement planning is very strong and governors are involved in the planning process. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. This indicates that the school has a good capacity to improve further.
- The school offers pupils a wide range of carefully planned practical experiences which are well matched to their age and particular special educational needs. This promotes equality of opportunity well.
- The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and at the heart of everything which the school does. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The need to provide opportunities for pupils to gain experience of different faiths, which was raised at the previous inspection, has been very well addressed.
- This good school receives light touch support from the local authority.
- Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and meet all current statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors bring a good variety of expertise to the school and access suitable training provided by the local authority to develop their skills in governance. They know how well the school is doing because individual governors are linked to areas of development planning which they monitor closely. They challenge the senior leadership team where necessary, for example to ensure that actions in development planning are properly costed. Governors have a good understanding of the school's tracking of pupils' progress and monitor it closely.
  - Governors monitor the performance management of teachers effectively and ensure that pay awards are linked closely to performance.
  - The quality of budget monitoring is excellent. Governors have a very good grasp of exactly how the pupil premium funds are being spent and check very carefully to ensure that these are helping to raise achievement.
-

## 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>	113645
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	400198

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
<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>	79
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	8
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Graham Devine
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael Loveman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2–3 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 207909
<b>Fax number</b>	
<b>Email address</b>	mloveman@torbridge.net



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

