

Stocklake Park Community School

Stocklake, Aylesbury, HP20 1DP

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
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 good school.

- School leaders are ambitious for their students. They have ensured that teaching has improved over time and that appropriate learning programmes are in place for all students.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding. They are extremely caring of each other and of their school environment. They enjoy coming to school and say that they feel very safe.
- Teaching is typically good. Teachers use their understanding of the needs of each student to plan activities which will help them learn more. They are supported well by their assistants.
- Students make good progress from their low starting points. Almost all make the progress expected of them and sometimes they do even better than their teachers anticipate.
- The good sixth form helps to prepare students for the next phase of their lives and learning because teachers plan programmes which students find relevant and interesting.
- Members of the governing body provide good support. They visit regularly, question school leaders, and ensure that a sharp focus is maintained on getting even better.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Middle leadership is not as strong in a few subjects where the curriculum has not been thoroughly and effectively planned to meet students' needs, for example design and technology.
- Teachers do not always use students' responses to their questions to shape the next part of the learning, which means that students are not always fully stretched.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 10 classrooms to observe the quality of teaching. On four of these occasions, they were accompanied by a member of the school’s leadership team.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and members of the governing body, and with teachers and students, including those in the sixth form. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority. The views of the 14 parents who responded to the online Parent View survey were taken into account. Twenty eight members of staff provided their views by returning their questionnaires.
- Inspectors scrutinised important school documents, including its policies for keeping students safe and for behaviour management. The school’s systems for checking its own work were reviewed.
- Inspectors looked at students’ workfiles and books and listened to them read in class.
- Evidence of students’ activities in school and in the wider community was reviewed when inspectors looked at photographs and written work which is on display around the school.

Inspection team

Bob Pugh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school forms the secondary special school part of The Vale Federation. There is one governing body for the schools in the federation. The primary special school member of the federation is on a site elsewhere in the town and was inspected separately at the same time.
- Three of the four sixth form classes are based in a converted house approximately four miles away from the main school site. The other sixth form class is based at the main site.
- The school provides an education for students who have severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. The proportion of students who have an autistic spectrum condition has increased over time. Students do not attend alternative provision.
- A higher than average number of students come from homes where English is spoken as an additional language. Approximately 15% of students come from a Pakistani background. The number of students eligible to receive funding made available by the pupil premium is above the national average. This is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Therapists work alongside teachers to plan programmes for students.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - strengthening teachers' subject knowledge by providing opportunities for them to take account of best practice when observing teachers at work in high performing specialist and mainstream schools, so that all subjects are equally well planned and taught
 - ensuring that teachers always check students' answers to their questions carefully, and use their responses to shape the next part of the learning, so that all students are as fully stretched as possible.
- Develop the skills of all middle leaders in all subjects so that the curriculum is planned to meet students' needs fully, for example in design and technology.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The Principal and head of school display ambition for making the school even better. They know the school well because they take time to check on the quality of teaching and students' achievements. They have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including improvements in students' rates of attendance and their continuing outstanding behaviour. They have worked effectively to address underperformance.
 - As a result, teaching has improved over time. Students make good progress because they are well taught and cared for, and because their views and those of their parents are taken into account.
 - School leaders, including members of the governing body, use the information they receive from their observations around the school to plan further improvements, such as employing sports coaches to help students achieve more in physical education. They have ensured that all students have equal opportunities to use all areas of learning and the available resources.
 - Disadvantaged students make good progress because school leaders have used additional resources well to provide extra teaching and therapy time.
 - Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They learn about the similarities and differences in faith groups and lifestyles, and how people celebrate special occasions.
 - School leaders, including middle leaders and teachers, have worked to improve the curriculum, especially in English, mathematics, science, and personal, social and health education. However, planning in other subjects has not yet been as rigorous, which means that there are areas of learning which are not as fully developed, for example design and technology.
 - The local authority provides suitably light-touch support to this school. Recently, it commissioned a review of teaching and students' achievements, which has helped school leaders and governors identify areas for further improvements.
 - All requirements are in place for keeping students safe and secure. Child protection arrangements meet all requirements. Students' safety when out and about is assured by thorough risk assessments.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governance is good. Governors make good use of the information they receive from their visits, and from reports by school leaders and external advisers, to challenge the Principal to raise the quality of teaching and students' achievements. Governors have undertaken suitable training in safeguarding. They understand information about students' achievements. They regularly monitor school documents and procedures, for example for recruiting and training staff.
 - Governors understand the impact that additional resources is having on improving students' achievements, for example in reading, writing and mathematics. They monitor the professional development of staff and ensure that decisions about salary increases for teachers are related to the effectiveness of their performance and to the progress of students. Good arrangements are in place for the performance management of the Principal.

The behaviour and safety of students are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. The really positive welcome they receive from staff when they arrive at school sets the tone for the day. Students enjoy the activities planned for them and are keen to learn more. They have very respectful relationships with staff and are eager to speak to visitors.
- In class, they are remarkably tolerant of each other's needs. An excellent example of this was seen when one student, who has an autistic spectrum condition, found his classroom environment too noisy. He was able to move to the very safe quiet area and then return to his work area as soon as he felt able to, where he caught up quickly, without any interruption to the learning of others.
- Students have no concerns about behaviour in the school; this view is overwhelmingly shared by staff and parents.
- Students' behaviour when out in the local community is excellent. They are great ambassadors for their school. Their attendance has improved and meets the national average for special schools. Their behaviour at lunchtime and in the playground is outstanding
- There are no reports of bullying of any kind. Incident logs are well-maintained and checked by school

leaders.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. The safeguarding policy has been very recently reviewed and updated. Sufficient staff have received advanced child protection training, and all staff sign to say that they have attended training programmes and have read the school's policy.
- School staff ensure that students' health needs are very well met. Care plans are very detailed and contain comprehensive advice for staff on what to do in case of medical emergencies.
- Effective teaching is in place about staying safe, in all key stages, including the sixth form. In class and in therapy sessions, students learn about various kinds of online bullying, as well as potentially dangerous situations in the local and wider community.
- Students help to keep each other safe. They move around the buildings in an orderly manner. They develop excellent relationships with each other and demonstrate a real sense of belonging to the school community.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good. Because teaching is good and therapists offer effective support, students make good progress in reading and writing (including handwriting), communication and numeracy.
- Teachers know their students well. This is shown in their detailed lesson plans. Teachers carefully set out the next steps which students must follow if they are to make good progress. Teachers' assistants add to the quality of teaching by following these plans and by prompting students to search for answers to questions. Everyone works hard to help students make good progress and no time is ever wasted.
- On some occasions, teachers do not increase the challenge when a student shows that they have completed the task, because they have not listened carefully enough to the student's response. Because of this, students are not always asked to complete follow-up work to stretch them more.
- In all activities, teachers encourage students to improve their reading and writing, to communicate clearly, and to count and add numbers. Students who were learning about festivals and celebrations carefully counted the number of candles when asked and others read from their workbooks about the ways in which people celebrate marriage. Through these activities, they are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Teachers help students to learn to become responsible citizens, for example by learning about the importance of recycling, asking them to think how everyday items can be used again.
- In school and when visiting the town, teachers provide good opportunities for students to practise skills which will help them in the future. At lunchtime, students use their good communication skills to make their needs known to staff. Every week, students serve in the tuck shop while others count out their money and carefully check their change.
- Not all teachers have yet had the opportunity to improve fully their own skills as teachers of different subjects, by observing highly effective colleagues in this school and elsewhere.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- From their low starting points, students make good progress over time. They achieve equally well in reading and writing, communication and numeracy. Sometimes, they exceed their teachers' expectations. They are well prepared for the next stages of their lives and learning.
- There are good opportunities for students to practise their writing skills in different subjects, such as religious studies or science. Over time, many students demonstrate improvements with handwriting while others learn good word-processing skills to help them form words and sentences.
- By the time they are ready to leave the sixth form, the most-able students have gained good accreditation such as Entry Level awards for life and learning.
- Students reach the ambitious targets which teachers set out for them because they feel confident in school and enjoy learning. Parents and members of the governing body can be sure that the good records maintained by staff provide them with accurate information about progress, because teachers work alongside their colleagues from similar schools to compare the records they make with others.
- School leaders make regular checks on everyone's progress. They ensure that information about achievement is presented in a format which all can understand. Parents and students themselves provide at annual review meetings their own views on how much has been achieved.
- There are no differences amongst rates of progress made by disadvantaged students or others in any

group, such as those who speak English as an additional language. Disadvantaged students make progress in English and mathematics which is as strong as all others. This is because additional teaching and therapy have been targeted well to close the gap. Everyone has the opportunity to take part in performances or to attend sports events and competitions.

- Parents are particularly pleased with their children's achievements. One parent expressed her pride and delight that her son had gained so much confidence that he was able to read a passage in a parents' assembly and take part in a school play.
- Students make great gains with physical skills. They participate keenly in sports events with other schools as well as improving their own strength and stamina in rebound sessions on the trampoline or when swimming.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Leadership and management in the sixth form is good. They make sure that good planning by teachers provides students with a sense of what life will be like after school.
- Regular visits are made to local shops, cafes and other facilities. During the inspection, students and teachers visited someone known to the school who lives independently in a flat. On returning to school, students held a lively discussion during lunchtime about organising your own life, what help and advice might be needed, and where to find that help.
- At school and in the wider community, sixth form students' behaviour is outstanding. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect between staff and students. Staff and students made a new student and her family feel extremely welcome, when they talked about the things they like about school and the places they visit.
- Teachers encourage their students to think hard about the qualities and interests they will need to do well in particular jobs. All sixth form students, including those who have the most complex needs, have the opportunity to learn about the world of work through visits, or in mini-enterprise activities where they raise funds or make money for class projects.
- Students make good progress during the time they are in the sixth form. They are encouraged to be responsible citizens and to think about the needs of others. For example, they volunteer to help elderly people with gardening chores. Students enjoy sharing their resources with students from other schools and colleges in the area when they come to work alongside them.

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	110581
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	447885

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	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	66
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	22
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Coneron
Principal	Chris Ludlow Gill Mullis (head of school)
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 January 2012
Telephone number	01296 423507
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