

# Dame Hannah Rogers School

Woodland Road, Ivybridge, PL21 9HQ

## Inspection dates

21–22 October 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Leaders have only recently revised policies and procedures to overcome shortcomings identified in safeguarding arrangements relating to pupils' health needs.
- Leaders do not monitor the school's work with enough rigour to check whether new initiatives are having the desired impact.
- The governing body does not evaluate and challenge thoroughly the school's performance. The information governors gather does not enable them to understand fully what is working well and where improvements are needed.

### The school has the following strengths:

- The well-organised therapy provision makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning.
- Very good use is made of pictures, symbols and communication aids to promote pupils' independence and engagement with learning.
- The timetable includes a good balance of sensory experiences, therapy and other learning activities personalised to pupils' individual needs.
- The sixth form provision is good because students are well prepared for their future care placements.
- Strong teamwork between teachers, support staff and therapists ensures that small gains in pupils' learning are captured and their achievements are valued. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and their behaviour is good.
- Parents and carers hold the school's work in high regard. They feel their children are cared for well and they appreciate the high quality of therapy provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across the school, including teaching in both classes, therapy sessions and individual learning programmes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the governing body, teachers, support staff, therapists and the School Improvement Partner.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents including information on students' progress, teachers' planning, therapy programmes, safeguarding policies and procedures, and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Questionnaires from five members of staff were analysed.
- The views of pupils were gauged informally as inspectors toured the school and by analysing the school's documents.
- The views of parents and carers were gained by holding telephone conversations with a small number of parents and carers and by talking to others who collected their children from school. There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), but the inspectors considered the results of the school's own questionnaires to seek the views of parents and carers.

## Inspection team

Andrew Redpath, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Edwards

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Dame Hannah Rogers School is a small school which provides education for pupils who have profound and multiple learning difficulties. All pupils are profoundly disabled, use non-verbal forms of communication and have complex medical and sensory impairments.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportions of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are both lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- No pupils attend an off-site provision.
- Since the previous inspection the school roll has fallen by about a half and some senior leadership posts, including the deputy headship, remain vacant.
- The school has an on-site children's home providing boarding and respite care. The inspection of the children's home was undertaken at the same time as the school inspection. The separate inspection report for the children's home can be found on the Ofsted website.

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

- Improve pupils' behaviour and safety by monitoring closely the updated safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that they are implemented consistently.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring:
  - senior leaders evaluate the success of initiatives against clear targets within suitable time scales
  - governors make better use of information to help them challenge and support the school's work more effectively.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.
- Improve teaching and learning further by extending the range of resources and learning experiences for primary-aged pupils and post-16 students.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the headteacher and governing body do not use information about the school's work to evaluate thoroughly its performance.
- The school has a positive ethos and pupils are treated with dignity and respect. The headteacher leads a strong team of staff who are committed to getting the best out of pupils.
- The headteacher is highly visible around the school. She has a deep understanding of the range and complexity of pupils' needs and is respected by staff.
- Following the recent departure of some key staff, the headteacher has assumed direct responsibility for leading on most aspects of the school's work. Staff across the school work hard to support her and to ensure the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The headteacher and governors are developing a new leadership structure to take account of recent staff changes, although in some areas roles and responsibilities have not yet been set out in job descriptions to ensure clear accountability.
- The headteacher has a broad grasp of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. She monitors the quality of teaching and learning regularly and sets targets for improvement, although these are not always followed up rigorously. The school improvement plan lacks clear milestones and has insufficient detail on how the impact of planned changes will be evaluated.
- Since the last inspection school leaders have improved the systems for recording and reporting pupils' progress. Staff use information effectively to set learning targets and to check each pupil's progress.
- Each pupil benefits from a personalised learning programme built around their individual needs. Therapy is balanced well with individual and group sessions to make sure each pupil has a stimulating timetable.
- The school promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through, for example, trips into the local community, themes on food from different countries and the celebration of religious festivals in assembly.
- Parents and carers are very pleased with the work of the school. In particular, they recognise the high quality of the therapy support and appreciate how they can easily approach school staff if they have any concerns. Parents and carers receive support that is tailored to the individual needs of each pupil. Some benefit from home visits, while others visit the school to gain advice on managing their child's needs.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors do not demonstrate the ability to challenge robustly the overall performance of the school and to hold it to account. This is because much of the information they receive on areas of the school's work is too descriptive and not sufficiently evaluative. A policy is in place which links teachers' performance and salary progression, although the implementation through the setting and monitoring of targets is not fully established.
  - Governors have a broad knowledge and understanding of the work of the school. They make regular visits to the school and receive timely reports from the headteacher and a School Improvement Partner. The governing body receives reports on pupils' achievement and has a good understanding of how the pupil premium is being used to improve pupils' communication skills. However, governors do not demonstrate the ability to challenge robustly the overall performance of the school and to hold it to account. This is because much of the information they receive on areas of the school's work is too descriptive and not sufficiently evaluative. A policy is in place which links teachers' performance and salary progression, although the implementation through the setting and monitoring of targets is not fully established. All safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

### requires improvement

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they feel valued. The respectful and understanding approach of staff encourages pupils to tackle new challenges with increasing confidence.
- Pupils demonstrate considerable perseverance when they complete tasks and convey their sense of achievement using gesture and communication aids. Their self-esteem and self-awareness are boosted through the range of carefully planned sensory experiences.
- Staff encourage pupils to make their views known, for example, when pupils choose a flavour of drink, decide they wish to change an activity or when they attend their annual education reviews.
- Pupils can make suggestions for improving the school through the school council. For example a school

radio station has recently been set up following pupils' requests.

- Pupils appear happy and relaxed around the school and do not display any anxious or distressed behaviour. Parents and carers readily give examples of how their children have demonstrated more settled behaviour since attending the school.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Following a recent incident, shortcomings were identified in arrangements relating to pupils' health needs. Since that time suitable action has been taken to strengthen policies and procedures.
- Key policies have been revised, including those for intimate care and the 'handover' of pupils from education to residential care staff. Staff have received updated training on child protection and on the new arrangements to ensure pupils' medical needs are met.
- The headteacher and the governing body are monitoring the revised systems to check that they are being implemented consistently.
- Staff who lead therapy sessions and administer medicines have had appropriate training. The school provides a safe and clean environment and there is ample space for the easy movement of wheelchairs. The school has good procedures for fire safety and for evacuating the building in an emergency.
- Parents and carers report that they feel their children are safe in the school. Pupils' attendance is above average.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Staff create a positive learning environment in classrooms and around the school. They take great care to acknowledge pupils' achievements and to present attractive displays.
- Teachers, support staff and therapists are well trained and implement the school's communication policy consistently. They have a good understanding of the individual needs of pupils. They use communication aids, pictures, symbols, signing and sensory resources well to reinforce pupils' learning.
- Staff design activities that often contain an element of fun and which build on pupils' particular interests. A good example was observed during the inspection when favourite songs and pictures of family members featured in a session to promote communication.
- Teachers and therapists set detailed learning targets which promote small steps in pupils' learning. Teachers and speech and language therapists meet weekly to review pupils' communication and to plan the next steps in developing pupils' communication skills.
- Activities generally provide a good level of challenge and hold pupils' attention. Pupils are given time to make choices and are encouraged to do as much as possible for themselves when taking part in an activity. For example, in a cookery lesson a pupil was given the right level of support to help crack an egg. Occasionally the pace of lessons slows while pupils wait for activities to change.
- Learning support assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. They manage pupils' medical needs discretely so that they do not impact unduly on learning.
- Teachers and therapists provide support and training for parents and carers, particularly on the use of communication strategies to use at home. They have also worked closely with some individual families where there have been exceptional difficulties.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils enter the school with very low levels of attainment due to their profound and complex learning needs. During their time at the school they make good progress relative to their starting points, particularly in developing their communication skills.
- Pupils learn to express their views and to make choices through the effective use of a range of communication aids, including pictures, symbols, switches and information and communication technology.
- Pupils develop a greater awareness of their own senses and of others around them, for example, in the hydrotherapy, 'Rebound' therapy and speech and language therapy sessions.
- Students in the sixth form are well prepared for their next stage when they leave.
- The school has a good system for recording pupils' progress regularly, using levels that measure the development of pupils' early cognitive skills. This information is used to set challenging learning targets and to check pupils' progress. As a next step, staff are developing links with a similar school to strengthen the accuracy of teachers' assessments.

- The progress of ambulant pupils of primary age slows because the classroom environment lacks the full range of resources to enable them to explore more freely for themselves.
- The pupil premium funding has been targeted well to provide additional communication aids for pupils. The school is monitoring the impact of these aids and early evidence suggests this work is improving the communication skills of these pupils.

### The sixth form provision

**is good**

- Students in the sixth form follow a recognised accredited course for young people who have profound learning difficulties. This course is very appropriate and focuses on increasing students' awareness of the community, social situations and independence.
- Teaching and learning are good. There is a strong focus on providing practical activities, such as cookery, which promote a growing sense of young adulthood.
- Experiences around the school that create a distinct older student atmosphere are underdeveloped. Staff are aware of this and have plans, for example, to create a sixth form common room for older students.
- Students are prepared well for their transition to future placements. Staff work closely with parents and carers and accompany students on visits to help them become familiar with their future care settings.

## 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>	113653
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	447955

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

<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–19
<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>	11
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	3
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Judith Waterfield
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Freestone
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 January 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 892461
<b>Fax number</b>	01752 898101
<b>Email address</b>	mail@damehannah.com



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014

