

# Ivy House School

Moorway Lane, Littleover, Derby DE23 2FS

<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 March 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher, together with her senior team, have led to sustained improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Teaching is of high quality. Adults regularly check how well pupils are doing during every part of the day, which enables them to build successfully on small steps in progress.
- Pupils' specific needs and difficulties are carefully addressed through personalised plans. As a result, their outcomes are outstanding.
- The curriculum is exciting and skilfully designed to focus on pupils' needs and stages of development. It is further enhanced through the excellent range of sensory activities and regular swimming in the school hydrotherapy pool.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding and at the heart of the school's beliefs and values. All staff ensure these are given high priority.
- Provision in the early years foundation stage is outstanding. Children are prepared very well for Year 1 because leadership and teaching are outstanding.
- Behaviour is excellent, and when pupils present with challenging behaviour due to their learning needs, staff are highly skilled in their support so that no interruptions to lessons occur and no learning time is lost.
- Attitudes to learning are very positive. Adults have very high expectations for each pupil. They work with passion and great attention to detail to enable pupils to develop their skills.
- Parents really value the strong daily communication that the school provides and the thorough transition arrangements which allow pupils to settle in quickly.
- Provision for learners in the sixth form is outstanding. Individual programmes are matched to learners' needs and most go on to attend college when they leave Ivy House.
- Governors provide strong support. They bring a good mix of experience and expertise, have high expectations for the school and want the very best for each pupil.
- Safeguarding arrangements are very thorough and effective. Pupils feel safe and secure and hence enjoy school.

## Full report

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

This outstanding school has no significant weaknesses, but in support of continuous improvement, leaders should address the following points from the school's own development plan:

- refine the small-step programmes for pupils who access pre-national curriculum learning to ensure a consistent approach for delivering all curriculum areas
- strengthen even further the systems for transition between the different key stages within the school, in order for pupils' learning to progress effectively in all curriculum areas.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher and her senior team, together with all other staff, show extremely high expectations in creating a culture that allows each pupil to do their very best. All staff with leadership roles are very well focused on improvement and successfully and accurately identify what needs to improve. They have put considerable effort into improving teaching, learning and assessment, which are now outstanding. The work of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluation across the curriculum has contributed significantly towards this.
- School improvement planning shows that leaders and governors have a realistic view of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and are continually striving for excellence.
- Relationships between everyone are excellent and staff morale is high. This contributes greatly to the outstanding progress pupils make and the school is 'buzzing' as adults try to get each pupil to achieve that little bit more and then celebrate with them when they do.
- Staff and governors understand how performance management is linked to checks made on pupils' learning. Targets are set for all staff and these are regularly reviewed. Adults are very well supported through continuing professional development. The whole-school focus on communication has had a significant impact on pupils' learning as it has been developed through all subjects and across the whole school.
- The curriculum is exceptionally well planned and specially adapted to provide individual, personalised programmes, which include academic, social and physical targets for each pupil. The sensory programmes enable stimulus and access for all pupils and as a result they are able to make regular, sometimes small, but very significant steps forward in their physical development. The work they do in the hydrotherapy pool and physical education sessions enriches their curriculum, enabling freedom of movements and increased self-awareness and confidence. Further refining of the curriculum for pupils working at pre-national curriculum levels of learning would help to provide consistency in the delivery of the curriculum in all subjects.
- Many opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about different cultures and world celebrations. All these rich experiences allow them to begin to develop an understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils look at and touch displays as they move round the school; for example, the photographs of their charity walk when they dressed up for BBC Children in Need. Staff support their learning through highly effective communication at the appropriate level.
- The need for pupils to keep safe is very high profile in the school and promoted by all staff in everything they do with the pupils. They encourage each pupil to be as independent as possible but they are never far away to support when help is needed. Adults are vigilant at all times and even though many pupils are poorly or have health problems that present as barriers to learning and physical movement, staff help them to learn about keeping safe from dangers by allowing them time to try to do things for themselves.
- The system to track the progress of individual pupils and groups is very thorough and staff have developed learning journals that are highly effective in showing the small steps pupils make over time. They are well explained and contain photographs of the pupils' achievements. When completed, these are very well received by parents, who are very appreciative of the time taken by staff to document evidence of their child's development. The school plans to develop these further to ensure that all staff collect similar information about the pupils they work with and that samples of work are kept for checking future progress after the books are given to parents.
- Staff, governors and parents work very closely together. Parents are kept very well informed of their child's learning and the school has developed activities for the pupils to do at home with an adult or sibling. Parents come into school regularly for reviews and attend celebration assemblies. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Those spoken to said that staff quickly take away anxieties about their child starting a new school. For example, one parent said: 'They go the extra mile. If he is poorly they know what to do. They share everything about his progress with me. He squeals with delight as we come into school'.
- Leaders make effective use of the additional funding received for disadvantaged pupils and for catch-up in literacy and numeracy in Year 7. Specific interventions contribute well to learning, including targeted use of eye gaze and communication aids. As a result, there are no gaps between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and that of their peers in school.

- The additional funding received by the school, through the primary physical education and sports grant, is used well to promote enjoyment and engagement in physical activity by primary-aged pupils. The use of sensory equipment, along with specialist outdoor play equipment and the hydrotherapy pool, significantly contribute towards their physical development.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has bought in the support of an external consultant for reviews, and this academic year is receiving good support from the local authority school improvement adviser.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governance of the school is strong. Governors have a good balance of experience and expertise which matches well the educational and specific needs of pupils. They know the provision that is offered is of high quality and continually look to ensure that the decisions they make are in the pupils' best interests.
  - Governors are very well informed and consequently are able to support and challenge, asking questions when needed. They have high standards and through their monitoring duties ensure that they are equipped with secure information about how well the school is doing. Governors show that they have a clear understanding of all the systems, procedures and documents that are established in the school.
  - Governors play an active role in the determination of the headteacher's pay and have a secure understanding of how leaders administer the school's performance management systems.
  - Together with leaders, governors have developed robust systems for managing pupils' welfare and safety. A thorough system to vet adults who come into school and the checking of the school site ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that their practices meet current requirements and provide appropriate training to all staff. They receive regular training in child protection procedures and are aware of the Prevent duty and wider safeguarding issues, such as homophobic and transphobic bullying. They are highly committed to providing the very best care for each pupil in the school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding because all staff have extremely high expectations in promoting and reinforcing learning for each individual pupil at their particular stage of development. High-quality teaching in all subjects and across the whole school leads to all pupils making outstanding progress and being well prepared for their next steps in education and life beyond school.
- Teachers and all other adults build strong relationships with pupils. They have a thorough and detailed understanding of pupils' specific needs. Targets are identified that relate to academic, social and physical development. Staff ensure that each small step in learning is recorded and shared with all who work with the child, and their parents. Planning is meticulous to take into account the learning taking place in individual interactions. As a result, pupils' progress is outstanding.
- A major strength in the teaching is the way adults develop and reinforce pupils' language skills through the finely tuned communication programme which is threaded through all subject areas and across the whole school. As a result, pupils learn to use a wide range of resources and equipment such as objects of reference, symbols, signs, communication aids and technology, meaning they can communicate and learn to develop independence in their learning.
- Ongoing checks on progress are continually collected by staff. This information identifies the next steps of learning for each pupil and is fed into future planning. This process results in each pupil working to a personalised plan that supports all their needs. Teachers and their assistants have become very skilled in keeping detailed information in pupils' learning journals. However, leaders have identified to further develop the procedures for transferring pupils' achievements in the different curriculum areas. This is to ensure that pupils' achievements are built on even more effectively when they move to a new key stage within the school.
- Teaching is highly effective because it meets the needs of all pupils, including those who are the most and least able. Teachers' assessments of what pupils can do are highly accurate. Links with other schools provide teachers with an opportunity to check the accuracy of their judgements. This, combined with the strong sharing of practice within the school, results in adults' precise understanding of pupils' capabilities.

- Teachers' feedback to pupils is given carefully at the appropriate level for them to understand how they can improve next time. Every opportunity is taken to celebrate successes with individual pupils and their parents at the end of the day and this contributes very well to helping them take the next steps in their learning.
- Pupils take part with interest and engagement in many activities to extend their communication and understanding. Teaching of reading and mathematics is highly effective. An inspector observed pupils reading. They showed a good understanding of the letter sounds they had learned and which they applied in their reading activities based on the theme of 'fish'. In a mathematics lesson, a pupil counted out five fish and then another three. To check his addition, he then used a number line to count on.
- Teachers are creative in their use of resources when planning lessons and this leads to very good engagement by pupils and successful learning. For example, in a secondary-age group science lesson when pupils were blowing air through tubes using coloured water, a switch was used by a pupil to blow the water and a bubble machine was experienced by the group to reinforce the learning points.
- Highly effective communication between teachers, support staff and specialist staff, such as the school's nursing team, ensures a consistent approach to the meeting of pupils' specific needs. This serves to build pupils' self-confidence and trust in other adults. For example, visitors are welcomed to the school by pupils, many of whom go out of their way to engage with the visitors they encounter in class and around school. It also ensures that no learning opportunities are lost when medical procedures are carried out.
- Outside areas are thoughtfully planned and used well to provide further environments for teaching to take place as well as for pupils to relax during their breaktimes.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding and staff see pupils' personal development as the key to unlocking their potential as learners. Adults work relentlessly to ensure that pupils are well cared for, and are vigilant in their checks on pupils who are poorly, post-operative or simply in need of additional support. At the same time, however, all staff work with a purpose to encourage each pupil to develop independence and self-confidence. As a result, pupils are happy to 'have a go' when presented with something new.
- Pupils settle into school quickly because of the excellent quality of care and support they receive. They thrive on the encouragement they receive and display excellent attitudes to learning. Many respond well to responsibility given to them. For example, in an independent living lesson, a pupil was able to instruct another pupil on the next step in cleaning the microwave.
- The school is characterised by its happy and calm atmosphere. The fundamental British values of tolerance and respect are at the heart of the school and shine through every aspect of its work. Adults model valuing the contribution made by everyone, and this in turn is mirrored by pupils. As a result, by the time they leave the school, they are well on the way to preparing to make a contribution to society and take the next steps in their own development.
- Parents spoke of how much they appreciate the effort staff go to when pupils enter or leave the school. They say nothing is too much trouble and they are grateful for the support they are given during what is an anxious time for them. As a result, their children settle well into the school and they are supported when transferring to a different setting.
- Lunchtimes reinforce pupils' personal and social skills. Those who are able to eat in the hall sit in small groupings and where possible make choices about the food they eat. Adults act as role models and those pupils who are able to, collect their food and clear away their plates. For those who are not eating, purposeful activities are arranged in classrooms and it is a sociable time.
- A major strength of the school throughout the day and including lessons, break- and lunchtimes is the positioning of pupils on seats, frames, workstations and wheelchairs to allow socialisation and interaction. As a result, inclusion is very strong and every opportunity is taken to enable the next step in personal development to take place.
- Pupils show that they are learning how to keep safe. Those pupils who were able to told an inspector that they know whom to tell if they have concerns about bullying, including name-calling.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Inspectors saw exemplary behaviour across the school, and where pupils present with challenging behaviour due to their learning needs, staff are highly skilled in supporting individuals and re-engaging them in activities.
- The school's own records show that poor behaviour incidents are rare. Published figures show that the school does not use exclusion as a means of managing behaviour. Case studies show how the school has worked with a range of agencies to support pupils when challenging behaviour has presented difficulties.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and they show they enjoy school very much. They attend school well and, when attendance levels dip, it is mainly due to long-term medical conditions and hospitalisation. Sometimes pupils are unable to attend due to short-term illness, for example chest infections. However, the excellent work of the nursing team to support pupils in school means that many are able to return to school sooner than might be expected.
- Pupils show respect for each other and for all adults in school. Those who are able to, hold doors open and all are courteous and polite.

## Outcomes for pupils

### are outstanding

- Pupils join the school with very low levels of attainment due to the nature and complexity of their learning difficulties and disabilities. It is therefore inappropriate to judge their attainment against national norms.
- Last year, all pupils made expected progress and a large majority made better than expected progress against their individual targets in communication, English, cognition and mathematics, and across the curriculum. The school's data shows that at this halfway stage this year, all current pupils are on track to progress at the same rapid rate as last year's pupils.
- Since the previous inspection, teachers have sharpened their approach to target-setting and the way they record progress in small steps. They have worked with other schools to check the accuracy of their judgements as well as with teachers across the school. Learning journals provide examples of levelled and annotated work.
- Evidence in pupils' books and files, along with that on display around school, substantiates teachers' and leaders' records. These records show outstanding progress across all year groups and subjects. There are no differences between groups and the progress of disadvantaged pupils matches that of other pupils from the same starting points. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress as all other pupils in school.
- Well-thought-out planning of the curriculum ensures that it is matched precisely to pupils' specific needs. As a consequence, all groups of pupils progress equally well over time. For example, the pupils identified as the most able achieve the higher levels in the 'Moving On' courses which focus on independence and basic skills at the end of sixth form with the ASDAN qualification available as a next step.
- The school's records show that all pupils who are on roll at the end of key stage 4 remain in the school's sixth form, where they are well prepared for transition to college or sometimes other settings by the time they leave school. All of last year's leavers achieved accreditation in 'Moving On' courses and transferred to destinations that provide further training and development opportunities, mainly college.

## Early years provision

### is outstanding

- Children in the early years make excellent progress in all areas of learning, especially in their physical development and communication skills, as a result of consistent use of very well-chosen resources and methods to stimulate their learning. These include objects of reference, symbols and signing.
- Teaching is outstanding and is a direct result of the accuracy of staff when assessing children's specific needs. Teachers use their accurate assessments, along with all the information they are given by parents and other professionals, to provide children with highly effective learning activities. As a result, they are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Safeguarding procedures are highly effective. Children are kept safe in a calm and welcoming environment with opportunities to play indoors and outside. Outstanding leadership ensures that staff are trained well in how to care for and keep children safe. As a result, children's welfare and safety needs are met sensitively by a team of caring adults and their behaviour is excellent.

- Adults are effective in establishing routines quickly so children begin to build strong relationships with them. As a result, they respond well to adults' requests and start to develop their communication and physical skills effectively.
- Leaders use supplementary funds well to ensure that appropriate additional support is directed to those who need it most, so that all groups of children have an equal opportunity to succeed.

## **16 to 19 study programmes**

## **are outstanding**

- Outcomes for this group of learners are outstanding because the quality of teaching is also outstanding. Each learner has a personal learning pathway which is matched expertly to their specific needs and interests. They all work on the 'Moving On' courses and gain valuable experience in basic skills and independence. They work at an identified level appropriate to their needs. All learners who left the school in July 2015 secured a place in further education.
- Learners in the sixth form receive high-quality, independent guidance and advice from a specialist careers adviser. A good proportion benefit from taking part in work experience in school. An inspector observed learners delivering eggs from orders they had previously taken and handling the money. They had already received the eggs from the farm and packaged them ready for distribution. Another group was running the weekly school tuck shop where they had responsibility for selling items and taking the money. As a result, they are developing skills to use in the community.
- Strong leadership has built a culture of high expectation and promotes independence within the sixth form. Leaders monitor progress with the same rigour as for the rest of the school.
- Adults teach pupils to build resilience as part of their courses and they learn to be as independent as possible, for example in learning to make a bed or clean out the fridge.
- Learners' behaviour is outstanding because they are given the opportunity to move around school independently and take part in real-life situations.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113047
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001862

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	83
<b>Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes</b>	17
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Cade
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Allen
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 777920
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ivyhouse.derby.sch.uk">www.ivyhouse.derby.sch.uk</a>
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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17–18 December 2013

## Information about this school

- Ivy House provides for pupils aged 2–19 years with severe, profound, multiple and complex learning difficulties. At the time of the inspection, the youngest child was three years old. Many pupils have complex medical needs which include chronic and degenerative conditions, and approximately one quarter are unable to take food by mouth. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- A high proportion of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, including Asian and Eastern European backgrounds. A well-above-average number of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Just over a quarter of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding given to schools for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school works with a cluster of mainstream and special schools within Derby city to share skills and knowledge and to carry out moderation. There are strong links with neighbouring Derby Moor Community Sports College and opportunities are taken for pupils to work together within the two schools. The school does not make use of alternative provision for any of its pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons within all nine classes during the inspection. All observations were carried out jointly with members of the school's senior management team.
- A number of documents were seen, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, the governors' external review report and action plan, and safeguarding documents. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and their learning journals.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and her staff, a few parents, governors, the school nurse, pupils and the local authority school improvement adviser.
- The views of parents were considered by looking at responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey, and the outcome of the school's own survey for parents.
- The views of staff were considered by analysing 35 questionnaires which were handed to the inspectors.

## Inspection team

Lynda Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Linda Lyn-Cook

Ofsted Inspector

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