

St Giles School

Pampisford Road, South Croydon, CR2 6DF

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2013

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.

- Teaching is typically good. Teachers know their pupils very well and they plan lessons which are well matched to the needs of each individual. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. By the time they leave, many have gained GCSE or Entry Level qualifications.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Pupils are very well prepared for the next phase of their lives and learning.
- Pupils behave outstandingly well. They are polite and considerate of each other's needs. They enjoy coming to school and are great ambassadors for the school when they take part in community or city-wide events.
- School leaders, including governors, have a clear idea of what needs to be improved to push standards even higher and have been effective in securing improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- School leaders and managers closely check on the achievements of each individual and, when they notice that a pupil is struggling, they plan highly personalised learning programmes to help boost progress.
- Governors ensure that all resources are used effectively, including those made available by the pupil premium. They have ensured that staff are well trained so that they can provide quick and effective support to individuals and groups of pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Signing and other alternative means of communication are not used to the best effect in every lesson.
- Not all teachers are fully aware of how information gained from assessment and tracking programmes can be put to best use in planning lessons.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 17 lessons taught by 17 teachers. This amounted to over eight hours in the classroom. Almost all of these observations were carried out with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- In a meeting with pupils and during lunch times, inspectors heard their opinions of school and discussed with them the activities they remembered and enjoyed. One inspector listened to pupils read and looked through work files with them to talk about how much progress they have made.
- The views of the 53 staff who returned questionnaires were taken into account.
- Eighteen parents took the opportunity to provide their views by completing the online Parent View survey and these were also taken into account.
- Meetings were held with members of the school leadership team and the governing body. A number of school documents were scrutinised, including its own evaluation of its performance in the past year.
- One inspector met a representative of the local authority to gain their view and a therapist provided information about the work of the therapy and nursing teams which work at the school.
- Teachers' views about performance management programmes and opportunities for professional development were also considered.

Inspection team

Bob Pugh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mary Geddes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Pupils who attend this school have a range of special educational needs. Most have physical disabilities in addition to a learning difficulty.
- Almost all pupils come to the school from the London Borough of Croydon. A few travel from neighbouring districts.
- The headteacher has been in post for 18 months. A new deputy headteacher was appointed last year. The school's leadership team has been re-structured in recent terms.
- A much higher proportion of children than the national average are known to be entitled to receive the pupil premium, which provides additional support for children in the care of the local authority, those from service families or those who are entitled to receive free school meals.
- The number of pupils who come from homes where English is not the first language is higher than the national average.
- Teams of nurses and therapists are based at the school to provide care and support to pupils and their families and advice to teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by
 - ensuring that teachers and their assistants use signing and other alternative means of communication more regularly in every lesson and at other times during the school day, for example lunch and break times
 - ensuring that the agreed pupil assessment and tracking procedures are always used by every teacher so that they understand fully how much progress each pupil is making.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- From their low starting points, pupils make good progress during the years they are at the school irrespective of their disabilities or special educational needs; by the time they leave, many have gained GCSE or Entry Level passes. Others have received accreditation for work completed in the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) programme.
- Older pupils are proud of their high quality work which has enabled them to gain these awards. One pupil described to an inspector how his art style has changed as a result of appreciating the work of other artists.
- Because teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is so well organised, children settle into school remarkably quickly. They enjoy stories and music, using the information and communication technology (ICT) resources which are readily available and they make very good progress in communication and life skills.
- Pupils develop good literacy and numeracy skills. One pupil was keen to show the inspector some written work which provided details of her holiday activities. She was able to compare this work with an exercise completed earlier in the year and pointed to the improvements in her writing style over time.
- Pupils make good progress in numeracy. Older pupils were able to use correct mathematical language appropriately during a lesson on probability. They were confident in making predictions and drawing conclusions about number patterns and sequences.
- The school's total commitment to removing all barriers to learning means that there are no differences in rates of progress made by different groups. In English and mathematics, those who are entitled to receive the pupil premium attain as well as other students at the school. School leaders have paid particular attention to checking that those who need to leave lessons for medical appointments or therapies have good opportunities to catch up on other occasions. All the evidence suggests that these pupils make as much progress as others because support is so readily available.
- Pupils coming from homes where English is not the first language achieve as well as their peers.
- Pupils achieve well when they enter community or regional sports, music and arts events. One pupil talked enthusiastically about his experiences at the London Disability Games, and all were very proud of the medals they won as a result of their very successful participation.
- Sixth form students make excellent progress in a lively learning environment. They improve their communication skills because teachers know precisely how much they have achieved as a result of regular and precise assessment.
- Because they have made such good progress over time at the school, pupils are well prepared for the next phases of their lives and learning. Those who are about to leave look forward to moving on to colleges and talk enthusiastically about the courses they would like to follow in the future.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is almost always good or outstanding because lesson planning is closely related to the needs of every individual. As a result, pupils usually concentrate well and work hard at their tasks.
- In a very few cases, lesson planning is not so good because teachers have not given sufficient attention to information gained from individual assessments. In these lessons, pupils do not learn as well and are sometimes unclear about what they are meant to achieve.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching. In lessons where teaching is outstanding, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is excellent co-ordination amongst all staff, which ensures that pupils are always learning. In a very effective

literacy lesson for younger children who have profound and multiple learning difficulties, work was highly synchronised and, as a result, staff were able to record pupils' responses to the music and story and to respond quickly to their particular communication methods.

- Literacy and numeracy are promoted well across all subjects. In a lesson about markets in another country, the teacher encouraged some pupils to count items on the market stall and challenged others to count in fives.
- Teaching is conspicuously effective in the sixth form. Students in this part of the school have particularly complex needs. Excellent use is made of personalised communication aids and the response of each student is carefully noted so that the teacher can plan the next steps for learning.
- Pupils' workbooks are marked regularly. Teachers comment on how well pupils have done and provide good advice about the next steps for learning. Photographic evidence is used to good effect to show how pupils work at their tasks and how they make progress over a year. In class, teachers provide immediate verbal feedback to pupils, so that they understand how well they are doing and what they must do next.
- In a very few lessons, teachers do not consistently use alternative means of communication, such as signing and symbols, to ensure that all pupils fully understand what they need to do.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are always positive in lessons. They attend well and settle quickly when they arrive. Their outstanding behaviour ensures that learning is very rarely disrupted.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe at school; they know whom to ask for help when unsure about what to do. Almost all parents and the overwhelming majority of staff say that behaviour at the school is very good.
- Good relationships are promoted very effectively; all around the school site, pupils are considerate of each other's needs. They wait patiently to be served their lunches whilst pupils who require more assistance make their choices. An impressive amount of organisation was observed when a fire alarm caused the school to be evacuated during a morning lesson. Everyone knew what they had to do and pupils behaved superbly as they moved in a very orderly fashion to the safety of the playground.
- In a lively personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson, pupils joined in an animated discussion about 'good' and 'bad' text messages. In a role-play session, they were able to identify 'rude' behaviour by mobile phone users and talked about their feelings about being ignored. In ICT lessons, pupils are taught about staying safe on line; teachers make sure that information is shared with parents so that this work can be followed up at home.
- Bullying of any kind is virtually unheard of at school and there is an absence of any form of discrimination. On those very few occasions when staff need to intervene to help someone to manage his or her behaviour, reporting is comprehensive and training guidelines are meticulously followed.
- In a very few lessons, pupils' attention wanders because teaching is not sufficiently focused on their individual needs. In these lessons, pupils sometimes appear uncertain about what it is they are meant to be doing.
- Therapists play an important role in supporting pupils who have complex medical needs. Appropriate equipment and resources are supplied to enable full participation in learning and play. On other occasions, highly personalised support takes the form of counselling or discussion about a condition.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and her recently re-structured senior team provide strong leadership. They monitor the quality of teaching regularly and provide constructive feedback to teachers on the

strengths of their lessons and how they might be made even better.

- Teachers and other staff speak highly of the professional development opportunities which are available. Well-planned training programmes provide them with clear guidance on working with the growing number of pupils who have complex learning, physical and medical needs. The school's therapists and nurses make a strong contribution to pupils' preparedness for learning.
- The school has responded well to the changing nature of its intake and seeks to ensure that all pupils are able to reach their full potential. Recent improvements to the assessment of pupils' progress are beginning to provide school leaders with more detailed information about how well each one is achieving and how they compare with similar schools. However, they have not yet ensured that every teacher routinely uses assessment results to the very best effect when planning lessons.
- School leaders in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the sixth form plan very carefully. Their excellent teaching prepares pupils extremely well for the move into the next phases of their lives and learning.
- The school's curriculum is well organised and offers pupils a wide range of opportunities for developing skills which will help them in the future. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well catered for by good teaching about similarities and differences of beliefs amongst people of various faiths and lifestyles.
- Students from a local music and drama college help pupils develop confidence as performers on stage. The enthusiasm with which all participated in a lively rehearsal for the summer show demonstrated how well they have learned to act and sing.
- The local authority has provided light touch support for this school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including performance data and the quality of teaching, because they regularly visit classrooms and attend meetings of staff, for example where pupils' achievements are being discussed. A good example of their effective questioning can be seen in their monitoring of progress made by pupils who miss lessons because of medical procedures. Governors have made sure that resources made available by the pupil premium have been used to raise standards, by providing additional staffing to support learning and to encourage greater access to community facilities by all pupils. They have assisted school leaders in tackling under-performance and they ensure that salary progression is linked to strong performance. They also ensure, together with school leaders and managers, that all safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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	101852
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	408906

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	4–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	4
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ken Morcombe
Headteacher	Mrs Virginia Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 September 2008
Telephone number	020 8680 2141
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