

# Castlebar School

Hathaway Gardens, Ealing, London, W13 0DH

## Inspection dates

18–19 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
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 outstanding school because:

- Teaching is always at least good with a high proportion of lessons that are outstanding.
- Achievement is excellent. Almost all pupils make outstanding progress, especially in their communication, reading, writing and number work.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress and this prepares them well for future learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' success including the most able. They set challenging targets and tailor work to ensure pupils make the best possible progress.
- Pupils who receive additional government funding and those for whom English is an additional language make excellent progress at rates comparable to other children.
- The pupils' behaviour is outstanding both in lessons and in the playground. They have positive attitudes to their learning and this has a significant impact on their progress.
- They feel safe and enjoy school. Their attendance is above average.
- The well planned range of subjects helps to make sure that pupils find their activities interesting. Adults are skilled in making use of resources which aid learning, such as signing and symbols to help pupils understand their work better.
- The headteacher leads an outstanding senior team which, together with the governing body, has maintained and built on the extremely high standards in teaching and achievement reported on in the previous two inspections.
- Senior and middle leaders continually check on each aspect of the school's work. Together they have inspired staff to strive enthusiastically for excellence in all their work.
- Governors are exceptionally well informed about the school's work. As a result, they are able to provide a high level of informed challenge and support to the school's management.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, all of which were joint observations with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with teachers, pupils, senior staff, support staff, the chair and other governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took into consideration the school's parent surveys. There were insufficient responses to the on-line questionnaire, (Parent View) to be included. Inspectors also considered 63 returned staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including self review and development planning, and records of pupils' progress and behaviour since the previous inspection. It also looked at monitoring reports on teaching and the range of subjects offered. All procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were scrutinised as well as attendance records.

## Inspection team

Melvyn Blackband	Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Jackie Blount		Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school provides for pupils, increasingly, with complex learning needs. Most pupils have severe learning difficulties and others, mainly older children, have moderate learning difficulties. About half the pupils have a further diagnosis of autism. There are a few pupils with additional hearing impairment. All the pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- An average proportion of pupils, are entitled to additional government funding, (the Pupil Premium) because they are entitled to free school meals or are looked after children.
- A very large majority of pupils are from ethnic backgrounds other than White British, reflecting the make-up of the borough. A majority of these pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Two-thirds of the pupils are boys.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are often taught in classes with Year 1 pupils.

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

- Ensure that staff accurately and precisely record the progress which pupils make in each lesson.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- The attainment of pupils on entry is invariably low although these starting points can vary widely. The standards reached by pupils in Year 6 remain below those expected nationally.
- From low starting points, almost every pupil makes rapid progress and above that expected of pupils with similar difficulties. This trend has been maintained and improved on since the previous inspection. Different groups of pupils make similarly rapid progress, including girls and boys, and those for whom English is an additional language.
- Pupils achieve outstandingly well irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds, or of their individual special educational needs or disabilities. On occasion a pupil makes good enough progress to return to mainstream school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make excellent progress in their communication and personal development because of very good teaching and exciting and interesting activities.
- The pupils, throughout the school, make outstanding progress in their communication, reading and writing. The pupils make equally good progress in numeracy.
- Pupils make excellent progress in reading because staff consistently teach them to recognise symbols, shapes, letters and words. By Year 6, the more able pupils have progressed to reading simple books. The development of these skills enables them to make excellent progress across the range of subjects. The pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Staff have been well trained in signing techniques and use them appropriately to interact, explain and question the children. These strategies are particularly successful in meeting the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language and enabling them to make rapid progress.
- Teachers check the pupils' progress in each lesson. Where a pupil does not meet the challenging targets set, extra support or further adaptations to the pupil's activities are quickly put in place.
- Those pupils who receive additional government funding progress as rapidly as their peers. The standards they reach in both English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 vary widely, in line with their peers, because of differences in pupils' starting points.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding. A high proportion of lessons are excellent including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, almost all pupils make rapid progress. Standards of teaching have consistently improved since the previous inspection and have improved especially rapidly over the last two years. This is as a result of intensive staff training in for instance, signing, symbol use and in behaviour management. The school's leaders rigorously check standards and provide highly effective coaching and support where appropriate.
- Teachers have extremely high expectations of the pupils' achievement and set challenging targets for all pupils including the most able. The checking of pupils' work is a strength of the school. Teachers mostly keep detailed records of how the pupils are doing based on short term specific targets which are reviewed daily.
- Teachers plan effectively to ensure that communication, early reading and number skills are practised consistently in all lessons. As a result, the pupils make particularly good progress in these areas.
- Pupils have a good understanding of when they have done well through praise and patient explanation and they are told very clearly how to make their work better. On a few occasions however, staff do not record what the pupils have achieved in the lesson with sufficient precision to guide the next steps in their learning.
- Adults continually check during lessons that the pupils understand what they are doing. They skilfully use signing and symbols to reinforce the pupils' understanding. They check that pupils

are making the best progress that they can and are adept at reshaping and adapting activities so that pupils stay focused and motivated to do well. All the pupils, including the most able, are effectively helped to achieve at a realistic but challenging pace.

- All the pupils receive a very high level of individual attention and support from adults. Support staff are very well trained and competent in working with and encouraging the pupils.
- Staff know their pupils well because of the regular checks on their learning. This enables them to tailor activities precisely for each pupil. For instance in a very good Year 2 lesson, a pupil worked with an adult in learning the sounds and names of letters and words about plants. Another pupil made a model of a story which he knew well while communicating the story through symbols. Yet more pupils were making models of plant pots while talking with an adult about the shapes and sizes of the pots and so practising mathematical and communication skills.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They love school and look forward to their lessons. Their attitudes to their learning in every subject are excellent and this has a strong impact on their outstanding progress. Disruption to learning in classrooms is rare.
- Their behaviour in the playground and the dining room is impeccable. Pupils are quiet; they behave sensibly and respectfully to others and all help to sustain the calm and harmonious atmosphere of the school. Members of the school council of pupils were emphatic that 'Everybody has friends. We play with everybody'.
- Parents, staff and pupils are very positive about standards of behaviour and the improvements the pupils make in their understanding of appropriate conduct.
- Bullying is almost unknown. There are very few recorded incidents. Pupils gradually learn about bullying and how to combat it, through very good personal, social and health education and through discussions with adults. Pupils overwhelmingly are supportive, friendly and courteous to others.
- Adults manage the pupils' behaviour consistently and with a high degree of professionalism. The school's policies and procedures are excellent. The pupils' needs are always the most important priority. This has had a significant positive influence on the conduct of the children. All adults receive regular training in relevant procedures.
- Behaviour records are exemplary and where appropriate pupils have detailed individual behaviour plans to minimise their anxiety and possible frustration. There has been a steady decrease in recorded incidents since the previous inspection and there have been very few, for example, over the last year.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school has been very effective in creating a safe environment. Safeguarding procedures are excellent and there are high standards of care. For example risk assessments for all aspects of the childrens' activities are exemplary. Pupils are taught how to identify and avoid unsafe situations. They practise this in the community, for instance in crossing the road or behaving well in supermarkets and in the street.
- The school makes stringent checks on pupils' attendance and makes determined efforts to reduce absence. As a result, attendance is above average and high for the type of school.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The experience and expertise of the headteacher has enabled him to very effectively lead the improvement of the already very high standards maintained over several years. He receives excellent support from his senior team, from governors, and from middle managers in charge of areas of the curriculum. Leadership and management are outstanding including that of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a solidly based culture of high expectations of both pupils and

staff. Staff and pupils respond well to the expectations placed on them. Without exception, staff expressed their pride in working at the school. Morale is high.

- Teachers maintain a detailed picture of their pupils' progress and well being and this is checked regularly by senior staff. Teachers intervene quickly where pupils are not doing as well as they could. This ensures that almost all pupils, including the most able, those who receive additional funding and those for whom English is an additional language make rapid and sustained progress. There is no discrimination and every pupil has an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Checks on teaching are very effective. This has ensured consistently improving performance. Procedures are clearly linked to challenging targets for teachers and other staff. Good performance is suitably rewarded by salary progression and weaker teaching countered robustly. The staff take full advantage of the very high levels of training, support and coaching and this has led to increasingly rapid improvement in teaching standards in the last few years. Leaders and teachers have responded very well to the increasing severity of the pupils' learning needs.
- The school evaluates its own performance accurately. Leaders are well aware, for instance, of occasional variation in the efficiency of recording the pupils' progress and have plans to improve things. Development planning is detailed and ambitious for the school's continuing success. The school has an excellent track record over many years. Leaders are very well supported by the governing body and local authority which makes good use of the school in supporting other local schools. There is an outstanding capacity to maintain improvements.
- The range of subjects is very well matched to the pupils' learning needs. National Curriculum activities are adapted for each pupil and staff skilfully use a range of techniques such as signing to help the pupils to learn faster. There is a suitable emphasis on all aspects of communication, language, literacy and number. The pupils benefit from government sports funding. For example, the school has employed specialist coaches and established a range of after school sports clubs which are well attended.
- There are many professional dance and drama groups who visit the school while pupils go on regular trips to local religious and cultural institutions. The curriculum contributes very well to the pupils' academic progress, their physical well being and behaviour and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There are excellent partnerships with a range of teacher training institutions. School staff work in other schools in a flourishing outreach programme. The school has built up strong multi-disciplinary teams of health professionals which work in partnership with the school for the benefit of the pupils.
- There are very good relations with parents, who report overwhelmingly that they are completely satisfied with the school's work.
- Safeguarding arrangements are secure and meet current statutory requirements.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are very well informed about the quality of teaching, pupils' progress, including school performance data, and the management of the performance of teachers. They effectively oversee financial control including the salary arrangements for teaching. They are fully involved in how good teaching is rewarded and any underperformance tackled. They maintain close supervision of additional government funding and regularly check the impact on the pupils' progress and well-being. They often visit the school, observing teaching and speaking with staff. Consequently, they are able to challenge school leaders very effectively. They take part in regular training, such as in child protection and the use of performance data. Members are well informed, about health and safety matters and the safeguarding of the children.

## 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>	101966
<b>Local authority</b>	Ealing
<b>Inspection number</b>	439493

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	120
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mary Delger
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Adair
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24-25 June 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 998 3135
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