

West Lea School

Haselbury Road, Enfield, N9 9TU

Inspection dates 12–13 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- The headteacher and her leadership team lead this school outstandingly well. There is a total focus on ensuring that pupils gain the best possible outcomes, and are well prepared to secure best life chances.
- Middle leaders play a fundamental part in driving towards excellent improvement of teaching and learning, and this includes developing staff expertise across the school.
- Planning, monitoring and evaluation are carried out extremely well, although the documentation that exemplifies this is not always clear and succinct.
- Many pupils enter the school with complex needs and often challenging behaviour patterns as a result of their wider difficulties. The school's positive ethos and care for every individual's needs ensure that all pupils become effective learners and full members of the school community.
- Outcomes are outstanding at every stage, from when pupils enter to when they leave the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their efforts towards success are extremely positive and result in their excellent achievement. Pupils are kind and very supportive of each other.
- The school maximises pupils' progress by engaging positively with all parents. This is seen as vital, and strong partnerships are in place.
- The governance of the school is highly effective. A range of relevant professional expertise allows governors to challenge and support. Careful monitoring of resources is underpinned by a strong focus on securing the best outcomes for all pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons, five of which were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, the inspection team made eight shorter visits to lessons to focus on specific aspects.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in class and attended two assemblies.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the headteacher, subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to parental surveys carried out by the school. Members of the inspection team also spoke to parents who were in school for a coffee morning.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including school improvement plans, data on pupils' current progress, pupils' written work, the governing body minutes and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Janev Mehmet, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jackie Blount

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- West Lea is a school for pupils between the ages of five and 19 who have a range of learning difficulties including severe learning difficulties, and autistic spectrum disorders. Many pupils have a complex range of needs.
- All pupils are supported with a statement of special educational needs.
- A high proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families. There are currently no pupils from service families in the school.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and many of them speak English as an additional language.
- The school is a designated sports college.
- There is no separate sixth form.
- The school runs specific projects for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream schools. It also provides teaching for children admitted to North Middlesex Hospital, which is part of the Home and Hospital Tuition Service.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine the way key information such as data, planning and evaluation about the school's work is presented to stakeholders, so that it is clear, succinct and shows what the school plans to do next.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- The achievement of pupils and their progress from starting points are outstanding because pupils consistently make progress that is higher than typically found. Sometimes medical or learning difficulties hinder learning and, for the majority, progress is measured in small steps. However, the proportion exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics, as well as in a range of learning and social skills, exceeds that found nationally for pupils with similar needs.
- Literacy and numeracy are promoted strongly across the school and well supported by the outstanding teaching of phonics (the understanding of letters and the sounds they make) and mathematics. There are no major differences in the outcomes for any identified groups, including those from minority ethnic groups or those who speak English as an additional language.
- Throughout the school there is clear evidence of the progress being made by pupils because their needs are known and understood, and they are supported to fulfil their potential. As a result, pupils really enjoy coming to school and working hard.
- High achievement is also reflected in practical and sporting opportunities. For example, groups of pupils are regularly representing the school in local, national and international competitions. These include visiting Northern Cyprus to take part in athletics and playing boccia in local competitions. Recently, a group of pupils took part in singing at a famous London hotel, and another group attended a book launch of a book they wrote with a co-author. These opportunities help build pupils' confidence as well as teaching pupils key life skills.
- By the end of Year 13, pupils are extremely well prepared for the next phase of their lives after school. They are independent, confident and able to secure either college or work placements.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is consistently at least good and a high proportion is outstanding.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together extremely effectively to plan and deliver creative and fun lessons that meet the needs of individual pupils very well, and reflect the school's strong commitment to equal opportunities. For example, in a mathematics lesson where pupils were investigating the properties of three-dimensional shapes, pupils got very excited while they were testing the ability of these different shapes to 'roll' down a slide. All pupils were involved in the experimenting – even those who had minimal mobility.
- Teachers have the highest expectations for their pupils. Work is challenging, and the pace of learning and activities during lessons maintains interest and enthusiasm. Pupils are encouraged to do their best across the whole range of lessons. For instance, part of a guided reading lesson demonstrated the systematic structure of how teachers ensure pupils learn to pronounce, read and write new and complex words. Pupils were engaged and learned quickly.
- Excellent use of technology accelerates pupils' learning. The pupils respond well to interactive teaching. In a lesson where the youngest pupils in the school were being taught words and phrases through songs and movements, the electronic board was used well to stimulate their minds and reinforce their learning.
- Teachers regularly inform pupils about their progress, orally and in writing to develop their progress. Marking in books provides pupils with a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve.
- Every moment of the school day is about improving learning for pupils. During breakfast clubs, lunchtime and after-school clubs, teachers reinforce key language through discussions that enable pupils to build on their personal and communication skills. This has a positive impact on how pupils communicate with each other. For example, during lunchtime, pupils were observed helping each other and talking about their experiences. One girl, unprompted, carried a dessert

to another pupil who was not mobile before collecting her own.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils at West Lea are kind, respectful and cooperative. They are part of the caring community of children and adults that makes being at school a happy and safe experience.
- Many pupils arrive at the school with very challenging behaviour caused by their wider learning or medical difficulties. The excellent skills of the school staff in managing behaviour positively ensure that pupils feel respected and valued. As a result, pupils behave extremely well and are engaged well in their lessons. Consequently, incidents of poor behaviour are rare.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. The pupils take responsibility for supporting each other as well as responding to their teachers' comments on how they can improve themselves in their lessons.
- Strong support is given to parents so that a common approach to behaviour can be developed between school and home. For example, a particular pupil whose behaviour at home was not as good as her behaviour in school was provided with a 'behaviour checklist diary' that was signed by her parents each day. This supported her parents with her behaviour at home.
- Parents and pupils are extremely positive about the behaviour seen around school and the part this plays in creating an enjoyment of school and of learning. All are equally positive about safety at the school, particularly considering the vulnerable nature of many pupils. There is a stress on keeping safe and understanding how important this is in life generally.
- School is a happy place where people get on together extremely well, so bullying is not an issue. Pupils are made aware of what bullying is and why it is not good. This includes an cyber bullying and the risks of misusing social networking sites on the internet.
- Attendance is in line with what is expected of special schools nationally, and has improved as a result of close working with parents.
- Part of the school's provision for older pupils is to provide work experience. Detailed risk assessments are in place and great care is taken to ensure that this is a positive and successful part of learning. Pupils attend a range of local placements on a regular basis, such as shops, civic centre departments and libraries. They are also on a rota for running the school charity shop, and they carry out their responsibilities with diligence and pride.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The leaders of the school, at all levels, display their commitment for ensuring that all pupils develop independent skills and high levels of self-esteem. All leaders have clear roles and responsibilities, helping to create a learning community that serves the needs of its pupils. There is a relentless focus on helping pupils to maximise their full potential. Consequently, the school has improved from being good at the previous inspection to being outstanding now.
- Middle leaders are rigorous in improving teaching and raising achievement through their drive to moderate, evaluate and build on what is working well.
- The performance management cycle provides teachers with clarity on how they can improve their work. This helps meet the needs of the school as well as individual professional development.
- The school makes good use of the additional sports funding by continuously promoting physical education and pupils' health and well-being through coaching programmes. The school provide pupils with opportunities to develop their motor and coordination skills through energising activities throughout the day, which include dance, racing, circuit activities, throwing, catching and athletics.
- The school very successfully ensures that all elements of spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning are embedded across the curriculum. Learning about other cultures, religions and

countries is extremely well integrated into the school's curriculum. Pupils learn French and visit Paris every year. They also study and celebrate British culture and take part in charity events.

- Links with parents are very strong. The school employs a bilingual parent liaison worker to help and encourage parents with actively supporting the development of their children. Activities such as weekly coffee mornings encourage parents to engage fully in the life of the school.
- There are strong two-way links with the local authority. The school uses the expertise available to support the training of its staff and to help ensure the high quality of teaching and learning, for example through joint observations of lessons. At the same time the school uses its expertise to work on projects for the local authority, such as the Raise Group, which involves pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion from their mainstream schools. Of these pupils, 95% are integrated back into education or employment with opportunities for better life chances.
- Safeguarding practices meet the statutory requirements. Great care is taken to ensure safety on trips and residential visits, which are an important element of school life for all pupils and add so much to pupils' experiences.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body supports and challenges school leaders extremely well and ensures that teaching and achievement are of high quality. The Chair of the Governing Body holds the school to account, and ensures that governors develop their skills through regular training. Governors visit the school regularly to keep up to date with developments and celebrate the pupils' successes. They visit lessons and familiarise themselves with the work of teachers and pupils. Governors have an excellent understanding of the school's data and how they are being used to maximise the impact of teaching. Governors ensure that teachers are suitably rewarded for good performance related to the quality of their teaching and pupils' achievement. They check that pupil premium funding is allocated in the best interests of the pupils concerned. Consequently, these pupils make rapid gains towards excellent progress from their starting points. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well with regard to safeguarding and ensuring finances are sound.

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	102067
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	427154

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeannette Knights
Headteacher	Sue Tripp
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 October 2010
Telephone number	020 8807 2656
Fax number	020 8803 5203
Email address	s.tripp@westlea.enfield.sch.uk

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