

# Ivy House School

Moorway Lane, Littleover, Derby, DE23 2FS

**Inspection dates** 17–18 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not all achieve as well as they could from their low starting points. A few pupils do not make the expected amount of progress in literacy and mathematics and not enough pupils make better than expected progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not always check the progress pupils are making in their knowledge, skills and understanding in each lesson. As a result, they do not always sufficiently anticipate where they may need to intervene to improve pupils' learning.
- Adults do not always make sure that all pupils maintain engagement throughout the lesson.
- Teachers' expectations for the amount pupils should learn are sometimes not sufficiently high.
- Leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness and its strengths and areas for improvement are not rigorous enough.
- Subject leaders do not analyse information about the progress that different groups of pupils make within their subjects in sufficient detail. They do not use this information well enough to plan improvement.
- Governors have not checked the impact of pupil-premium spending on the progress this group of pupils are making.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour and safety throughout the school are good and sometimes outstanding.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress as a result of good provision and good leadership.
- The sixth form is good because leaders ensure that students are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Most students see out their places in further education when they leave school.
- The successful and effective leadership of the new headteacher has brought about improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning over the past two terms.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons jointly with senior leaders and saw 12 teachers teach.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' work, they heard a few pupils read and discussed individual case studies with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, staff, four members of the governing body and a local authority representative.
- Telephone conversations were held with a small number of parents. There were too few responses to the online survey, Parent View, to enable results to be considered. Inspectors examined the 23 parental responses to the school's own recent survey along with 17 staff questionnaire responses.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including self-evaluation and school development planning, minutes of governing body meetings and governors' schedule of visits, pupil attendance figures, records of incidents, safeguarding policies and records of pupils' progress over time.

## Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kathy Yates

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Ivy House provides for pupils with complex learning needs, many of whom have a severe physical or sensory disability. Some have severe learning difficulties and the majority have profound and multiple learning difficulties. A small proportion of pupils have complex medical needs which include chronic and degenerative conditions. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, including Asian and Eastern European. A well-above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A high proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding given to schools for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care or from families where a parent is in the armed forces.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed and a new Chair of the Governing Body has taken up post.

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

- Make teaching consistently good or better, and enable all pupils to achieve well in literacy and mathematics, by making sure that:
  - teachers and teaching assistants systematically check pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in each lesson, and anticipate where they may need to intervene to accelerate pupils' learning
  - adults make sure that all pupils are maintaining engagement in lessons
  - all teachers have consistently high expectations for what pupils should be learning in lessons.
- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure that:
  - self-evaluation is more rigorous and based on robust checks on the quality of teaching and the impact it is having on pupils' achievement over time
  - subject leaders rigorously check the progress of different groups of pupils in their subjects across the school and use this information to plan improvement.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils join the school with very low levels of attainment due to the nature and complexity of their learning difficulties and disabilities. It is, therefore, inappropriate to judge their attainment against national norms.
- Although most pupils make sufficient progress towards their targets in communication, literacy and numeracy skills during their time at the school, they do not all do so. The school's data also show that too few are exceeding progress against their individual targets in these areas. It was not possible to judge pupils' progress in work sampled during the inspection as there were insufficient annotations to show what they had achieved and their work was not levelled at each point in time to confirm their progress over time.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of learning, especially in their physical development and in communication skills, as a result of consistent use of very well-chosen resources and methods to stimulate their learning. These include objects of reference, symbols and signing.
- Case studies and the school's data over time show that some pupils across the school make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress, particularly in their physical development and in communication skills.
- Students in the sixth form leave having succeeded in a range of relevant 'Moving On' courses which focus on independence and basic skills in readiness for further education or training. Most hold their places after a year, showing that the school prepares them well for the next stage of their lives.
- The headteacher has made sure that pupil premium funding has been used effectively to promote communication and develop physical skills. There are no significant gaps between the progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium in English and mathematics and that of their classmates.
- All groups of pupils, including those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, girls, boys, those with more complex medical needs, those from different ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, make similar progress.
- More-able pupils are making the same progress as their classmates. This is because they are given suitably challenging tasks to complete.
- During the last two terms, the majority of pupils have made good progress in lessons due to the effective leadership of the headteacher in improving teaching and learning.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching over time requires further improvement because some weaknesses remain and not enough teaching is at least good.
- In a significant number of lessons, teachers and teaching assistants do not systematically check or record pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding through the course of the lesson.

Consequently, they are unable to anticipate accurately where they need to intervene to accelerate pupils' learning further. This was seen for example, in a hydrotherapy session, where the adults missed an opportunity for a pupil to practise communication skills while sitting on the pool steps to improve posture.

- Sometimes, teachers and teaching assistants do not engage all pupils sufficiently in learning to make sure that they are all continuously absorbed in their activities. For example, in a few lessons, some pupils with severe and complex needs who need ongoing support for their learning, were left for too long a period without any adult support. As a result, these pupils' attention drifted, which limited their progress.
- In some lessons, teachers' expectations are not high enough. This was seen, for example, in lessons where too much time was spent on low-level activities such as singing the 'hello' song.
- Teachers and adults generally make good use of well-chosen practical resources such as photographs, real-life objects for pupils to refer to, including symbols, signing and electronic communication aids such as switches. This was seen most consistently in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where all teaching was good.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. This is because teachers provide relevant tasks, focusing on the application of literacy and numeracy skills to real-life situations such as the mini-enterprise task of packing and delivery egg boxes to staff, and communicating effectively when collecting payments for the eggs. Activities such as this prepare students for the next stage of their lives.
- Teachers usually match levels of support, tasks and resources well to pupils' different levels. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, those at an early stage of learning English and those with additional complex needs, make the same progress as their classmates.
- Since the appointment of the headteacher, there has been a marked increase in the proportion of good or better teaching across the school. This recent improvement in the quality of teaching was confirmed during the inspection, where the teaching seen in most lessons seen was good.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils throughout the school behave well and stay safe. In lessons, behaviour is nearly always good, with only a few instances of disengagement from learning. Pupils showed good attitudes to learning, mostly remained focused on their activities and tried their best to complete each task with adult support.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All pupils are encouraged to adopt safe practices around the school and most stay safe; for example, by moving in their walking frames and wheelchairs safely from one area of the school to another. Pupils move safely from their transport into school on their arrival and they were seen to adopt safe practices in the dining hall and during assembly.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They are kind to one another and bullying is rare. During telephone discussions with the lead inspector and in the school's parental survey, parents agreed that their children feel safe in school and that behaviour is good. They said how much their children look forward to coming to school.
- Pupils who do not have complex medical needs attend regularly and there are few incidents of

unauthorised absence. Significant numbers of pupils require ongoing medical treatment for their physical conditions and therapy in hospital to promote their personal development and well-being, which limits their attendance at school.

- Strong partnerships with health professionals and therapists mean that all pupils are in school as often as they can be and make good progress in movement and physical development.
- Only a small number of incidents were recorded of challenging behaviour. School records show that most of these pupils make good progress in their behaviour during their time in school.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- The school's view of its own effectiveness is not rigorous enough because it focuses only on recent improvements in teaching since the appointment of the new headteacher. It does not take sufficient account of the impact of teaching in previous years on pupils' progress over time in school. Evaluations of teaching and its impact on the pupils do not make clear what it is that needs to be addressed most to secure more sustained and consistent improvements in all classes.
- Subject leaders are beginning to develop their role; for example, in measuring levels of progress in their subjects. However, they are not rigorously checking the progress of different groups of pupils in their subjects across the school nor using this to plan improvements. Although they have informal discussions about aspects of the school's work, these discussions are not part of systematic monitoring by the school's subject leaders to help them routinely evaluate the school's work and effectiveness.
- Good and effective leadership by the headteacher has led to greater staff confidence and commitment to school improvement. She has introduced a rigorous performance management system with a sharp focus on improving the quality of teaching against the national *Teachers' Standards*, and termly checking of teaching and learning using the Ofsted framework. As a result, there has been significant improvement in the quality of teaching during the last two terms with a higher proportion than previously of good and outstanding teaching seen.
- In the relatively short time that the headteacher has been in post, she has gained the confidence of parents and staff, who expressed strongly positive views. The headteacher, with support from the staff, is developing a new curriculum matched to three broad ability ranges of pupils and with a strong emphasis on promoting independence, physical development and communication skills.
- The headteacher and senior leaders are making sure that all teachers are making good use of practical resources, methods and specialised approaches. They work closely with health professionals and therapists to promote pupils' physical skills, their independence and communication skills. The use of the hydrotherapy pool to develop pupils' movement and confidence within a specialised curriculum, which promotes physical development, results in some significant gains in pupils' physical development and self-confidence. The senior leadership team has identified the right priorities for improvement in the school development plan.
- The curriculum prepares pupils effectively for the next stage of their lives when they leave school. Good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children get off to a good start with their learning. The post-16 leader is developing the curriculum further to provide more opportunities to carry out work experience outside the school.

- Staff have created a positive climate for learning in each classroom and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, in the use of praise and encouragement, in opportunities for reflection, in fundraising for the poor and under-privileged and in the celebration of world festivals. Sixth form students also make a positive contribution in helping the local community by organising a school café.
- The local authority is providing appropriate support for the school, with training provided for staff in evaluating teaching and learning, carrying out termly reviews of the school's performance and building close links with local schools.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are not holding the school to account sufficiently over the use of additional funding such as the pupil premium. They receive headteacher reports about how the pupil premium is spent but minutes show that what is reported is being accepted rather than challenged. Governors regularly visit the school to check on its work. They report back to the governing body meetings with well-informed accounts of what they have seen and the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. As a result, they have a realistic view of the quality of teaching and how it has improved since the new headteacher has been in post. They are commissioning a new and updated website to reflect the recent work of the school. Governors make sure that legal requirements are met, particularly for safeguarding. They are beginning to use data to look at achievement across the school and use this, alongside the school development plan, to set targets to manage the performance of the headteacher. They are also ensuring that teachers' salary progression is linked to their performance.

## 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>	113047
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	424949

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

<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>	85
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	15
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rosalind Oldham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Allen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 777920
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