

Stone Hill School

Barnsley Road, Scawsby, Doncaster, DN5 7UB

Inspection dates 14–15 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Achievement is outstanding. Pupils progress exceptionally well. They are very well prepared for the next step in their life.
- Pupils make consistently good and often outstanding progress in school subjects. They are able to do this because they make outstanding progress in personal and social development and life skills.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding because the curriculum is highly effective and they spend an increasing amount of time using and applying their skills.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. Teachers have excellent knowledge of their subjects as well as specialist skills. They know the needs of their pupils very well and, as a result, pupils are inspired by, and highly engaged in, their learning.
- At times, pupils do not make quite as much progress in English and mathematics as they could because targets set do not always challenge all of the pupils all of the time. This is because the robust data collected is not always used to compare the progress of different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are inquisitive and very polite. They say and show they feel safe in school. They are very well cared for.
- The school is expertly led and managed by the headteacher. There is a highly successful and shared vision of the pursuit of excellent care and high standards in all of the school's work.
- Procedures to improve the quality of teaching and pupil achievement are in place and very effective because they are consistently monitored to ensure they are having an impact on improvement.
- The governing body hold leaders to account stringently. They challenge rigorously as well as support the school. They evaluate expertly the performance of the school, including teaching and achievement, and care for every individual within it.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed several lessons, most of which were with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' individual learning and behaviour plans.
- Meetings were held with key staff, three members of the governing body and discussions were held with support staff. A telephone call was held with a member of the local authority.
- The inspectors took into account 58 questionnaires from staff and 18 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including pupil's work, plans for improvement, records of the school's checks on pupils' and teachers' performance, safeguarding and attendance documents, minutes of meetings of the governing body and school policies.

Inspection team

Pauline Hilling-Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The majority of pupils have moderate learning difficulties and over two thirds have autism. Additionally, a minority have severe learning difficulties and a further small minority have visual or hearing impairment or complex medical conditions.
- All have a statement of special educational need or an education, health and care plan or are in the process of being formally assessed for a plan.
- The majority of pupils are boys and the vast majority of pupils are White British.
- There is an above average proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged; those supported through the pupil premium. The pupil premium is funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- A new deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2015.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement even further by ensuring that targets set, particularly in English and mathematics, are always challenging, as a result of the comparison of the achievement of groups of pupils such as boys and girls.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is a highly effective and respected leader. He is very well supported by an expert governing body and leadership team. One of the keys to success is the consistently outstanding way in which everyone, pupils and staff, support and care about each other.
- Middle leaders impact very well on improvement in their subjects. They are acutely aware of the strengths and weaknesses and they work well together to ensure smooth transitions for pupils to the next stage in their education.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective and very robust because leaders ensure that record keeping is meticulous and closely evaluated. All policies and procedures meet requirements.
- The leadership uses data extensively to analyse the steps of progress made by individuals towards their targets. Although the assessment of the levels achieved by the pupils is robust, new targets set are occasionally not as challenging as they could be because they are not always as sharply informed by the evaluation of the progress of groups of pupils such as boys and girls.
- Monitoring of teaching is effective as it is focused on pupils' achievement. School leaders use the observation of pupils' progress in lessons to set targets for teachers and continually improve the quality of teaching.
- The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils exceptionally well. It is very well planned with a sharp focus on personal and life skills. As a result pupils are inspired and engaged and very well prepared for the future.
- The school is highly inclusive. For example, physical or sensory impairments do not prevent any pupil from abseiling off a bridge. Arrangements to tackle discrimination are at the heart of the school's work.
- The curriculum is extensively enriched by music, sport, outdoor learning visits, visitors, work experience, music and drama and residential and clubs. These opportunities form the basis for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum is very well planned with a focus on reading, writing and mathematics; as a result pupils are inspired and build up their skills progressively.
- All opportunities are grasped to promote an understanding of life in modern Britain. The recent election has provided the focus for a study of the suffragettes as well as the process of democracy.
- Partnership with parents is exceptional and parents use phrases such as 'overwhelmed with my son's progress.' Parents and pupils are made fully aware of the options available to them well in advance of leaving the school. Consequently, they are able to make the best decisions for future placement.
- Courses for parents of pupils with autism are very effective in supporting parents to understand the special ways in which they can help their children to achieve.
- The light touch support from the local authority is adequate.
- The primary school sports funding and pupil premium are used to good effect to raise the achievement of eligible pupils and to extend the range of sports available. For example, the recent introduction of Boccia.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body whose members include representatives who themselves are experts in health and education make an extremely positive contribution to the school's success. Governors monitor the work of the school both individually and through committees and report back to the governing body extremely well. Committees meet regularly and monitor the detail of the work done in their area. They support and challenge leaders to ensure that every pupil is given an equal opportunity to succeed. They have up-to-date knowledge of pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching and provide sufficient challenge to the school to move it forward. The governing body ensures financial resources are well managed including the school's use of additional government funding to support pupils, such as the pupil premium, and are aware of their impact.
 - Governors are involved in setting targets for the headteacher and they are also fully aware about how teachers' pay awards are linked to the progress that pupils make.
 - They ensure that all safeguarding procedures are fully met and, as a result, pupils are safe at school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are very polite yet inquisitive in their welcome to visitors.

- Chatting and socialising with everyone as pupils arrive is a priority and this sets the atmosphere which is characterised by the respect everyone extends to each other at all times. One pupil commented that 'he had a warm feeling when he walked through the front doors'.
- Pupils are exceptionally well motivated. They behave very well in lessons and rise to the high expectations set by staff. For example, they will persevere when learning to tell the time even when they are keen to begin their reward time.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning in lessons and throughout school are exceptional overall. Outstanding behaviour characterises many lessons. Pupils listen carefully to each other, and other adults, and think hard when they are faced with challenges.
- Pupils learn to make increasing sense of what is happening around them and to take control of their own behaviour. Staff are well trained in how to manage behaviour and strong relationships with pupils mean that pupils are confident that there is always someone to talk to if necessary.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils are aware of the different risks posed when they are out in the community. They understand the different forms that bullying can take especially when using the internet.
- Records show that incidents of inappropriate behaviour are very rare. Any incidents which involve physical intervention are dealt with effectively and quickly by staff. Incidents are recorded in detail, monitored meticulously and action is taken as a result.
- Governors are vigilant in ensuring that full checks on the safety of premises are regularly undertaken and acted upon.
- Attendance is above average because pupils enjoy school and know that they learn a great deal.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is consistently good and often outstanding; it helps pupils learn and achieve exceptionally well during their time at school. Teachers have expert knowledge in the teaching of pupils with learning difficulties and autism.
- Teachers and all staff are committed and dedicated to the pupils and, as such, have excellent relationships with their pupils. As a result pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and they enjoy what is planned for them to do.
- Teaching happens continuously throughout the day as there are always the same staff there to grasp any opportunity for learning. For example, football is always available at break and lunchtime. All staff socialise with pupils during lunch and then offer a club for pupils to attend. Outdoor activities and residentials are extensive and carefully planned to extend learning.
- Extensive use is made of computers, including tablet computers, and this contributes well to achievement. Pupils are highly motivated by, for example, using them to take photographs of places they have identified on a map.
- A particular strength of the teaching in the school is teachers' subject knowledge, which they use well to ensure that pupils think hard and deepen their understanding. Staff understand the needs of the pupils well and modify tasks for individual pupils expertly. These features make a notably positive impact on the quality of the pupils' learning.
- Teachers are very skilled in communication techniques, such as the use of social stories to aid the understanding of pupils with autism.
- All staff are well trained in the teaching of reading, which means that every opportunity is taken in all subjects to enhance reading skills.
- The teaching of mathematics is outstanding because the subject is well organised and expertly led.
- The teaching of writing is closely tailored to individual needs and as such teachers give a good balance of attention to developing skills in punctuation and grammar or to developing creativity and fluency. Qualifications chosen for each pupil to attain reflect the interests of each individual.
- Feedback including marking is very effective. It ensures that all pupils are very clear about what they need to do to improve and it is very effective in accelerating the progress pupils make.
- The most able pupils are usually challenged to reach the highest levels or deepen their knowledge and understanding. Opportunities for drama, work experience or music enables these pupils to apply their knowledge and skills very successfully.
- Staff frequently reflect on the quality and impact of their teaching alongside other staff. As a result

teaching is improving continuously and pupils learn and achieve outstandingly well during their time at school.

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils enter the school at any age and with a wide range of starting points. However, the majority are working well below the levels expected nationally when they enter the school as a result of their special educational needs. Most pupils make outstanding progress overall throughout the school when compared to pupils with similar starting points.
- Occasionally progress in English and mathematics is not quite as rapid because targets set for individuals are not always challenging. Nonetheless, as a result of an excellent curriculum, which is in place for all pupils at all times of the school day, the majority of pupils make outstanding progress. For example, rapid progress in the development of personal skills ensures that pupils know how to behave in a range of social situations where they have good opportunities to apply their skills in English and mathematics.
- At the end of Key Stage 4 pupils achieve a good range of qualifications according to their talents. All pupils have the opportunity for work experience. The vast majority of pupils make a successful transition to further education.
- Occasionally younger pupils make accelerated progress, which enables them to return successfully to mainstream school.
- Pupils with autism achieve very well because all staff work under the guidance of an experienced and specialist teacher who also guides the work of teachers in many other schools. Improvement has been particularly marked in writing.
- Pupils with visual impairments make outstanding progress because their needs are met very well under the guidance of highly trained support staff guided by local authority specialists. This includes, for example, training using a long cane that has improved the mobility of some visually impaired pupils.
- In 2014 school data show that more girls exceed expected progress in writing and mathematics than boys, and in reading more boys exceed expected progress.
- Pupils achieve well in reading because it is prioritised and staff are well trained. In 2014 school data shows that some individual pupils doubled their rate of progress last year and made equivalent to two years expected progress in one school year.
- Overall, the majority of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium make the same excellent rate of progress as their peers.
- In reading, more boys eligible for the pupil premium exceeded expected progress than girls; however, a gap remains between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged boys. More disadvantaged girls than boys exceeded expected progress in mathematics. Pupils looked after by the local authority all make excellent progress in all subjects.
- The most able pupils achieve high levels of attainment relative to their individual needs. For example, in 2014, these pupils achieved well in GCSE examinations.

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	135547
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	450002

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	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	122
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Gallafent
Headteacher	Steven Leone
Date of previous school inspection	10 October 2012
Telephone number	01302 800090
Fax number	01302 800099
Email address	admin@stonehill.doncaster.sch.uk

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