

# The Bridge at HLC

Waterloo Road, Hadley, Telford, TF1 5NU

**Inspection dates** 8–9 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school because:

- Leaders, managers and the governing body have maintained and improved on outstanding teaching and the rate of pupils' progress since the last inspection.
- Pupils make very good progress, especially in their communication and early literacy and number skills. This includes young children in the Nursery and the students in the sixth form provision.
- Teaching throughout the school is outstanding. Teachers have an excellent understanding of the learning and personal needs of their pupils and tailor all activities to enable each individual pupil to make the best possible progress.
- Over time, they make significant progress in their personal development, independence and ability to make choices and they have outstanding relations with adults at the school. Their behaviour is almost always impeccable.
- The pupils enjoy school. This is reflected in the very low absence rates of the vast majority of pupils.
- The pupils feel and are kept very safe. Their attitudes to learning are excellent and this has a great impact on their behaviour and progress.
- The headteacher has led the development of an outstanding leadership team. Together they continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and the pupils' activities and inspire teachers and other adults to strive to help each pupil achieve as well as possible.
- Governors are exceptionally well informed about the progress of pupils and the standards of teaching. They are passionate about providing the very best for the pupils and they contribute an excellent level of challenge and support to the school's leaders.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons and parts of lessons, the great majority of which were joint observations with the senior team.
- Meetings were held with staff, senior and other leaders, governors and representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors took into account the 15 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as the school's own surveys of the opinions of parents and carers.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including self evaluation and development planning. Inspectors scrutinised records of pupils' progress and behaviour since the previous inspection as well as the monitoring reports on the quality of teaching and the curriculum. Pupils' attendance records were looked at as well as documents and procedures relating to the safeguarding of the pupils.

## Inspection team

Melvyn Blackband, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Christine Fraser

Additional inspector

Mark Emly

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school makes provision for pupils with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties. A significant proportion of pupils have additional complex needs such as autism.
- There is an assessment Nursery catering for up to 40 part-time children as well as a sixth form of 30 students.
- The school has specialist status as a Business and Enterprise College.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is above average. This funding is given for pupils who are entitled to free school meals, are looked after by the local authority or who are the children of service families.
- An average number of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school provides an outreach service to other schools in the local authority.

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

- Make sure that the pace of lessons is always appropriate, to enable pupils to sustain their outstanding progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The attainment of almost every pupil is very low on entry to the school, but from these starting points, the pupils make often rapid and always sustained progress throughout the school. The overwhelming majority make progress which is as good or better than that expected nationally of pupils in similar schools. The rates of achievement have been improved on since the previous inspection and pupils do equally well, irrespective of their disabilities and additional needs.
- The teaching of communication is exceptional and because of this, pupils with very little language because of learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress. Pupil-premium funding has been used effectively to make sure that eligible pupils achieve as well as other children in communication, literacy and numeracy.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have consistently made outstanding progress since the previous inspection. The excellent teaching and a curriculum which is structured to reinforce communication at every opportunity ensures pupils make significant gains. Teachers challenge them very successfully also to develop their physical skills and gross and fine motor skills. As a result, the pupils get off to a very good start in their education.
- Sixth form students make excellent progress both in their basic skills, which leads to nationally recognised accreditation and also in applying their learning across a range of practical activities, giving them choice and a strong influence on their learning activities. They develop self confidence and a variety of skills which prepares them well for the next stage in their lives.
- Activities are geared precisely to the immediate learning needs of each pupil and the pupils' performance is tracked thoroughly to make sure they make very good progress towards challenging targets which the teachers set for them. Adults analyse the progress of each pupil daily. No pupil is allowed to fall behind. There is no discrimination and the equal opportunities of all pupils is at the heart of the school's work.
- The pupils make outstanding progress in literacy and numeracy. Precisely focused teaching means that pupils, whether at the early stage of responding to sounds and shapes or in some cases in reading simple words and sentences, make rapid and confident progress. The exceptional organisation and teaching of phonics skills underpins skilled teaching in letter and word recognition. Literacy and numeracy skills are woven into almost every learning activity. Pupils match symbols, learn to recognise and use numbers and words, and mathematical vocabulary, for instance, is practised across most curriculum areas.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Standards of teaching have risen consistently since the previous inspection as a result of frequent robust monitoring by senior staff and outside consultants. This has been accompanied where appropriate by extensive support and further training. As a result, all teaching is at least good with much that is outstanding and this has a crucial impact on the pupils' excellent progress.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is dynamic and energetic and teachers are extremely well focused on the developing skills of each child. Teaching in the sixth form is very well organised and effective. Students are treated appropriately as young adults, their learning

needs are assessed minutely and relationships between pupils and adults lead to very positive and productive working partnerships.

- Teachers maintain exceptionally detailed records of pupils' achievement and assessment is a real strength of the school. Teachers know their pupils very well and plan very small steps in learning for each individual child, so that pupils are always challenged to make good progress but never overwhelmed by work which is beyond them.
- The pupils receive a high level of individual tuition and support. Adults continually interact with each pupil through language or in symbols, pictures or objects of reference. They check and stretch the pupils' understanding through careful questioning and by modelling speech and matching symbols. The pupils are made clearly aware of how to take the next step and to improve their work. This gives them the confidence to proceed and helps maintain their concentration.
- Adults are skilled in using alternative methods such as matching symbols, picture and word exchange and in helping pupils develop early speech. Information and communications technology is very well used, for instance in the sensory experience rooms to encourage pupils to interact with their environment and communicate their thoughts and feelings.
- Lessons almost always proceed briskly because of the teachers' enthusiasm and excellent lesson planning. On a very few occasions the pace can slacken, if the teacher talks for too long, for example. At these times, some pupils may lose concentration and learning slows down.

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

- The pupils love their school. Apart from a small number with chronic medical conditions, their attendance is very high. They have excellent relations with adults and other pupils and their attitudes to learning are exemplary.
- The pupils' behaviour is almost always very good. Parents, staff and pupils are very positive about the calm and happy atmosphere of the school. When on occasion a pupil is confused or upset, resulting in challenging behaviour, the staff deal with it quickly and calmly and use the opportunity to help the pupil develop strategies to control his or her own behaviour.
- The management of behaviour is outstanding. Comprehensive school records clearly show substantial improvements in the behaviour of a very few pupils due to tailored behavioural plans and support. Parents indicate that the school is very effective in working with them to provide the best for their children.
- The school's records show that there have been no incidents of bullying over a long period. Throughout the day and in specific personal, social and health education lessons pupils are taught to respect and be kind to others. The pupils very much appreciate and look forward to the friendliness of their classmates and adults. They feel safe at school, confirmed by parents, and they learn over time how to keep themselves safe.
- Their spiritual, moral and social awareness develops very well and their cultural understanding is encouraged through the many trips and visits and through their tolerance and friendship towards children of different ethnic backgrounds.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher's experience and expertise and an unswerving commitment to excellence have driven continual improvement. She is supported by a highly skilled and enthusiastic team of senior and other leaders who support staff extremely well in the quest for ever higher standards.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage and the sixth form provision are very well led and managed. Staff are unequivocal in their support for the school. They have an appropriate influence on development and take full responsibility for maintaining the standards of their own work.
- The local authority has confidence in the school's leadership and maintains a 'light-touch' overview of provision because of the high quality of the school's self evaluation and improvement strategies. The school has a strong track record of consistent improvement over several years especially in teaching standards and the assessment of pupils' progress, thereby ensuring their excellent achievements. There is an outstanding capacity to maintain this improvement.
- Self-evaluation procedures are highly effective. The work of each teacher is reviewed regularly and robustly and teachers' performance is monitored and managed extremely well. Their performance is clearly linked to salary progression and levels of responsibility. New staff are supported strongly and all staff benefit from high quality training. The school's work is very well regarded in the local authority and teachers from other schools are encouraged to visit to improve their practice. The school maintains a highly effective outreach to other local schools.
- The curriculum is exemplary in the detailed planning at each stage and the exceptionally well organised learning in communication, literacy and numeracy. The curriculum has been precisely adapted to the needs of the pupils. Older pupils in the 14-19 age range work within an innovative work-related curriculum, firmly linked to the school's specialist status in business and enterprise.
- Those pupils benefit from wide choices in practical subjects such as catering and horticulture as well as maintaining the practice and application of their basic skills. The curriculum has a very positive impact on pupils' confidence and behaviour and makes an outstanding contribution to their achievement and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Safeguarding arrangements at the school are outstanding and meet all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are exceptionally well informed about pupils' progress, including school performance data, and the management of the performance of teachers. They effectively manage financial control including the salary arrangements for teaching and are fully involved in how good teaching is rewarded and any underperformance tackled. They maintain very close supervision of pupil-premium funding and regularly check the impact on the pupils' progress and well-being. Governors are fully involved in the school's self review, target-setting and monitoring processes. They take part in regular training and, consequently, nominated members are well informed, for instance, about health and safety matters and the safeguarding of the children.

## 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>	123635
<b>Local authority</b>	Telford and Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	403802
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community Special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–19
<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>	207
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	30
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Debbie Bell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heather Davies
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 February 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01952 387108
<b>Fax number</b>	01952 417022
<b>Email address</b>	H7017@telford.gov.uk



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

