

Marjorie McClure School

Hawkwood Lane, Chislehurst, BR7 5PS

Inspection dates 15–16 July 2014

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

- Teaching that is typically outstanding and a very appropriate range of subjects enable pupils to make outstanding progress in their learning.
- Staff are highly skilled communicators. As a result, they cater for every pupil's preferred communication system extremely well.
- Pupils' achievement over time is outstanding. The pupils make excellent progress from their starting points. Their performance compares very favourably with that made by pupils of the same age and starting points in schools nationally.
- Different groups of pupils achieve equally well. Those who are entitled to support through additional funding perform as well as others.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are outstanding. Pupils are sociable and respectful young people who are supportive of each other. Excellent relationships are evident throughout the school.
- Leaders and managers at all levels are highly effective and influential. They have established the school's aims very clearly and constantly evaluate how well it is performing.
- The staff are unanimous in their support for the school and what it is trying to achieve.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make excellent progress in their social awareness, physical development and communication skills.
- The post-16 department is a particular strength of the school. It is very successful in preparing pupils for leaving school. Most pupils gain qualifications that lead to further training or employment. The self-help and independence skills they acquire enable them to live fulfilling lives.
- Post-16 pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school and they signify how successful the school is. They are ambitious young people who are optimistic about the future.
- The staff, parents and carers agree wholeheartedly that pupils are safe and very well cared for.
- The nursing and therapy team makes a very significant contribution to pupils' learning, as well as to their physical well-being and personal development.
- There are excellent links with partner schools. These enable some older pupils to follow accredited courses that are not available in this school, including GCE A-level courses.
- Every parent and carer who completed Parent View stated that their child is happy at the school and they would recommend it to others.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all year groups. Thirteen lessons were observed, each taught by a different teacher, and they were all visited with either the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with members of the senior and wider leadership teams, a governor, an officer from the local authority and three therapists. Inspectors collected pupils' views of the school from the many conversations that were held with individuals and from a meeting held with post-16 pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 10 parents and carers, as expressed in the online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors analysed the 57 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A wide range of documentation was examined. This included information about pupils' progress, attendance records, safeguarding procedures, the school's own judgements about its strengths and areas for improvement, and development planning.

Inspection team

Mike Kell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Tomkins

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Marjorie McClure is a slightly larger than average size special school. Pupils come from five London boroughs in addition to Bromley.
- There are 27 pupils in the post-16 department and very few children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Around two thirds of pupils are boys. A few pupils are children who are looked after by the local authority.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs for physical disability or medical needs. Some have additional needs associated with sensory or communication difficulties.
- The school receives additional government funding, pupil premium, for approximately a quarter of its pupils, which is higher than the national average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school also receives additional funding for primary school physical education and sport.
- About three quarters of pupils have a White British background. Very few pupils are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language.
- Pupils have access to a range of on-site nursing and therapy services.
- Wood Lodge is a small off-site residential facility that small groups of older pupils use for short periods in order to develop their self-help skills and to experience community living. The school manages this resource, but it is also used by other Bromley schools and colleges.
- The school shares a site with Coopers Technology College, an academy that a small minority of pupils in Years 7 to 14 attend for some lessons. Older pupils also attend Bromley College.
- As Marjorie McClure is recognised as a specialist school for physical development, staff work with five partner schools to develop their skills in supporting pupils with physical difficulties.
- The headteacher is a local leader of education.
- The school received a Leading Parent Partnership Award in April 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Use teaching assistants' appraisal procedures more effectively to ensure that they all focus consistently on supporting pupils' learning in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress. They acquire new knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they study, as well as the ability to use and apply their skills in solving problems.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Pupils generally outperform pupils of the same age and starting points in schools elsewhere. The proportion of pupils exceeding expected progress in mathematics and English is significantly higher than national figures. The gap between their attainment and that expected of a typical pupil of the same age is narrowing at a good rate.
- There is no significant difference between the progress of pupils who receive additional funding and their classmates. Eligible students make similar progress to their peers in English and mathematics.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are equally successful.
- The very few pupils with English as an additional language do as well as others, as does the very small number that is looked after by the local authority.
- Post-16 pupils make outstanding progress. They acquire the qualifications and develop the skills that improve their chances of employment and enable them to live as independently as possible.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to an extremely good start. Careful assessments enable challenging targets to be set. Outstanding teaching encourages children to make excellent progress in pursuing these targets in communication, numeracy, social skills and physical development.
- Pupils throughout the school make exceptionally good progress in developing communication skills using their preferred approach. This is because the school offers a wide range of communication systems, including technology aids. This includes the development of reading skills in most cases, as systems for teaching the early stages of phonics (recognising the sounds letters make are well established).
- The nursing and therapy team makes an invaluable contribution to pupils' achievement. It ensures that their well-being is maintained and their physical and communication needs are met so that pupils are in the best possible position to learn. Furthermore, therapists work with staff in classrooms to monitor the effectiveness of their interventions in supporting pupils' learning.
- The oldest pupils' outstanding progress is evident in the accreditations that these pupils achieve. In 2013, a few obtained a GCSE grade A to C in subjects such as mathematics, English and science, and one got good GCE A-level grades in mathematics and physics. The results for 2014 look equally good.
- Further evidence of pupils' excellent development and achievement is where pupils move to when they leave school. In 2013, all leavers moved into education, employment or training, and this will be repeated this year.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching in all year groups, including the Early Years Foundation Stage and the post-16 department, is typically outstanding.
- A key feature that makes teaching so effective is adults' expertise in meeting each pupil's preferred communication approach. By exploiting the input of the nursing and therapy team, adults ensure that each pupil is able to participate fully in activities, having the ability to ask and answer questions and to express opinions and choices.
- Teaching in all subjects develops pupils' communication skills extremely well as staff grasp all opportunities to extend pupils' language and improve their ability to express themselves. This includes the teaching of reading and writing, because adults are well equipped to teach phonics to support pupils who are at an early stage of reading.
- Staff make excellent use of their knowledge of pupils' attainment and of what pupils have learned previously when planning lessons. They strike a good balance between whole class work

and individual activities. Therefore, every pupil has the opportunity to benefit from the social experience of participating in discussion and learning from others, as well as more focused time working on individually-tailored activities.

- Teaching contributes significantly to pupils' personal development, such as their social awareness, moral development, mobility and fine motor skills. Staff do this through high expectations that pupils follow classroom procedures, such as turn taking and listening to others, and through using routines consistently.
- Outstanding relationships and interactions underpin all of the school's work. Consequently, staff are able to provide work that challenges pupils, confident in the knowledge that they will invariably get a positive response.
- Staff deal very efficiently, and with minimum fuss, with the very rare occasions when pupils become agitated so no time is ever lost managing pupils' behaviour.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to supporting pupils' learning. They are generally watchful and take the initiative, balancing expectations of independent work with the need to prompt or guide. However, occasionally they do not intervene when an activity needs to be modified or extended.
- Teachers make frequent checks on pupils' learning. They word questions carefully and in a way that is appropriate for each individual. They challenge pupils to explain and solve problems and give them the thinking time to do so.
- Staff regularly mark and assess pupils' work formally and they record this carefully. Close working with partner schools ensures the accuracy of these assessments.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They all enjoy school. They have outstanding attitudes to everything on offer, from lessons and clubs to supervised activities at lunchtime.
- Pupils are very courteous and welcoming. They speak about the school in glowing terms and are a testament to its ambitions and success.
- Attendance is no better than broadly average, but this is because some pupils' acute medical conditions can require prolonged periods of absence. Even then, the school maintains close contact with pupils' families so that some degree of learning can be maintained.
- Staff and parents agree that pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils interact very amicably and are very considerate of each other. They willingly celebrate the successes of their classmates, such as when they spontaneously applauded one pupil in assembly after he had explained the details of a local activity week.
- There are no instances of bullying and no pupils have been excluded in recent years. Pupils confirm that they work without fear of any form of harassment or intimidation.
- Pupils show great respect for themselves, each other and the school and its surroundings. They are smart and no litter or graffiti can be seen.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make excellent progress in understanding what constitutes acceptable behaviour and, as their social skills develop, they quickly learn to play amicably with others.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in many additional aspects of their personal development, for instance their improved hand-eye coordination and their ability to move unaided around the school. In some instances, they mature to the extent that they have the confidence and skills to travel independently on public transport.
- Post-16 pupils leave school having made outstanding progress in developing the self-help skills that contribute greatly to the quality of their future lives.
- The school's underlying conviction that all pupils can succeed and fulfil their potential encourages in them a very positive self-image and a belief that they have a promising future.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. All of the required policies and procedures are in place and their effectiveness and robustness are reviewed regularly. The staff

and parents and carers agree unanimously that pupils are looked after and cared for very well.

- The school takes very seriously the importance of making pupils aware of safe internet use, and both pupils and their families are reminded regularly of the need to remain vigilant.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher leads the school exceptionally well and has embedded clear aims for its continued development. She is supported very ably by senior colleagues and by middle managers with a leadership responsibility. All staff are enthusiastic supporters of these aims.
- The local authority maintains only light touch oversight of the school. It has justifiable confidence in leaders' ability to acquire insightful understanding of its strengths and relative weaknesses. Leaders' accurate auditing is used to develop an improvement plan that focuses on maintaining the highest possible provision.
- Leaders have maintained a consistent focus on improving the quality of teaching since the last inspection. There has been steady improvement over that time as leaders have supported individuals to develop their skills. They use performance management procedures very well to aid this process.
- The impact of all additional funding is monitored very closely. Additional literacy sessions for the few pupils who are not making expected progress have successfully raised their achievement. Expenditure on sport has enabled more pupils to participate in an increasing variety of activities, including competitive sport. It has also funded training for staff and the engagement of disabled sports leaders as role models.
- Parents confirm that the school sees them as partners in their children's education. Their views and comments are always welcome and they receive very comprehensive information about their children's progress and development.
- The range of subjects and other learning opportunities is very well geared to the needs of different age groups. Learning in classrooms is supplemented extremely well by community-based experiences. This includes residential visits for some pupils, such as a recent trip to a partner school in Holland. Wood Lodge is an innovative development that enables pupils to experience more independent living in a supervised and supportive environment.
- Leaders monitor and analyse in depth the information they gather about pupils' behaviour and progress and use what this information is showing them very effectively to drive further improvements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is fully involved in the life of the school. Members make frequent visits to see for themselves how well it is doing. They also contribute more specifically, such as by taking assembly and talking to older pupils about careers.
 - Governors take their safeguarding responsibility very seriously. The governing body maintains close oversight of all relevant policies and procedures.
 - The governing body holds school leaders to account for what is happening. Governors do this by not only responding to reports from the headteacher but also by asking questions based on their own observations. Governors talk knowledgeably about pupils' progress and their behaviour.
 - The use and impact of additional funding is monitored closely.
 - Governors know about the outcomes of teachers' performance management and of how pay is linked to their performance. They receive good information about how well different teachers perform.

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	101697
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	439450

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	4-19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	27
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Knowles
Headteacher	Denise James-Mason
Date of previous school inspection	25-26 May 2011
Telephone number	020 8467 0174
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