

Oakfield Park School, Ackworth

Bansley Road, Ackworth, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF7 7DT

Inspection dates 26–27 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Exceptionally strong leadership is focused on creating a school where students' achievement is outstanding and the quality of teaching goes from strength to strength.
- Governors provide very effective support and challenge because they know the school well and use their experience and expertise to guide their work.
- Leaders give careful consideration to what actions will make the greatest difference for the students in their care. For example, leaders have identified a need to fine-tune their assessment procedures to provide a more detailed record of the progress made by students with the most complex learning difficulties.
- The attitudes displayed by students to their work and school life are exemplary. They work exceptionally hard in lessons and are friendly and supportive of one another around school.
- Students are safe and happy in school, behave very well and their attendance is above average. Those with complex medical needs may spend some time away from school. However, carefully thought through activities, such as using internet communication, make sure everyone is fully included as much as possible.
- Teachers and support staff work as very effective teams in every class. They observe carefully how well students are responding and adjust tasks accordingly. This ensures everyone makes the best possible progress in lessons.
- Students benefit from a wide range of educational trips and residential visits, which are organised for them throughout the year.
- During their time at school, students are extremely well supported so they can achieve highly and make the most of their skills and talents.
- Students make excellent progress in their English and mathematics as well as in developing their art, music and horticultural skills.
- High-quality leadership and teaching in the sixth form provides students with a distinct experience from the rest of their school. The sixth form common room and the life skills which are developed in the flat are enjoyed and appreciated by all.
- Students in the sixth form are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their lives and all leave school having attained externally recognised awards or qualifications.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors conducted a number of inspection activities jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteacher or assistant headteachers, including observing learning in class.
- Inspectors spoke with students about their views on behaviour and how the school keeps them safe. Inspectors also spoke to students about their learning.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, school staff, governors and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed behaviour at lunchtime, break times, around the school and during assembly.
- Inspectors took account of 10 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and also of the school's own recent survey of parent views. Inspectors also spoke with a number of parents during the two days of the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about students' current progress, planning and monitoring, records of behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- Inspectors also took account of the 34 responses to the staff.

Inspection team

Jim Alexander, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Paul Edmondson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oakfield Park School provides education for students and young people with severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple disabilities, many of whom have additional needs such as autism, hearing or visual impairment and also those with physical or medical requirements.
- All students and young people have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for children who are looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- A new headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher were internally promoted in September 2014. A second assistant headteacher, new to the school, was also appointed at the same time.
- The school is currently undergoing extensive building work and refurbishment.
- Staff at Oakfield Park School provide support for other schools within the local authority when the need arises.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further refine the school's assessment procedures to provide leaders with an even more detailed record of the progress made by students with the most complex learning difficulties.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The recent appointment of a new headteacher and assistant headteacher has brought further strength to an already highly effective leadership team. Together they have a drive and determination for excellence in everything the school achieves.
- Each member of the senior leadership team has a very clear role and set of responsibilities for which they are held robustly to account by governors. This means leaders know what needs to be done and work efficiently to ensure students benefit from the highest quality of education and care.
- Leaders make sure the school is continually improving. For example, leaders have identified that while their current system is highly effective in tracking the progress students make each year, it does not measure with the same pinpoint accuracy the breadth of experience gained by students with the most complex learning difficulties.
- Outstanding procedures to check on the quality of teaching, assessment and planning provide clear evidence of teaching and learning of the highest standard. This has enabled leaders to raise the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
- The deputy headteacher is currently meeting with parents, students and a range of professionals to ensure that the statements of special education need reflect the requirements of the new code of practice.
- Middle leaders also play an important role in improving the quality of teaching and the school's curriculum. For example, they have recently identified that while students benefit from regular visits to the local shops to buy ingredients to use in their cookery lessons, these opportunities can be developed still further. Now small groups of students are given individual targets on each of these trips. For example, one student might need to ensure he has been given the correct change, another needs to ensure they have the right weight of vegetables for their recipe, while another is given the responsibility of making sure they are on time to catch the bus back to school.
- A wide range of activities also support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain. For example, the recent visit to The Yorkshire Sculpture Park provided students with an opportunity for some excellent written and artistic work in response to The Buddha Sculpture by Niki de Saint Phalle.
- The school's work to measure its own performance is detailed and accurate. It leads to effective priorities for continuing to move forward the school's rich curriculum. The very useful advice provided by staff equips students to be exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education and adult life.
- The school's use of additional funding, for example, the pupil premium is highly effective enabling all students to make the best possible progress and reflects the excellent promotion of equality of opportunity for all.
- There is a strong partnership with a range of professional agencies to ensure the health and educational needs of students are effectively met.
- The local authority offers effective support and also uses the expertise within school to support others within the local area.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very effective in carrying out all its duties, including those of safeguarding and child protection. Governors challenge senior leaders to ensure high-quality provision and to promote equality of opportunity for all. Governors are frequent visitors and, therefore, have first-hand evidence of how well the school is performing. They have a similar firm grasp of spending, including an understanding of how effectively the pupil premium is being used to make sure the disadvantaged students are provided with the best opportunity to make excellent progress. Governors also fully understand the links between teachers' performance and their pay. Governors ensure challenging targets are met and have a good understanding of performance data, so they can challenge leaders robustly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Students are helped to develop exceptionally positive attitudes to their learning and work hard in their lessons. They have a great deal of respect for their teachers and staff who support them. Some students need more support than others to manage their own behaviour or emotions. However, all respond very

well to the support and encouragement they receive, so very little time is ever wasted in lessons.

- Students' attendance is above average and they say, 'our school is brilliant'. Students, who may need clear structures and regular routines, are supported to manage change exceptionally well, for example when new routines were required at the start of the day due to the current building work.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Students say there is no bullying and school records confirm that incidents of unacceptable behaviour are always well managed. Parents also speak highly of the school, one explaining 'my child was bullied in a previous school. Not only is there no bullying in this school, but staff have helped my child overcome hurt from his previous experiences'.
- Students have a good awareness of how to stay safe when, for example, using the internet. Students are also given effective training for how to stay safe when going to the shops or other activities in the wider community.
- The school has a very small number of students who can travel independently to school each day. Careful attention has been given to individual travel plans for these students, which have involved input from parents and local authority colleagues.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- In every class, teachers, teaching assistants and support staff work extremely effectively as a team to support both the learning and medical needs of students. As a result, all students are very well challenged and supported. It is this desire for excellence that underpins the success of this outstanding school.
- Staff know the students' starting points very well and know what each student needs in way of academic target or emotional support.
- Lessons are planned to meet the needs and interests of each student. A wide range of resources, including those designed to simulate response to light and sound, are used very effectively.
- Students respond well to guidance and support provided by staff throughout each lesson. For example, a student who was on the trampoline, in a physical education lessons for students with profound and multiple disabilities, responded exceptionally well to the vibration provided by staff tapping on each side of the bed by tracking with his eyes the changes they made to the rhythm.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds made by letters) is highly effective and students in some classes use what they know to spell simple and complex words.
- Teachers also provide a range of activities that support students' writing. For example, a recent visit to the Hepworth Gallery resulted in some excellent written work which is displayed around the school.
- The teaching of mathematics is also very effective in providing first-hand opportunities to develop life skills in, for example, using money.
- The use of questions is also used highly effectively. Teachers and support staff use questions to consolidate students' understanding and to extend their thinking.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- From their individual starting points, students are helped to make outstanding progress whatever the nature of their disability or difficulty.
- Leaders use a wide range of measures to track students' progress. Work seen in lessons and on display around the school, provide clear evidence that all students make at least expected progress and the majority make much better than expected progress.
- Excellent progress in English and mathematics is matched by progress in science, information technology, physical education, personal and social education as well as in communication in all its forms.
- Leaders have taken great care in allocating the additional resources from the pupil premium. It is clear that this is proving very effective in accelerating the progress of the disadvantaged pupils in all subjects, not just English and mathematics. As a result, there is no difference between the performance of disadvantaged students in school and non-disadvantaged students. However, the disadvantaged students were some years behind other students nationally, but the nature of their disabilities and difficulties makes such comparisons difficult.
- The most able students, those working at Level 1 of the national curriculum, are also challenged and

supported effectively to make the best possible progress.

- Students' achievements are celebrated each week at the X Factor awards assembly. Students are not only proud of their own achievements but happily share in the success of others.
- Parents also speak very highly of pupils' achievements. One parent explained that they did not know their child had such a good singing voice because 'until he started this school he did not speak'.
- All students are expected to leave school with externally accredited qualifications, which is understandably the source of great pride by students, staff and families alike. The main qualifications are those at Entry Level or from the range of certification provided by the Awards Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN).

The sixth form provision

is outstanding

- Outstanding leadership of the sixth form and excellent teaching ensures that students are very well prepared for the next stage of their lives.
- A well-conceived curriculum ensures that students make excellent progress towards their accredited courses, in developing independence skills and enhancing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A large proportion of students start school in the sixth form. Those students that have been in the school longest make outstanding progress and those who arrive in the sixth form are helped to settle very quickly and soon catch up.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding and they willingly take on extra responsibilities, such as running the school tuck shop, providing excellent role models for younger students in the school. Students feel and are very safe.
- A significant feature in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 is built upon in the sixth form; teachers have exceptionally high expectations of what students are capable of doing and achieving. Staff have a very good awareness of pushing for excellence, but knowing when to step back when required.
- The relationships that are developed between students and staff are impressive and students show remarkable determination in their learning.
- Good links with colleges and supported living centres ensure effective transition when it is time for students to leave school.
- It is without question that all students greatly benefit from attending Oakfield Park School.

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	133719
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	449502

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	124
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bernie Szpigel
Headteacher	Steve Copley
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2011
Telephone number	01977 723145
Fax number	01977 723148
Email address	headteacher@oakfieldpark.wakefield.sch.uk

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