

Bennerley Fields Specialist Speech and Language College

Stratford Street, Cotmanhay, Ilkeston, DE7 8QZ

Inspection dates

28–29 January 2015

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| | 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 |
| Early years provision | | Outstanding | 1 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher is an exceptional leader and, together with the senior staff and governors, has effectively tackled the issues identified in the last inspection.
- The increased use of pupils' ideas has played a significant part in bringing about improvements. It is now central to every aspect of the school's work.
- Senior leaders have been outstandingly clear about where improvements were needed. They have taken superb action to raise achievement and the quality of teaching, both of which are now outstanding.
- Excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's success. This underpins its drive to ensure that all pupils are prepared exceptionally well for life beyond school.
- Leaders have revised the school's curriculum and are beginning to develop their own systems of assessment to reflect the skills development of individual pupils across a range of subjects.
- The governing body has improved significantly since the last inspection. Governors now make an excellent contribution to the school's effectiveness through their regular reports and visits to the school to check all areas of its work.
- Progress in the early years provision is outstanding due to the excellent teaching and highly individual manner in which all children are taught.
- The range of subjects and activities on offer across the school is very carefully designed in order to meet pupils' individual needs. This ensures that pupils make rapid progress in the key subjects of English and mathematics. It also ensures that pupils have access to a wide range of opportunities through work in class and the very many enrichment activities on offer.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They have excellent attitudes to learning and love coming to school. The school's efforts to ensure that pupils are safe are outstanding.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. As one stated: 'Bennerley is a fantastic school. All of the staff, from the headteacher to the caretaker work exceptionally hard to promote good behaviour and values. My child has made so much progress because the activities offered are brilliant for his confidence. The teachers and assistants work really hard to make sure he is included in everything.'

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all teachers jointly with senior leaders. They visited 12 lessons to see how teaching staff provide for pupils with different types of learning needs.
- The inspectors looked at pupils’ work and heard a small number of pupils read. A meeting was held with some members of the school council to talk about their work and their experiences of school. Informal discussions with pupils also took place during lessons.
- The lead inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, as well as a representative from the local authority. In addition, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and senior leadership team, middle leaders and one of the speech and language therapists.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school’ self evaluation summary and school development plan, safeguarding policies, records of behaviour, reports to governors, minutes of governors meetings, attendance figures, information about children’s progress in the early years provision, pupil progress over time and the monitoring of teachers’ performance records.
- Inspectors also checked the school’s website and records of local authority reviews.
- Eleven responses to Parent View (Ofsted’s online questionnaire for parents) were considered alongside the school’s own parental survey. The inspectors also took into account 35 completed staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Lynda Walker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Martin Bertulis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bennerley Fields caters for children and young people with special educational needs aged between two and 16 years. All pupils in the main school have a statement of special educational needs. The Nursery offers part-time places for up to 12 children, some of whose needs are still being formally assessed. Children in their Reception year attend full time.
- Almost half of the pupils have autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Some have severe or moderate learning difficulties, physical difficulties, speech, language and communication needs or behavioural, social and emotional difficulties.
- A high proportion of pupils, over half, are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care. All pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Bennerley Fields is part of a strong partnership with nine other special schools across Derbyshire. This means that staff from all of the schools have the opportunity to share good practice, moderate pupils' work and benefit from joint training opportunities.
- The school works in close partnership with two local alternative providers, Access Training and Crisp Vocational, in order to provide vocational courses for pupils in Year 10 and 11. School staff always accompany the pupils when they attend these courses.
- The school has a specialism in speech, language and communication. Two speech and language therapists are, between them, based at the school full time.
- The school's vision statement is: 'Bennerley Fields is a welcoming community. Learning and communication is promoted through hard work, respect, friendship and belonging. Together we inspire and motivate each other to aim high for the future.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the school's approach to assessment without national curriculum levels in order to continue to finely track pupil progress and skill development across the core curriculum and other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has successfully ensured that the school vision statement has real meaning for every member of the school community. As a result, an extremely positive atmosphere spreads through the whole school.
- The well-established and rigorous checking by senior staff and, on occasions the local authority, have been central to the consistent rise in teaching standards and pupil progress since the last inspection. Having high expectations and providing opportunities for staff development has been a powerful force for change and has had a significant impact on the excellent progress of all pupils.
- Monitoring teachers' work has a high priority. There are now excellent procedures to manage teachers' performance. There are clear links to salary progression and increased responsibility. Links with other schools, particularly those in the special school partnership, are used very well to share expertise and good practice.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have high expectations of the middle leaders, and effectively encourage the growth of their ambition. The middle leaders are very appreciative of the support they have been given to undertake their roles effectively. They have made a significant contribution in bringing about the improvements in the quality of teaching and pupil progress.
- The leadership of the early years provision is very effective. Activities are organised very successfully to meet the needs of all the children. Basic skills of communication, literacy and numeracy are taught well. Systems for monitoring and recording children's progress are rigorous, and provide teachers with a solid base on which to plan future learning.
- The strong emphasis on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social development and promoting British values are an integral part of the school's work. This is evident from early years where the emphasis is on making relationships, developing communication and social skills. When pupils reach Key Stage 4, the focus is on recognising and appreciating diversity, cooperation, respect and tolerance for each other.
- In addition a wide range of visits, the study of different faiths and cultures, together with very well thought out assemblies, provide opportunities for reflection and celebrating success. These ensure that there is no discrimination of any kind and that every pupil is given an equal opportunity to succeed. This is reflected in the consistently high achievement of all groups of pupils, including the most and least able.
- In order to provide vocational opportunities that the pupils had requested, the school uses alternative providers to run courses in animal care and construction. School staff closely monitor pupils' attendance, progress and safety. Careers advice is used well and pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education. All last year's Year 11 pupils moved onto a special school sixth form or a local college of education.
- Pupil premium funding has been used very effectively. Eligible pupils have benefited from a range of literacy and numeracy interventions, and access to the many school clubs and enrichment activities.
- Year 7 catch-up funding has effectively been used to enhance pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills by providing specific equipment. Careful monitoring has demonstrated that this has had a significant impact on their interest, motivation and progress both in English and mathematics.
- The school makes good use of the primary physical education and sport funding by buying into the Erewash School Sports Partnership. This gives them access to a number of courses where the emphasis is on developing the skills of staff. Teachers and teaching assistants have attended courses in athletics, dance, gymnastics, and outdoor and adventurous activities. Funding has also been used to provide a number of after-school clubs such as Boccia and wheelchair volleyball, as well as providing transport to attend sporting events. This has resulted in increased pupil participation and enjoyment.

- The school works extremely well in partnership with parents. As well as involving parents in their children's learning, the school does a great deal to support the whole family through the work of the family support worker. There are many opportunities for parents to meet for mutual support; parents seen during the inspection were unanimous in their praise for all of the staff of the school.
- Safeguarding is promoted exceptionally well. All staff are fully up-to-date with training in child protection and the management of behaviour. Checks made on the suitability of staff, alternative providers and visitors to the school are rigorous. Robust checks are made on any potential risks both on and off site, and staff are extremely vigilant in the supervision of pupils at all times during the day.
- The headteacher is very appreciative of the support she receives from the local authority who now, because of their confidence in the school's leadership, high quality self-evaluation and improvement strategies, only maintain an overview of the provision.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors have completely reviewed and revised their working practices since the last inspection and are now extremely active in shaping the strategic direction of the school. Governors have taken on responsibilities which utilise their own strengths, interests and expertise.
- Governors are very visible in the school and they know all of the staff and pupils. They regularly visit classrooms, attend assemblies and other school events, and are well known to parents through their attendance at open days and parents' evenings.
- Governors have an excellent understanding of data and the quality of teaching. They monitor performance management for all staff and make sure that the quality of their work is related to their pay and professional development.
- Governors monitor the budget carefully and have a detailed analysis of the spending of specific funding, such as the pupil premium. They know about its impact on the achievement of eligible pupils.
- Governors have taken on the responsibility for regularly updating the school website which is very informative and provides very detailed information about the school's curriculum for parents.
- Governors have ensured that all safeguarding regulations are met. They are vigilant in ensuring that the health, safety and well being of every pupil is given the highest priority.
- The impact on pupils is now central to the governors' role. Their work is thorough and systematic, and being complacent is not an option. At the end of each governing body meeting, governors reflect on their own effectiveness and how their contribution has made a difference to the pupils in the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their good attendance and their very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils have excellent relationships with adults and with each other. When asked by the inspectors, they couldn't think of anything that would make the school better than it already is, although one or two favoured more playtimes.
- The pupils are very proud of their school and of the work that they do. This is very well presented in their books and in displays around the school. They have created their own vision statement for the school: 'Children can learn good things and be happy. They work hard and have good friends. All of the children work as a team and have a lot of respect for each other.' This is certainly evident in classrooms and around the school. Pupils work and play cooperatively together. They are extremely polite and courteous to each other and to visitors, and fully understand what 'respect' means.
- All staff have high expectations of the pupils and, as a result, they also have high expectations of themselves. This is because an 'I can do' culture has been developed from early years and throughout the school. One of the pupils told the inspectors that she liked the school better than her old one because: 'Staff listen to me, help me and understand me – I really feel as if I am valued and that I belong.'
- Parents and staff confirm the happy and harmonious atmosphere of the school. When, on occasion, a

child becomes distressed and behaviour becomes challenging, it is dealt with professionally and sensitively by well trained staff and is never allowed to disrupt learning. Challenging behaviours have been reduced significantly as a result of the positive play activities that have been introduced. Any incidents that do occur are very carefully recorded.

- Children in the early years provision are very quickly helped to understand the expectations for their behaviour through the establishment of daily routines and the use of praise and encouragement.
- The behaviour of the pupils attending the courses run by alternative providers is excellent because they are extremely motivated and interested in the tasks they are undertaking.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school has rigorous policies, strategies and procedures to ensure the welfare and safety of pupils. These ensure that pupils are kept safe at all times.
- Pupils, parents and staff all agree that pupils are safe in school. Staff seize every opportunity to ensure that pupils understand why it is important to follow safety rules in the classroom, and when out and about in the local community. For instance, pupils learn to handle equipment safely when cooking or making models in technology, when crossing roads or learning how to use public transport.
- High levels of supervision and engagement of adults in children's learning in the early years ensures that they are always safe both in the classroom and in the outdoor play area.
- Pupils are kept very safe when they are attending the animal care course or construction course run by the alternative providers because staff from the school watch over them.
- The school does all it can to make sure that the more-able pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe in the local community. A small group attended a theatre workshop at a local mainstream secondary school where they explored the dangers of drug use and the safe use of social networking sites.
- A recent focus-week on anti-bullying involved all pupils and many of their families. Pupils are aware of the different kinds of bullying. They told inspectors that bullying didn't take place in the school and would not be tolerated.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- As a result of rigorous and supportive monitoring by school leaders and the training opportunities that staff benefit from, teaching is outstanding. Work in pupils' books, photographic evidence of their annotated work, the school's progress data and visits to observe learning in lessons contribute to this judgement.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work exceptionally well together and effectively promote very high expectations for learning and behaviour of all pupils. They are very skilled at getting the very best out of everyone and have fostered a real 'I can do' attitude in the pupils who now see themselves as successful learners. This underpins the excellent progress that all groups, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, make.
- Excellent planning and preparation, knowing and building on the strengths and interests of individuals, flexibility and excellent relationships, are key components to the success of the school in meeting individual needs. This was clearly evident in all lessons observed. Pupils clearly enjoyed participating in tasks, were confident and polite, and extremely proud of their work and achievements.
- The teaching of reading has been improved as a result of all staff being trained in how to teach phonics (the sound that letters make). There is now a very strong emphasis on reading together and, as a result, the vast majority of pupils make excellent progress in reading.

- The quality of teaching mathematics is particularly strong. Activities are related as far as possible to real life experiences. This was particularly evident in a Year 10 mathematics lesson where pupils told inspectors how important it was that they learnt how to work out percentages so that they knew if they were really saving money when they bought sale items in the shops.
- Teachers have very strong partnerships with the school's speech and language specialists. This has resulted in them using specific questioning strategies in their classrooms that are particular to individual pupils.
- A very strong emphasis on communication, literacy and numeracy across all subjects is evident both in planning and practice. In all classrooms, visual timetables are displayed and all pupils, in particular those with an autistic spectrum disorder and communication difficulties, benefit from the use of pictures and symbols to aid communication.
- Children in the early years provision are taught exceptionally well. Joint work between classroom staff and the school's speech and language therapists help children begin to communicate their needs and wishes very effectively.
- Teachers are skilful at using information about pupils' previous achievement to plan further learning. They also provide feedback to pupils on the quality of their work orally and, where appropriate, in written form. As a result, pupils are very clear about the next steps to improve their work. In samples of work from different classes, there is evidence that work is set for each individual at exactly the correct level of challenge. Teaching therefore meets the needs of all, including the most able and those who find learning very difficult.
- Constant references to learning and targets are made throughout the school. Children in the early years provision very proudly told inspectors that they were learning how to count to ten, while pupils higher up the school told them how they had learnt what the Egyptians used to make 'mummies'. Another pupil told an inspector that his target was to become a leader and this was because he wanted to be like the headteacher.
- Teachers have adapted the curriculum in response to pupils telling them what they wanted to learn about. As a result, an increasing wide range of exciting outdoor challenging activities such as caving and bush craft have been introduced in Key Stage 3. In Key Stage 4, a very wide range of vocational courses have been introduced. Not only do these prepare pupils for life outside of school but they also promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils' extremely well as the focus is very much on promoting teamwork, confidence and resilience. Teaching is fun, interesting and motivating and as a result pupils make exceptional progress across the curriculum.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children enter the early years with skills, knowledge and understanding well below those which are typical for their age. As a result of excellent teaching they make exceptional progress from their very low starting points. This proportion has risen considerably since the last inspection because leaders are more rigorous in tracking progress and teachers use the information exceptionally well to set challenging targets.
- All pupils are now assessed in depth when they join the school so that progress can be measured from starting points. This provides teachers with detailed information which they use effectively to stretch and challenge individual pupils appropriately.
- The school is currently refining these assessment procedures further so that they can accurately record both the skills and knowledge that the pupils acquire in a range of activities and different curriculum subjects.
- Achievement is outstanding in the early years provision. All children make exceptionally good progress in developing their communication, physical and social skills because excellent leadership has assured

excellent planning and delivery of high quality provision.

- Throughout the school, pupils make outstanding progress in English and mathematics. Attainment is different for each pupil because of their different needs but each individual makes outstanding progress in relation to their complex needs and disabilities.
- Computer technology is used extensively and very effectively by pupils and staff to enhance learning. In a Key Stage 3 class, pupils were very competently using codes to devise a computer game. Pupils receiving Year 7 catch-up funding achieve very well because specific ICT resources have been purchased that motivate and interest them which means they are highly focused in lessons.
- External accreditation for all courses studied in Key Stage 4 was introduced for the first time in 2013. The Year 11 cohort at that time made accelerated progress and the most able pupils achieved a GCSE in mathematics and Entry Level in English after only one year of intensive teaching in school and support from home.
- This success raised the aspirations of the pupils themselves and the 2014 Year 11 cohort all left school with Entry Level passes in English, mathematics and science. This demonstrated outstanding progress from their starting points. In addition, they were able to gain recognised qualifications in a range of work related and vocational subjects. Some pupils were able to study hair and beauty at a local mainstream school, while others gained accreditation in animal care and construction as result of the work they completed with the alternative providers.
- GCSE English has been introduced for the current Year 11s along with accredited awards in ICT, workplace skills, media skills, sports leadership and study skills for creative arts. Pupils are thoroughly prepared for the next stage in their lives, demonstrated by all Year 11 pupils transferring to another special school sixth form or for other appropriate destinations in further education.
- The most able pupils achieve extremely well in all areas of learning. During a lively debate where Years 10 and 11 pupils were discussing why it would be good for the school to have its own sixth form the most able pupils were able to give very valid reasons to back up their opinions, and it was clear that they understood why gaining qualifications were important for their future.
- The school very carefully analyse the progress of all of the groups within the school and this clearly shows that there is no significant difference between boys and girls, those with autistic spectrum disorders, behaviour and emotional difficulties or speech and communication needs. Pupils who are at risk of not meeting their personal targets are quickly identified and additional support and interventions are put in place to enable them to succeed.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding make the same outstanding progress as the others in English and mathematics because of the outstanding support they receive.
- The achievement that all of the young people make in their personal and social development permeates the life of their school and is seen in the pupils' rapidly growing in confidence and self esteem.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- The leadership and management of the early years is outstanding. Children enter the Nursery or Reception Year with knowledge and skills significantly below those typical for their age. They settle quickly into the welcoming environment and make outstanding progress.
- Staff support children extremely well, have high expectations and ensure that activities are set at the right level for every child. There is a very good balance of children selecting activities for themselves, working in groups or individually with an adult. Displays around the provision support the learning very well. Children were very enthusiastically counting the number of spiders in 'Incy wincey spider' web that was on the wall and took great delight in doing so. This is because teaching is outstanding.

- Children gain a growing confidence in seeking out things that they particularly like playing with and are beginning to make choices, for instance between looking at books or playing with the large construction toys. Children learn to use objects, pictures and symbols to express themselves and adults are extremely effective in helping the most able express themselves. They do this by modelling the correct language and terminology to use when, for example, describing the properties of shapes or describing a range of textures, smells, sounds.
- Home visits, and close work with parents and other agencies, mean that the children's needs are identified as precisely as possible. School records of progress are thorough and accurate. They show the children's rapid progress from low starting points.
- Detailed planning contributes outstandingly effectively to the development of children's behaviour, physical and emotional health, safety and well being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Exciting indoor and outdoor activities provide children with many opportunities to develop communication and language skills. This provision prepares them exceptionally well for their next stage of education and the move to Key Stage 1.

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 | 113037 |
| Local authority | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number | 453708 |

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 | 2–16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 86 |
| Appropriate authority | The local authority |
| Chair | Julie Brown |
| Headteacher | Debbie Gerring |
| Date of previous school inspection | 13 March 2013 |
| Telephone number | 0115 932 6374 |
| Email address | info@bennerleyfields.derbyshire.sch.uk |

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email 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, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: 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.

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
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2015

