

# Royal Free Hospital School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100094
<b>Local Authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	276248
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 September 2005
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Smith

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Professor Brent Taylor Ms Manuela Beste
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Floor 6 Special School Pond Street London NW3 2QG
<b>Telephone number</b>	02077940500
<b>Fax number</b>	00

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<b>Age group</b>	5–19
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

The Royal Free Hospital Children's School (RFHCS) is a community hospital special school based in the London Borough of Camden; designated a 40-place school for children aged 5-16. The hospital serves a large area of London but also admits pupil-patients from further a field including from abroad. Pupils are short-stay, long-stay or regular recurring in-patients of the hospital. In an average year about 500 pupils pass through the school and at any time about 16 pupils per day and 30 pupils per week will be on the school roll. There are a number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who have English as an additional language; and the number of pupils who have special educational needs or who are looked after children will vary from day to day and week to week. In addition, the school offers a range of outreach services and has up to five primary and five secondary places for pupils referred by a paediatric consultant. Referrals are made for a variety of reasons, including: to contribute towards a medical, psychological or social assessment to provide temporary respite for a child in distress to provide a 'bridging' placement whilst a child is awaiting transfer to a medical or psychological placement elsewhere to partake in the school's Re-engagement with Education programme. The school's Re-engagement with Education programme is specifically designed to support pupils who have lost the link with education due to a chronic physical or mental health problem. Reintegration into mainstream provision is a key element of this programme.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

**Grade:**

### **What the school should do to improve further**

\* In order to more accurately monitor and assess pupil's progress and achievement in their health, safety, enjoyment, contributions and social and employment understanding, the school needs to:\* Clearly identify these areas through all its curriculum planning.

## **Achievement and standards**

**Grade:**

### **Personal development and well-being**

**Grade:**

### **Quality of provision**

#### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade:**

Learning is outstanding as a result of exemplary teaching, which is dynamic, motivating and which offers challenge and interest to all pupils. Excellent use is made of ICT and other resources to effectively support pupils' learning and stimulate further interest in their work. Attitudes to learning are excellent and learners clearly enjoy being in lessons. Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well and their teaching and support successfully ensures that excellent progress is made for all pupils. Assessment, recording and evaluation are excellent and it clearly informs planning. Individual discussion and feedback helpfully explains how a pupil can improve. Excellent relationships and mutual respect ensures that the learning environment is of the highest quality. Pupils report that they enjoy their lessons and have fun with their learning.

#### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade:**

The curriculum is excellent and is successful in meeting the needs and interests of all learners. It is flexible and responsive to individual needs, including those with learning difficulties or those who are higher attainers. There is a strong emphasis on personal, social, health, citizenship and religious education (PSHCRE) in all lessons. This ensures that learners increasingly understand the importance of taking responsibility for their own learning and behaviour and working in a safe environment. The support and raising of individual confidence is another priority, which helps learners to succeed in all aspects of the curriculum offered. Opportunities for independent learning are regularly given; as are group and whole class cooperative learning that enables pupils to develop useful skills for later in life. Although accommodation is extremely restrictive the school effectively maximises its available resources to provide excellent opportunities for literacy, numeracy, science, ICT, design and technology and art and design. Additional activities such as trips into the city and abroad are also effectively maximised to enhance and stimulate learning. The curriculum positively and effectively supports pupils moving to the next stage of their education, whether it is reintegration to mainstream schooling or preparing for life after school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade:**

Learners are exceptionally well cared for and their health and safety is given the highest priority. All staff are very conscious of ensuring the well-being of all pupils and ensure that learning takes place in a supportive, yet stimulating environment. Pupil's personal and academic progress is carefully monitored and targets are negotiated and discussed with them and their parents/carers whenever possible. It is made clear to pupils how they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Pupils report that they are very well supported at school and are able to talk to staff about any concerns they may have. For a number of pupils the school offers the one place where appropriate advice and support can be obtained. Child protection systems are effectively established as are procedures for the early identification of potentially vulnerable pupils. The school has effective links with all contributing support agencies and parents and has excellent relationships with hospital staff who report their confidence and admiration for the work of the school and their effective care, support and guidance for pupils' personal development. Effective careers guidance is available to learners at appropriate times that takes into consideration their very individual medical and personal circumstances. This represents good progress since the last inspection. Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school and highly praised the staff for the care and support of their children.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade:**

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

After meeting with you yesterday I am writing to let you know what I thought about your school. Thank you for making me feel welcome and talking to me about your experiences. Well, I think you are very lucky to be attending the school as I think it is really excellent!

Although I was only with you for a day, I think the following points are worth a mention: -\* You all appear to make excellent progress in your work and personal targets.\* I really enjoyed seeing some of your work, particularly some of the fine art and craft work on display.\* You all appear to really enjoy your lessons and your behaviour is excellent.\* Your personal needs are well met and you are encouraged to have high expectations.\* Your parents are extremely happy with what the school does for you.\* You feel safe in school and are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle (what no chips?)\* You all get on really well together and show respect and understanding of each other.\* Relationships between you and the adults in the school are excellent.\* The school uses its learning resources really well, particularly its information communication and technology (ICT) resources to support your learning.\* Your headteacher, governors and all adults are very caring and have your best interests at heart.\* The school has further improved since the last inspection and it continues to improve.

Your school is aware of the need to further develop its curriculum planning and monitoring to include aspects of your health, safety, enjoyment, contributions and social and employment understanding. Thank you once again for making my day such a pleasant one and I wish you all the very best for your future.