

Calthorpe School Sports College

Darwin Street, Highgate, Birmingham, B12 0TJ

Inspection dates 13–14 November 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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Highly effective leadership and management have maintained the school's effectiveness, including outstanding teaching, and extended opportunities for students and staff since the previous inspection.
- Given their starting points and complex needs, all groups of students achieve extremely well because of excellent teaching, very high levels of care and an extremely broad range of activities at the school.
- Teaching is excellent because all staff have very high expectations for all students, they offer a very wide range of engaging activities and meet individual needs well.
- Partnerships within and beyond the school are excellent. These ensure that the learning, as well as physical and emotional needs, of all groups of students are met exceedingly well. Consequently achievement, well-being, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding for all.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is highly effective because staff support and teach extremely well, provide an excellent range of very engaging activities and have high expectations of what all of the children can learn and do.
- Post-16 provision is outstanding. Students have many different and highly effective opportunities to learn, develop confidence and prepare for later life and learning.
- Governors challenge and support the school strongly.
- Despite change and increasing demands, the school community, including staff, students, parents and carers, are very positive. They are very proud of the school and its highly positive reputation locally, nationally and internationally.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons taught by 19 different teachers. They briefly visited a further five lessons, taught by a further five teachers. Seventeen of these observations or visits were joint visits with the headteacher or other senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with students, governors (some of whom were also parents or carers), an officer from the local authority, a school improvement partner, senior leaders and staff.
- The inspector received the views of parents and carers through 16 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, written comments and informal discussions.
- The inspectors received the views of staff through 148 responses to the inspection questionnaire and discussions, together with the views of students through informal and planned discussions.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on pupils' current and recent progress, students' work, the school's development plan, planning and monitoring documents, documents relating to safeguarding, as well as records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jo Curd, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter Lawley	Additional Inspector
Sa'ad Khaldi	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school has grown and changed considerably since its previous inspection report. It has a quarter more students and considerably more staff. Several staff, including senior leaders have left, often for promotions elsewhere. Thirty-one new staff joined the school in September, five of whom are newly qualified teachers. The needs of students are far more profound and complex than previously and there has been considerable building work to adapt accommodation to meet these.
- All the students have statements of special educational needs. Currently, about half the students have severe learning difficulties, about a third have autistic spectrum disorders and about a fifth have multiple learning and physical disabilities. All the students have profound and complex disabilities and many have significant health needs. About a tenth of the students have nurses and health care workers who attend to their physical needs throughout the school day. About two thirds of the students are male.
- At almost two thirds, the proportion of students who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding, is much higher than the national average. This is additional funding for specific groups of pupils, in this case, those who are looked after or who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Most students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost all the students are at very early stages of any spoken language. Almost half have Pakistani heritage.
- All of the students are registered full-time at this school. Where appropriate, older students undertake work experience in various locations. This is organised and supervised by leaders at the school. Some students, of all ages, spend parts of the week in mainstream schools, including a full-time satellite class at Waverley Secondary School.
- The headteacher is a national leader of education. In the last year the school gained accreditation as a national teaching school, training and advising new teachers in this and other schools.
- In September 2013, the school opened provision for students aged 19 to 25 on the school site. This provision will be inspected at another time and is not included in this report.
- The school has strong links with the British Council and is partnered with schools in South Africa, China, Pakistan and France.
- Several health care staff, including nurses, are based at the school and a consultant paediatrician holds a clinic at the school each week.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that staff make the most of learning time by engaging all the students effectively throughout lessons and by using signs and symbols even more frequently throughout the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- All groups of students achieve extremely well, because they have such broad opportunities and have excellent teaching. Rates of progress compare very favourably with similar students elsewhere. Over time, there are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups, as all achieve extremely well. This is because staff promote equal opportunities very effectively, using very frequent and detailed assessments extremely well and rapidly identifying and addressing any difficulties that arise.
- Although rates of progress of students with the most complex needs are relatively small compared with national figures, they achieve exceedingly well. During the inspection, some Key Stage 2 pupils made considerable progress in a physical education lesson. Some sat unaided for fourteen seconds, which was far longer than ever before. They were extremely positive and proud. Staff visibly celebrated this massive success.
- Pupil-premium funding is used highly effectively on special events such as residential trips, additional staff and information technology. One parent reported how beneficial her son's computers are at home and at school, helping to extend his enjoyment, engagement and achievement. At the end of Year 11 in 2013 students in receipt of this funding had achieved slightly better than others, because the money had been used so well to meet their needs, drive equality and reduce discrimination for them in and out of school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve extremely well, because the staff ratio is very high, interactions are highly effective and children engage in a wide range of activities.
- Students in the satellite class make excellent progress, because accommodation and resources are of exceptionally high quality and teaching is outstanding.
- Students in the sixth form achieve exceptionally well, because activities are so suitable and relevant. More-able students benefit from worthwhile high quality work experience, including jobs in coffee shops and hotels. They also eagerly undertake responsibilities, such as being a prefect and helping younger students. Staff have very high expectations for all the students, including those with more profound needs and ensure that activities are relevant and suitable for them all.
- Although the school is currently extending its provision for students who speak English as an additional language, these students achieve very well, because so many activities are practical and visual and because the needs of all students are met exceedingly well.
- The school uses primary sport funding exceptionally well on specialist staff and equipment. Staff use their very high levels of skill and subject knowledge to work outstandingly with students, including those who have the most profound physical disabilities. This very successfully helps the well-being, health and achievement of all. Year 7 catch up funding is also used well on staff, raising the ratio of adults to students and successfully helping achievement of all.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Very accurate and extremely well-focused school monitoring shows that teaching over time is

outstanding. Even though there are times, particularly when staff are new, that the quality is solidly good, this rises rapidly so that over time it is excellent.

- Teaching is highly relevant, resulting in excellent achievement and preparation for later life. One parent reported how staff worked extremely well with her, to tailor teaching to her son's specific needs. She was delighted that at the age of 15 he learned to say his very first words, 'water' and 'food'.
- Team work is outstanding. Teachers, teaching assistants and other professionals, including speech therapists and health workers, work together extremely well. For example, students who need it are fed or given medicine during lessons. This minimises disruptions to learning, enables the full range of students to be full time at school and boosts achievement overall.
- Staff focus extremely well on the basic skills of English, mathematics and communication in specific lessons and within a range of subjects. More able pupils in Key Stage 2 made excellent progress in mathematics as they searched for and found shapes around the school, including the circular wheels of wheel chairs and rectangular doors and windows. They then photographed these using their computer tablets and excitedly developed their communication skills as they showed and talked to others about these.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have excellent opportunities to work and play on their own, alongside peers and in small groups, led and taught by staff. During the inspection, staff very successfully encouraged and guided more able children, to find coloured plastic numbers in shiny coloured water, correctly naming those they found.
- In the sixth form, teaching is excellent because staff have such a strong focus on preparation for later life. They retain a very strong focus on basic skills, teaching these in highly practical ways. For example, through enabling these older students to help younger ones, cooking, cleaning and making beds in the life skills bungalow and tending the school grounds.
- Teaching in the satellite class is excellent. Staff are skilled and experienced. Their partnership with staff in the mainstream school is exceedingly effective. During the inspection, students made exceptional progress as they used language and mathematics during a science lesson investigating the importance of healthy diets.
- Even though achievement is outstanding overall, the progress of a very few students very occasionally slows, because one or two students are not effectively engaged throughout lessons. This is because staff are deeply engaged with others, activities do not fully meet the finer specific needs of all individuals, or signs and symbols are not used to their fullest effect.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Most students behave extremely well in and out of classes and develop very positive attitudes to learning, because activities are very interesting, needs are met exceedingly well and staff have high expectations and are extremely encouraging to them all.
- Students in the satellite class develop confidence and independence extremely well, as they take a full part in mainstream school, supported appropriately by sensitive and highly skilled staff.
- Students enjoy school greatly. The attendance of the vast majority of students is above the

national average. This is because the school engages parents and carers exceptionally well and they quickly see the value and relevance of school for their children.

- Students, parents, carers and staff are extremely positive about how safe students feel. Those who are able to communicate verbally say they feel safe, because they learn about safety, appropriate contact and how to stay safe out of school. Others express very high feelings of safety through facial expressions, demeanours and use of signs and symbols.
- Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Almost all students feel very settled in their classes, show support and concern for each other and are confident to suggest ideas and take the initiative. For example, a more able girl in a Key Stage 2 class helped peers to gather on the carpet, find their places and take turns in discussion at the end of a lesson. Students of all ages play a really positive part in supporting and helping each other.
- Challenging behaviour is managed extremely well, minimising disruption and quickly calming unsettled individuals.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Students take part in highly engaging activities, special events and residential trips, which include visits to partner schools abroad and overnight stays in the life skills house on site. The pupils learn about a range of cultural and religious beliefs and events, have opportunities to try different foods and welcome visitors from different countries to their school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leaders know the school extremely well. Team work is strong and leaders and managers at all levels are very active, always seeking to improve provision and outcomes for all their students. Excellent improvements since the previous inspection include alterations to the school building, refinements in assessments, lesson monitoring and staff appraisal, as well as accreditation as a teaching school. These all have a highly positive impact on teaching, achievement and well being for all.
- The headteacher is extremely welcoming, diligent and ambitious for students and staff. He has very high expectations for staff at all levels, enabling them to train, develop and make a highly positive impact in this and other schools. Ten teaching assistants have been trained through the Graduate Teacher Programme at the school and are now qualified as teachers at the school. Ten deputy head teachers from the school have been promoted to headships in special schools elsewhere since the appointment of the existing headteacher.'
- Leaders and managers ensure that there is a strong emphasis on the basic skills of English, mathematics and communication, as well as relevant practical skills for later life. These help students' safety, well-being and achievement extremely well.
- Despite the challenges of change in students' needs, numbers on roll, new staff and building work, the vast majority of staff are extremely positive about all aspects investigated in the inspection. One, expressing the views of almost all said, 'The school is very welcoming and helpful. The students achieve a lot and flourish as a result of all the staff working as a team to get the best for and from them all'.
- The local authority is well aware of the school's reputation and strengths. Officers have little direct input but maintain contact with leaders and staff through networks of local teachers, training courses and local events.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Most governors are experienced and effective. Most, but not all, have undertaken training and have a good knowledge of the school, its quality of teaching and the achievement of all groups, compared with those in other schools. Training for newer governors is booked and imminent. Governors support and challenge the school effectively and diligently work with other leaders to address any underperformance. They are very vigilant with finances and ensure that additional money, including pupil premium, primary sports funding and Year 7 catch-up funding is used well. Systems for ensuring that staff pay awards and promotions are closely linked with 'Teachers' Standards', policies and other requirements, are robust and tightly adhered to. All statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding, are met well.

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	103604
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	427070

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	30
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nargis Rashid
Headteacher	Graham Hardy
Date of previous school inspection	14 Oct 2008
Telephone number	0121 773 4637
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