

# Hawthorns School

Sunnyside Moss Campus, Audenshaw, Manchester, M34 5SF

**Inspection dates** 19–20 May 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b> <b>1</b>
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.

- Achievement is outstanding. Pupils progress exceptionally well. They are very well prepared for the next step in their education when they leave Hawthorns school.
- Pupils make consistently good and often outstanding progress in reading and mathematics. They are able to do this because they make outstanding progress in the development of language skills and personal and social skills.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding because the curriculum is highly effective and pupils are constantly using and applying their language skills throughout the day.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers have excellent specialist skills. They know the needs of their pupils very well and as a result, pupils are highly engaged in their learning.
- Overall, pupils do not make as much progress in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are inquisitive in their welcome to visitors. They show they feel safe in school by coming into the school readily.
- The school is expertly led and managed by the headteacher and executive principal in partnership. There is a highly successful and shared vision of the pursuit of high standards in all of the school's work.
- Children make excellent progress in the early years and are ready for their move into Key Stage 1.
- Procedures to improve the quality of teaching and pupil achievement are very effective because they are highly developed and embedded in the work of the school.
- The governing body and trust hold leaders to account stringently. They challenge the leadership rigorously and also support the school to the full. They evaluate expertly the performance of the school, including teaching and achievement, behaviour and safety and the performance of each individual within it.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons and undertook a learning walk, all of which were undertaken jointly with the headteacher or the executive principal.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' individual learning and behaviour plans.
- Meetings were held with key staff, four members of the governing body, the chief executive of the trust, a member of the local authority and academy support staff.
- The inspectors took into account the 48 questionnaires from staff and the 13 responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including pupils' work, plans for improvement, records of the school's checks on pupils' and teachers' performance. They evaluated safeguarding and attendance documents, minutes of meetings of the governing body and a variety of school policies.

## Inspection team

Pauline Hilling-Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Marilyn Massey

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Hawthorns school converted to become an academy school in September 2013. When its predecessor school, Hawthorns Community School was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding.
- The academy is part of the Enquire Learning Trust.
- The school is designated as a National Teaching School.
- The executive principal is a National Leader of Education.
- All pupils have moderate or severe learning difficulties. All pupils have additional complex needs.
- Almost 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 such a plan.
- The majority of pupils are boys.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- There are a well above average proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged, and who are supported through the pupil premium. The pupil premium is funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.

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

- Ensure that pupils achieve as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- As a National Leader of Education, the executive principal has developed and maintains a highly effective school. She also makes a significant contribution to raising the achievement of many more pupils within the trust and to pupils in those schools which belong to the teaching school alliance directed by the school.
- The co-leadership of the headteacher and principal is strong and seamless. Leadership is well supported by other senior leaders in school as well as by a committed and expert governing body. The trust knows how well the school is performing and how well the pupils are achieving because it carries out regular, forensic monitoring of all areas of the school's work. Plans for improvement are very effective because they are put in place swiftly and based on this detailed knowledge.
- Middle leaders impact very well on improvement in their subjects or areas. They are acutely aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the areas for which they are responsible and they work very closely alongside senior leaders to ensure continuous improvement in the school.
- 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. The assessment of the levels achieved by the pupils is robust and the progress of each pupil is frequently reviewed to ensure that everything is being done to enable pupils to maintain excellent achievement.
- Monitoring and development of the quality of teaching is very successful. This is because the headteacher and executive principal are experts in the area of monitoring teaching and providing sharply focused targets for improvement. They have ensured that the high percentage of newly qualified teachers at the school provide a consistently good or better quality of teaching. This has been made possible because all systems within the school are embedded and link together, which means that everyone is clear about what they need to do to maintain the high expectations.
- The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils exceptionally well. It is very well planned with a sharp focus on language development and communication and sensory needs. As a result, pupils are engaged and enjoy their time at school. They are very well prepared for the future.
- The school is highly inclusive, promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well and no-one is ever left out of the trips or drama productions. Arrangements to tackle discrimination and to foster good relations with all are at the heart of the school's work.
- The curriculum is extensively enriched by art, music and drama, sport, gardening and outdoor learning, visits, visitors, and residential. The attractive presentation of the school environment based on a rain forest encourages pupils to reflect on beauty and the rhythm of life. These opportunities form the basis for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- All opportunities are grasped to promote an understanding of life in modern Britain. The recent election has provided the focus for the understanding of the process of democracy.
- Partnership with parents is exceptional. All parents who responded to Parent View would recommend the school to another parent.
- Courses for parents of pupils with autism are very effective in supporting them to understand the special ways in which they can help their children to achieve.
- The partnership with the local authority is excellent. Close working relations are forged because the local authority representative is a member of the teaching school strategic board.
- The primary school sport funding and pupil premium are used to good effect. They are used to raise the achievement of eligible pupils through the provision of additional interventions to promote speaking and listening and to extend the opportunities for participation in sport.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body makes an extremely positive contribution to the school's success. Governors ensure that they are often present in school to listen to parents or be involved with pupils. They monitor the work of the school both individually and through committees and report back to the governing body and trust extremely well. Committees meet regularly and monitor the detail of the work done in their area.
  - Governors support and challenge each other as well as leaders to ensure that every pupil is given an equal opportunity to succeed. They have up-to-date and accurate knowledge of the data in relation to pupils' achievements and to the quality of teaching and provide challenge and support to the school to move it forward. The governing body ensures financial resources are very 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 with the trust in setting targets for the headteacher and executive principal. They are also fully aware about how teachers' pay awards are linked to school improvement and the progress that pupils make.
- They ensure that all safeguarding procedures are effective and 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 used to visitors coming into their school and, when spoken to, are extremely polite. This is because staff make requests of pupils and always try to follow the answer given by the pupil. For example, staff will make sure the pupil agrees to have a hand massage. Pupils are keen to find out information about visitors such as what is their favourite animal.
- Readiness for learning is seen as a priority by staff and pupils use the techniques for deep breathing they have been taught very well, to keep themselves calm.
- Pupils try, and usually succeed in behaving very well and rising to the high expectations set by staff. For example, they will wait patiently at lunchtime until their table is called to go to the hatch. As tables are called in a different order each day pupils learn to control their impulses very well.
- Stars earned for good behaviour at break and lunchtime form the priority given to each pupil in choosing to attend their favourite activity on Friday afternoon.
- Staff understand the needs of the pupils very well and continuously observe pupils in lessons to assess what they need to do to enable all to stay calm and enjoy and achieve success when they are learning.
- Pupils learn to make increasing sense of what is happening around them and to take control of their own behaviour. This makes a significant contribution to their outstanding achievement.
- Strong trusting relationships with staff mean that pupils show they are confident that there is always someone to seek help from if necessary.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils develop an awareness of their own capabilities in physical education from an early age when given the opportunity to climb on apparatus. They understand the rules they must adopt in certain situations such as the garden and when using a wide range of tools, for example in cookery and sculpture lessons.
- Records show that incidents of inappropriate behaviour are 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.
- Bullying is very rare as pupils are not allowed to be unkind to each other. This develops their understanding of how important it is to accept differences between people.
- Governors are vigilant in ensuring that full checks on the safety of premises are regularly undertaken and addressed.
- Attendance is broadly average and improving.
- Parents who responded to Parent View unanimously agree that their children are well looked after.

## **The quality of teaching** is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding overall; it helps pupils learn and achieve exceptionally well during their time at school. Teachers have expert knowledge of the teaching of pupils with learning difficulties and complex needs.
- Teachers are committed to pupils achieving as well as they can. They plan activities that they know the pupils will find interesting and exciting. As a result, pupils are engaged and have very positive attitudes to learning because they enjoy what is planned for them to do.
- Extensive use is made of gardening and outdoor learning and this contributes well to achievement. For example, pupils searched for coloured feathers left by fairies in the forest area and then exchanged them for wooden blocks to build houses for them.

- A particular strength of the teaching in the school is teachers' enthusiasm which they use very well to ensure that pupils develop their language skills. Staff understand the needs of the pupils very well indeed and modify tasks for individual pupils expertly. These features make a notably positive impact on the quality of the pupils' learning.
- Teachers are expert in developing pupils' listening and looking skills to underpin understanding. Symbols for these key skills are carried by staff on key rings so that they can show the symbol to individual pupils as well as saying the word. Larger sized symbols for these skills are used effectively in practical subjects such as cookery and sculpture classes.
- Pupils make very good progress in phonics (the sounds that letters make) when they are ready to learn to read.
- The teaching of reading is very effective because staff are well trained in guiding pupils as they learn to develop their reading. Teaching places an emphasis on pupils understanding what they have read and on enjoying books.
- The teaching of mathematics is outstanding because priority has been given to staff training. Teaching focuses on pupils learning important mathematical skills through practical activities and the use of models and images to aid concept development.
- Meticulous tracking of the progress of individual pupils forms the basis of the provision of both individual and group sessions to accelerate progress. However, although these opportunities prioritise pupils eligible for the additional funding, extensive provision is available for all pupils as it is also the basis of meeting the learning needs of everyone.
- Pupils with greater language needs benefit considerably from specialised teaching for periods of time in a group.
- Pupils with additional sensory needs benefit greatly from sessions in 'a quiet place' where they learn how to calm themselves or to feel relaxed through massage.
- The teaching of writing is not yet as effective because staff have not been trained to the same level as in reading and mathematics.
- Feedback is very good. 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 challenged extremely well to reach the highest levels or deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers constantly reflect on the quality of their teaching through the many opportunities provided by leaders for coaching by colleagues.

### **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.
- As a result of an excellent curriculum the majority of pupils make outstanding progress in the key areas of personal development which are identified for them.
- Pupils make significant progress in physical education and are champions of Greater Manchester in curling and golf as well as Tameside primary schools cheerleading champions. A very large majority achieve swimming awards.
- Pupils who are not yet verbal make outstanding progress in very small steps. This is because the curriculum is highly specialised and delivered by staff who have been trained extensively in the assessment and progress of pupils with very complex needs.
- Although numbers are small and cohorts of pupils vary greatly in number, ability and special needs, school data shows that pupil progress accelerates the longer any pupil attends the school. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding make excellent progress and catch up with their peers.
- National data shows that progress across Key Stage 2 represents outstanding progress in mathematics and reading but slower progress in writing. There is no difference in the progress of boys and girls.
- The most able pupils achieve well. For example one pupil attained at a level above the national average in mathematics in 2014.
- All pupils achieve well in reading because it is prioritised and staff are well trained. In 2014, school data show that some individual pupils accelerated their progress in reading from their starting points as a result of carefully tailored additional individual and group work.

**The early years provision****is outstanding**

- Almost all children enter Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding well below those typical for their age. Many children have attended a nursery for pupils with special educational needs and as such are already supported by a wide range of other agencies. Hawthorns school works closely with this nursery and continues the work with these agencies very well. This has a significant impact on achievement.
- Teaching is outstanding in the early years. Children achieve outstandingly well and are therefore very well prepared for Key Stage 1. The outdoor area is well developed to promote children's learning which means that it develops as well outside as it does inside. Children make particularly strong progress in mathematics. The development of personal skills, especially independence is promoted very well.
- The leadership and management are outstanding. The leader ensures the impressive teamwork is used to support less experienced staff and she ensures the provision of an exciting and appropriate curriculum. Tablet computers are used most effectively to fill gaps in children's learning identified through assessment.
- Children show they feel safe and they behave very well because staff ensure that children's welfare requirements are met at all times.
- Partnership with parents is very strong because communication with parents is excellent. Staff ensure they go outside to meet parents as children arrive and parents receive a video e-mail every Friday so that they know what their children have done and how well they are achieving. This means that parents are pleased to be involved in the weekly fun homework sent out by the school. This contributes very well to the achievement of their children.

## 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>	140133
<b>Local authority</b>	Tameside
<b>Inspection number</b>	450341

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	72
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jeffrey Mellor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Margaret Lochhead
<b>Executive Principal</b>	Moira Thompson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected as an academy
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 3701312
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