

Percy Hedley School

Station Road, Forest Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE12 8YY

Inspection dates 21–22 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Overall effectiveness of the residential experience		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an Outstanding school.

- The highly skilled headteacher and her leadership team are very ambitious for the high achievement of the pupils. Management of the quality of teaching is highly effective and this has ensured that pupils have made continued and increasing progress since the last inspection.
- The extremely effective governing body makes an excellent contribution to the leadership and vision for the school. To realise this shared vision they are seeking to increase capacity in leadership across the school to support new developments.
- Pupils make outstanding progress, particularly in communication skills. This means they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education or training.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in English and mathematics. They apply these subjects extremely well to all lessons leading to admirable achievements in other subjects.
- Teaching is outstanding and has further improved since the last inspection. Teachers and therapists plan activities thoroughly for each individual pupil. All adults make an exceptional contribution to pupil's outstanding progress.
- Excellent systems are in place that ensures pupils' progress both academically and therapeutically are tracked rigorously and consistently across the school.
- The sixth form is outstanding and pupils make exceptional progress here because they spend an increasing amount of time applying their skills in an adult situation.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. They work hard and live up to the high expectations set for them to ensure their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils truly enjoy being in school and say they feel safe, secure and well cared for.
- The school provides outstanding residential provision because residential staff are exceptionally committed to the achievements, welfare and independence of residential pupils to prepare them for life at school and beyond.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons and part lessons taught by 18 teachers.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher conducted five joint observations of teaching with inspectors.
- The inspectors carried out three learning walks across both sites to observe behaviour and spiritual, moral and social and cultural provision.
- The inspection team had discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, the Chief Executive of the Foundation, members of the governing body, pupils and a consultant to the school.
- The inspection team looked at the work of the school including pupils' behaviour and analysed documentation in relation to attendance, safeguarding, pupils' work and the school's system for checking on pupils' progress.
- Eleven responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were available to help plan the inspection. The inspectors formally met a group of parents during the school day for their comments.

Inspection team

Ann Muxworthy, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pauline Pitman	Additional Inspector
Sally Hicks	Additional Inspector
Nicholas Murphy	Social Care Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Percy Hedley Foundation and draws the majority of pupils from local authorities across the north of England.
- The school has two sites: one for the Early Years Foundation Stage, primary age and Key Stage 3 pupils; the other for Key Stage 4 and post 16 provision. It accesses a sports academy within the foundation.
- The residential provision at Leybourne House has 18 beds for full-time or short break care. At the time of the inspection 12 pupils were accessing this provision.
- The large majority of pupils have either speech and language and complex communication difficulties or physical difficulties. Many have additional visual, hearing or emotional needs.
- There are 37 full and part-time therapists for speech and language, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The vast majority of pupils are boys of White British origin.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is lower than the national averages.
- No pupils are eligible for the pupil premium.
- The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, Comenius Project Award and Arts Mark Gold Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further build capacity in leadership to realise the vision for the school in sharing best practice by:
 - providing high quality continued professional development and research for future leaders
 - identifying skills and expertise to drive new initiatives.
- To further develop outstanding practice in residential provision by:
 - auditing case files of residential pupils on a regular basis to ensure that they are well organised and contain all relevant information
 - ensuring that risk assessments of individual residential pupils address all issues.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding.

- As a result of their special educational needs and disabilities all pupils are working well below national expectations when they start school. The majority of pupils make outstanding progress in English and mathematics when compared to the progress of pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Pupils with speech and language difficulties make outstanding progress as a result of the highly effective integrated therapy that maximises their access to learning. Equally, pupils with physical disabilities make outstanding progress as a result of the consistency in therapy that builds upon very small steps of progress and further motivates them to achieve.
- The majority of pupils make outstanding progress in their social and communication skills to understand the world around them. Pupils are confident to apply these skills extensively in other subjects and use them to communicate with others and read simple texts.
- Children's abilities in the Early Years Foundation Stage are assessed in close partnership with parents. This means that their individual programmes are highly effective in providing and stimulating an excellent start.
- Each pupils' skills and aptitudes in English and mathematics are developed carefully as they progress through the school. From Key Stage 3 onwards the ability of pupils to utilise these skills in real life situations develops rapidly, the result being the majority leave with a qualification in the functional use of both English and mathematics which is extremely valuable. Further, some pupils gain GCSE qualifications in a range of subjects including English language, mathematics, art and design and science.
- There is no difference between the achievement of any age group or between boys and girls. Additionally there is no disparity between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds or those pupils in residential and non-residential provision. This is as a result of the school being extremely effective in understanding how to promote equality of opportunity for all.

The quality of teaching is outstanding.

- Much of the teaching observed during the inspection was outstanding. Monitoring shows that it has improved year on year following the last inspection.
- Teachers, therapists and support staff plan together to ensure teaching meets the needs of each pupil. As a result, each pupil learns exceptionally well.
- All staff are excellent at meeting the communication and physical needs of all pupils. The well-trained staff use highly effective strategies to enable pupils to access their learning. This was demonstrated in an extremely successful lesson where pupils, whilst carrying out movements to help their sitting, in addition practiced sounds and numbers to support their learning.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons enormously and are keen to state that their projects are extremely exciting. In a meeting with the inspectors, one pupil proudly showed his bike wheel he had made in a design technology lesson and another confidently played the Titanic theme on his guitar.
- Teachers use questioning very well to systematically check understanding as the lesson proceeds. Subsequently, they adjust their plans based on their assessment to ensure each pupil is achieving their best. For example, in a mathematics lesson the knowledge and skill of the teacher developed the pupils' understanding in solving increasingly complex algebra problems as the lesson progressed.
- Staff make sure that pupils have a clear understanding of what they want them to achieve. They model an activity or use real objects and situations so that they successfully engage and develop their learning.
- Rapid progress is achieved by using inspirational teaching to ensure a continuous focus on

achievement. This makes certain all pupils progress to the best of their abilities. Excellent opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and assessment, working independently or with a partner.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are provided with a variety of challenging opportunities to think creatively, investigate and explore. High expectations of parental involvement in their children's learning supports shared aspirations and emotional well-being.
- Typically all lessons include pupils applying their personal and social skills as well as applying their English and mathematics skills at their highest level. As a result pupils concentrate for long periods and make rapid progress in all subjects.
- Parents were pleased to say they often recognise at home the significant progress being made in their child's academic and personal development in school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding.

- High expectations, clear boundaries for behaviour and conduct, positive staff role models and effective use of praise all contribute to pupils feeling exceptionally safe at all times.
- The excellent behaviour of pupils, including those who are potentially vulnerable, is reflected in their whole-hearted commitment and their willingness to work hard.
- Staff are highly skilled in maintaining a positive atmosphere at all times. This is because they use skilled techniques to ensure pupils are calm and stress free. In discussions, parents, staff and pupils speak extremely positively about the excellent standard of behaviour in school. Pupils take great pride in their work and this can be seen in the great care they take with its presentation.
- Conversations with pupils reveal that they have a very secure grasp of what constitutes bullying. They report that there are very few incidents of bullying and harassment. Pupils speak confidently about how staff are always on hand to help them if they have a worry or concern. They demonstrate an excellent grasp of how to avoid risk and danger.
- Well established routines for pupils with communication and additional behavioural difficulties enable them to make remarkable improvements in their behaviour.
- There have been no exclusions and attendance is above average when compared to mainstream secondary schools. This is because of the highly effective engagement with families and therapists.

The leadership and management are outstanding.

- The headteacher leads the school with passion, drive and energy. Together with her leadership team and governance of the school they provide a clear vision for the school's continuous improvement. However, all leaders recognise the need to develop capacity in leadership further to realise their ambitious plans to disseminate best practice as a National Centre of Excellence.
- Senior leaders' view of the school's performance is accurate and they utilise research to support the review processes to ensure continued improvement. For example, the rigorous analysis of pupil performance supported by a local university has provided a high quality source of information on the pupils' achievements.
- The leadership team has a very strong focus on teaching and learning. Working closely with the governing body, they have been purposeful in their actions to improve the quality of teaching and make sure that what is learnt from monitoring of teachers' performance is used to determine what training and salaries staff should receive.
- The staff are extremely supportive of each other. They routinely share the optimum ways to ensure pupils achieve their best by allowing other staff to observe them.
- The excellent curriculum is firmly focused on improving speech, language and number skills. The pupils' experience of this highly positive curriculum encourages frequent practice of their developing skills. For example, in a music lesson the teacher practised reading and speaking

fast, slow, loud and soft to illustrate tempo. Pupils then copied and successfully counted using a maraca to communicate their understanding of a fast tempo.

- The extensive range of enrichment activities including visits, guests and after school activities adds to the richness and enjoyment of pupils’ learning. This has a very positive impact on pupils’ emotional well-being and contributes exceptionally well to their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Safeguarding meets requirements with much effective practice strengthening the high quality of care and support for pupils and their families.
- Pupils, staff and parents feel they are highly valued in the school community. The school’s ethos and beliefs promotes equality of opportunity extremely well and tackles discrimination promptly.
- The school benefits from being part of a foundation where sharing good practice is common. This sharing has maximised the use of resources and provided high quality professional development. The foundation provides highly experienced external consultant inspectors to challenge and support senior leaders in checking the impact of their work. Their feedback supports the high quality of provision for pupil’s physical and communication needs and particularly the highly effective partnership with healthcare services who locate a paediatrician on site to enable multi-professional assessment.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a passionate commitment to the school and its pupils. They provide excellent support and know its strengths and weaknesses very well. This is apparent in their understanding of outstanding teaching and learning. Through their work with the school, leaders governors have identified the priorities for further improvements in teaching. They make suggestions particularly about how the foundation status can contribute to this and monitor closely the budget to ensure it is focused on pupil outcomes.
 - Governors make highly effective use of performance management to continuously improve school outcomes for pupils. The Chief Executive of the Foundation particularly ensures the management of the headteacher’s performance has an exceptional impact on school improvement.

Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding
Quality of residential provision and care	Outstanding
Residential pupils’ safety	Outstanding
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Outstanding

- The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.
- Residential pupils make excellent progress in their lives. The residential experience has an outstandingly beneficial impact upon their educational and health outcomes, and their social development.
- Residential pupils are exceptionally well behaved. They treat each other, and staff, with consideration, respect, and affection. There are very few restraints and no sanctions. Residential pupils love coming to stay here and are happy and settled.
- Staff within the residential unit work extremely closely with other professionals within the school. This ensures that programmes of care are followed consistently for the benefit of residential pupils. Staff also communicate effectively with parents to ensure that the experience of residential pupils is as positive and productive as possible.
- Residential staff are caring and exceptionally committed to the welfare of the residential pupils. They are tenacious in promoting the independence of residential pupils and encouraging them to do things for themselves. This ensures that residential pupils are as fully prepared as they can

be for life outside the school.

- Accommodation is warm, welcoming and comfortable. Staff take care to make each bedroom personal to the residential pupil when they come to stay. This helps residential pupils to settle in and reduces any anxiety they may have.
 - Residential staff are appropriately qualified and receive comprehensive levels of training. Senior staff provide professional supervision and support which is clearly focused on the welfare of residential pupils. This helps staff provide an outstanding level of care.
 - Staff have a deep understanding of each individual residential pupils' needs and the plans in place to meet them. However, some case files are not properly organised which makes it more difficult for staff to access information. In addition, written risk assessments for individual residential pupils are not sufficiently comprehensive. This means that aspects of a residential pupils' behaviour which may place them at risk are not recorded.
 - The school provides an excellent range of activities for residential pupils, both within the residence and also in the community. Such activities provide stimulation and enjoyment, and contribute to the learning outcomes for residential pupils.
 - Staff are highly resourceful in supporting and enabling residential pupils to have a voice. They make imaginative use of technological aids to help residential pupils who have limited communication. This means that residential pupils can make choices and have as much control as possible over their lives whilst in residence.
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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>

Boarding/Residential provision		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	108657
Social care unique reference number	SC042897
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	403069

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
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	160
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	55
Number of boarders on roll	12
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Wignall
Headteacher	Lynn Watson
Date of previous school inspection	9 January 2008
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