

# Delamere School

Irlam Road, Flixton, Manchester, Lancashire, M41 6AP

**Inspection dates** 13–14 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- From starting points that are much lower than the national averages pupils progress well and their achievements are good.
- Teaching is at least good with some that is outstanding throughout the school including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result pupils make good gains in English and mathematics.
- Staff are highly effective in helping pupils to develop the ability to communicate. They provide pupils with very high quality care and support in relation to their personal and medical needs.
- Pupils feel safe here; they attend regularly and behave well. Their good personal development prepares them well for moving on to secondary school.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher and others are good with some that is outstanding such as the recent implementation of new ways of managing pupils' behaviour.
- The new headteacher is rapidly improving the school through the use of effective performance management, particularly the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements.
- Leaders and managers have introduced new information systems that help them understand better how the school works.
- The governing body has maintained and enhanced its effectiveness since the last inspection.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always provide tasks and activities fully matched to pupils' individual needs, abilities and interests. Consequently, pupils do not yet make outstanding progress in the majority of their lessons.
- Leaders and managers have not yet ensured that all of the staff and parents fully understand and accept the changes and improvements being made in the school.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed seven lessons given by seven teachers, two of which were undertaken jointly with the headteacher. Some parts of lessons were also seen. The inspectors spent more than three hours watching teaching and learning. The pre-reading activities of pupils were observed as they were working.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, middle managers, teachers, three members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the school nurse. They spoke informally with pupils throughout the inspection.
- Important documents were scrutinised including those relating to teachers' planning, safeguarding, the curriculum, records of pupils' achievements and their progress. The headteacher's reports about the quality of the school and the plans for its future development were taken into account.
- The inspectors took account of 24 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Five parents met with an inspector and seven letters and emails were received from parents. The school's own analysis of recent surveys undertaken with parents was scrutinised and 40 questionnaires were received from staff.

## Inspection team

Terry McKenzie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Halford

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Delamere School admits pupils from 2 to 11 years-of-age who have profound and multiple learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties and autistic spectrum conditions. Many have additional barriers to learning such as visual and hearing impairments. All have a statement of special educational needs.
- Just under half are girls and a higher proportion than the national average come from minority ethnic groups, mainly Asian. The proportion entitled to support from the pupil premium is slightly below the national average for most schools. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed since September 2012. A whole-school staffing restructure has been recently completed including a significant reorganisation of the work of teaching assistants. A very few pupils are dual registered with a mainstream primary school. A few pupils attend a local primary school for some part of their education through informal arrangements.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that teachers always tailor tasks and activities to the individual needs, abilities and interests of pupils so that the rate at which they make progress in lessons continues to gain pace.
- Improve leadership and management, including that of the governing body by:
  - ensuring that parents and staff fully understand the innovations and new developments being made in the school and demonstrate that these are in the best interests of the pupils
  - keeping parents and staff fully informed, including about any changes to be made.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils reach levels of attainment much lower than the national averages. However, the great majority make good progress in their lessons and over time. For some, their progress is outstanding and this was confirmed by inspectors' observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Record of achievement files indicate that pupils achieve well and make good or better progress in all areas of the curriculum including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, in the early stages of learning to communicate pupils used the beat of music to emphasise the syllables in their names.
- The information held by the school indicates that good or better progress is made by the different groups of pupils with identified special educational needs throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Similarly, those supported by the pupil premium funding achieve well and make similar progress to all of the other groups, as do boys and girls, and those from minority ethnic groups. Consequently, all are included and not discriminated against in their education. This reflects the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity.
- Throughout the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, good management of the English and mathematics curriculum ensures there is a consistent approach by teachers in helping pupils to gain the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. A recent whole-school initiative has led to many pupils making better than expected progress in reading. All groups achieve well in mathematics, particularly in using numbers.
- Teachers concentrate on helping pupils develop skills in communication. The pupil premium has been put to good use here through the purchasing of tablet computers for those entitled to benefit from the funding. Staff are skilful in communicating with pupils in whatever way it is possible for them to understand. Even pupils with the lowest levels of ability take part in learning and gain from their experiences in classes. A number of parents commented that the gains made by their children in learning to communicate far exceeded their expectations.
- School records indicate that pupils with autistic spectrum conditions usually make less progress in reading than in writing but make better gains in number work than they do in using shapes and spaces. Overall, however, this group of pupils achieves well.
- Teachers provide well for the most-able pupils and ensure that, where it is possible to do so, they learn to read and write.
- A contributor to the faster pace at which progress is being made by pupils throughout the school is the new behaviour-management system that encourages staff to reduce pupils' levels of anxiety and calm their behaviour. This has resulted in pupils who have difficulty in behaving appropriately being able to spend more time in lessons actively learning.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good or better in all areas of the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and is improving rapidly. This is because of the effective use of staff appraisal by the headteacher who has introduced innovative ways of planning lessons and teaching. As a result teachers are gaining the skills and experience required to enable pupils to get the very most from their learning opportunities.
- Teachers plan and prepare lessons that are interesting and relevant to pupils. Consequently, pupils enjoy their work, achieve well and contribute whenever they can.
- Outstanding teaching occurs when particular note is taken of the needs of every pupil in the group. Here, teachers are acutely aware of what pupils have previously learnt and they design tasks in accordance with pupils' interests and abilities. In these lessons pupils make rapid progress.
- In less-effective lessons opportunities are missed to ensure pupils make the maximum gains.

This is because teachers do not always provide activities planned with sufficient attention to the individual needs of pupils.

- Teachers manage classroom spaces and teaching areas well and in accordance with the differing learning difficulties and disabilities of pupils. For example, where pupils have autistic spectrum conditions the environment is deliberately bland so they are not over stimulated. Other classrooms have been carefully set up so that those with extreme mobility difficulties can take a full part.
- A significant feature of the school is the degree to which the adults care for pupils and support their physical and medical needs. Parents are quick to praise the staff for their patience and dedication. One reported, 'Staff always go above and beyond their duty!' Other parents spoke about the life changing work of the school, stating that through the significant gains made in learning by their children the whole family has benefitted.
- This remarkable degree of support for pupils was evident in an outstanding food technology lesson in which even those with the most severe barriers to learning were able to take part in practical activities through the skills of the staff.

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

- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good because, with adult help where necessary, they are so well engaged and occupied in lessons.
- Occasionally, when lessons are slightly lacking in pace or when teachers talk for too long the concentration of some of the pupils wavers. Usually, however, pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly, taking part in lessons and contributing where they can. Some even come on Saturday for the weekend club. Here they can continue their positive relationships with the other children and with the adults that they know and trust.
- In the recent past a very few parents expressed minor concerns about the welfare of their children. All of these concerns were examined carefully during the inspection. Inspectors believe, as the great majority of parents who expressed their views do, that pupils are safe here and that bullying and harassment do not occur between pupils.
- Over time, pupils gain success in lessons to the extent that their self-esteem and self-confidence grows and this enables some to take part in an even wider range of activities. By the time pupils leave and go to secondary school many have gained important skills needed to move on in life. For example, pupils learn where they can, through the curriculum, about keeping themselves safe, including using public transport safely and handling money.
- The lessons seen during the inspection demonstrated that the school is a highly cohesive community despite the many different backgrounds that pupils come from. Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are evident. Pupils get on well together and with the adults. Those that can understand about right and wrong learn to respect the school rules.

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

- Leadership and management are good and improving rapidly at all levels. The senior team and governing body share a vision of how to improve the school and provide the best possible education for pupils. However, this shared mission is not appreciated and understood by all because some of the non-teaching staff do not feel fully involved in the significant and rapid changes that are taking place.
- In the short time since her appointment the new headteacher has improved the quality of teaching by directing teachers to focus more on pupils' individual needs. This aspect of leadership and management is outstanding as is the work recently done to implement new ways of managing pupils' behaviour. This has resulted in significantly fewer requirements by staff to handle and restrain pupils. Consequently, pupils now spend more time in class, gain more from

their lessons and make faster progress.

- Much has been done by the headteacher in a very short time to help the school understand its strengths and weaknesses. New systems have been introduced to enable the staff to analyse better how individual pupils and groups make progress. The information is now so robust that it can be used accurately to target pupils who are in danger of falling behind.
- The new information systems provide a firm foundation for the headteacher to use in performance management with teachers to challenge them to get the most from their pupils. Consequently, performance management is being used effectively to guide teachers in improving the quality of their teaching.
- The great majority of parents are extremely supportive of the school and appreciate the work done by staff to educate their children and care for them. However, not all parents fully understand the recent changes made to the way the school operates. They feel that not enough has been done by managers to communicate with them about the current developments.
- Additionally, a very small number of parents raised their concerns with inspectors. These were carefully investigated by inspectors and the majority were found to be unjustified. However, the inspectors felt that one concern was justified but noted that prior to the inspection the school had put measures in place to prevent the occurrence of future incidents of the sort complained about.
- Plans are in place to use the new primary sports development funding to provide more opportunities for pupils to swim by making further use of the on-site hydrotherapy pool. Managers consider that this will allow the maximum number of pupils to benefit from the funding and encourage them and their families to continue with this form of exercise into the future.
- The local authority has supported the school well through a period of new leadership and management and recent change. The new headteacher has benefitted from good and regular help from a local authority adviser.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has maintained its stability and effectiveness since the last inspection. Members are experienced and know the school well. Governors provide support and challenge to the school, for example, by holding the headteacher to account about pupils' achievements and the progress they make. Members have been fully involved in the allocation of the pupil premium funding used to encourage the development of communication for those with extreme needs through the acquisition of tablet computers. The governing body has supported the new headteacher through her first round of performance management with staff and they have been closely involved in checking that the specific targets for improvement are appropriate. They have made funding available for professional development related to performance management and have already implemented performance-related pay through the appointment of a new deputy headteacher. Governors have undertaken performance management with the headteacher and appropriate targets for improvement have been set in respect of her work. All requirements for safeguarding are 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106394
<b>Local authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	427183

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	75
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nick Coulias
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Burston
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 May 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 7475893
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