



Norfolk Park School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107177
LEA Sheffield
Inspection number 277724
Inspection dates 19 October 2005 to 20 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Jeffery Plumb CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Park Grange Road
School category	Community special		Sheffield
Age range of pupils	2 to 11		South Yorkshire S2 3QF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0114 272 6165
Number on roll	78	Fax number	0114 272 5932
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr C Nuttal
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2001	Headteacher	Ms G Croston

Age group 2 to 11	Inspection dates 19 October 2005 - 20 October 2005	Inspection number 277724
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

Norfolk Park School, situated in Sheffield, is designated as a special school for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties and severe learning difficulties. However, it caters for children with a very wide range of complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including autism and severe medical needs. It is an average sized special school. The number of children eligible for free school meals is above the national average. There are more minority ethnic children than found in schools nationally, with a high proportion of Pakistani children. However, few are at an early stage of learning English. The school has gained the 'Healthy Schools Award' and is recognised nationally for its outstanding work in promoting inclusion (enabling children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to work alongside able bodied children of their own age in mainstream schools).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school; a judgement better than what the school evaluates itself. The innovative partnership between health and education service providers ensures that some very sick children are fully included in exciting and beneficial educational programmes. Nursing care is outstanding. Children's emotional needs are exceptionally well met and those with challenging behaviour make rapid improvements in how they behave themselves at school and at home. Children make outstanding progress in communicating their needs; their development of social skills; and in moving independently and with confidence. Foundation Stage children make good progress. Teaching is good overall; much is outstanding. Children love coming to school and are determined to succeed. Assessment in communication (English) and science could be better. Leadership and management are outstanding. There is a commitment to working 'outside boxes'. Consequently, the practice found is innovative, creative and exciting, and ensures dignity and the highest achievement possible for all children. The school gives outstanding value for money. Capacity for further improvement as a centre of excellence to support mainstream schools to manage children with very complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities is stunning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve assessment in communication (English) and science to better demonstrate and celebrate the small steps of progress children make over time.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children make rapid gains in developing communication skills. By using switches and pointing with their eyes children with the most complex needs express what they want and what they do not want. Others communicate choices successfully and independently using pictures. The highest attainers talk confidently. Amazing achievement in communication is summed up by a parent who wrote: 'I wept last night as my child stood in front of the mirror and kept saying hello to herself; I have waited years to hear her first words'. Progress in reading is outstanding. Children with the most complex needs show anticipation and express excitement during sensory story time; others read pictures and symbols; whilst the highest attainers read text. Because of the severity of their learning difficulties few children are able to write. However, the highest attainers write super stories and beautiful poems, assisted well by computer programs.

Progress in independent mobility and the development of social skills is outstanding and greatly appreciated by parents. The highest attaining children feed themselves using a proper knife and fork. Children with visual impairment find their way around the building aided by a sensory trail. Outstanding opportunities that are made for all children to work alongside able-bodied children from other schools make a fantastic contribution to their confidence and learning. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. Throughout the school children make good progress in mathematics,

science and information and communication technology (ICT). Art is a strong feature of the school and some children make outstanding progress in this subject.

Those children in regression because of the severity of their medical condition are fully included in all learning experiences and their achievements, for example, being free from pain because of careful positioning in the hydrotherapy pool are celebrated. Children with English as an additional language also have very complex learning difficulties and they make the same progress in communication as other children using signing and pictures. The highest attainers make outstanding progress and so are enabled, with support, to cope with learning in mainstream school and are given the opportunity to do so as soon as possible.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children enjoy learning as evidenced by the smiles on their faces during role play activities; especially as they anticipate what is about to happen. A parent said: 'This has been the happiest year of my son's life'. Attitudes to learning are outstanding. Concentration during a Year 3 art lesson was amazing. Behaviour is good and those children with challenging behaviour associated with their learning difficulties make significant improvements in how they behave, especially when they mix with able-bodied children. Attendance is good and improving because of the health care provided at school. Authorised absence reflects the severity of medical needs children have.

Good systems are in place to enable children's views to be heard and acted upon. Children are able to contribute to their annual reviews. Social skills development lies at the heart of this school. It promotes dignity and independence exceptionally well. Children are encouraged to feed themselves; toilet themselves; and move independently around the site. The highest attaining children made a very valuable and confident verbal contribution at an important meeting to obtain the Healthy Schools award.

Spiritual, moral and cultural development is outstanding; as evidenced by the excellent Harvest Assembly and the use of the quite splendid sensory garden to evoke feelings of awe and wonder during the inspection. The focus on dignity for the child ensures that even those with the most profound difficulties are corrected when they do wrong. Children's awareness of cultural diversity is promoted exceptionally well.

The school very successfully promotes a healthy lifestyle: children are encouraged to eat healthy food and good provision is made for physical exercise. The physiotherapists play a major part in the physical development of the children. The personal, social and health education programme promotes children's awareness of what they need to do to keep safe.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is good overall; there is a significant amount of outstanding teaching. Teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Teachers have such enthusiasm it gives a sparkle to their teaching and excites the children in their learning. Staff know the needs of every child and plan relevant learning outcomes for each in every lesson based on the targets on their individual education plans. A flexible and wide range of teaching methods (to address very specific learning difficulties) are very effectively used to develop children's social and independence skills alongside the development of their communication, numeracy and ICT skills.

Teachers have an outstanding knowledge of the techniques to promote very good learning for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties and with autism. Resources are skilfully adapted to enable children with visual impairment to access their learning. Expectations are high and because of challenge in the teaching children produce good work at a level appropriate to their learning difficulties. Exceptionally skilful behaviour management, based on outstanding teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, ensures that some of the most challenging children are kept on task and make good progress. Children are very well supported when included with able-bodied children in mainstream schools and this makes a very valuable contribution to their learning and development of social skills.

Children's progress against targets on their personalised programmes is regularly monitored in all lessons and used to inform planning to raise achievement. Assessment in mathematics and ICT celebrates the very small steps of progress the children with the most complex needs make over time. Assessment in communication (English) and science is not sufficiently refined to show clearly the very small steps of progress made by the children who seem to be sticking at the same level of attainment for a long time. It appears, rarely, as if a child is not improving over time in these subjects when in fact the child is.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding; it is better than the school's own evaluation. It is exceptionally well planned to meet a very wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is a curriculum programme tailored to the needs of children with autism and the sensory curriculum for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties is outstanding. ICT is used across the curriculum, enabling children to access learning using a range of switches and communication aids. The planning to include children to work alongside their able-bodied peers in mainstream schools is outstanding; it benefits able-bodied children as well as those with a disability. The planning for mathematics is meticulous. It enables children to make very small stepped gains and for their progress to be celebrated. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation

Stage is good. A magical ingredient is the personalised learning programme; it enables the most complex children to make small steps of progress which are hugely appreciated by them and their parents.

All therapy is integral to the curriculum and makes an excellent contribution to children's emotional and physical needs. Relationships education is outstanding and makes a valuable contribution to promoting children's awareness of the importance of adopting a safe lifestyle. Every opportunity is taken through the curriculum to promote children's awareness of the benefits of choosing a healthy lifestyle and to encourage them to be as independent as possible. Excellent use is made of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum and to raise children's awareness of cultural diversity.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care is outstanding. Every child is valued. Children's needs are known and catered for. Staff know what triggers anxiety in the children and plan to ensure that they are kept stress free, by correctly positioning them so that they are comfortable to access learning and ensuring total dignity over toileting them. Outstanding nursing care ensures that some very sick children access a rich curriculum as an entitlement. Feeding programmes and protocols for the use of oxygen enable children with the most complex medical needs to attend and enjoy school. Children's progress towards their targets is very carefully monitored and information from this exercise is used very effectively to raise achievement.

When included in mainstream schools children are exceptionally well supported. At annual reviews, parents say that their children feel safe and: 'it is a privilege for their children to have such excellent care'. Robust child protection procedures are in place. Risk assessments are thorough. There are clear procedures to ensure a safe chemical balance in the hydrotherapy pool and for the disposal of clinical waste; including the 'sharps' used by the dentist on site. The transition plans to support children moving from Year 6 into secondary school are excellent.

The care shown by escorts is outstanding; they ensure that the journeys to and from school are a pleasant experience for the children. The lunchtime fitness club contributes very effectively to children's health, fitness and enjoyment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The commitment to the best quality care and the highest achievement possible for all children lies at the heart of the headteacher's leadership. Her clarity of vision is shared by all staff because she empowers them to be confident in their work. Highly effective teamwork means that all staff encourage and support each other. Together they have created a learning environment where every child is valued and allowed to blossom. Outstanding links with mainstream schools and the on site nursery ensure amazing inclusion opportunities for all children. Excellent partnership with the health authority means first rate medical

care is provided in school and so some very sick children have the dignity of receiving a rich curriculum alongside their peers.

Robust systems are in place for checking performance and taking action to improve. This is a very self-critical school. All staff and governors are involved in the self-evaluation. The school improvement plan takes on board what is needed to raise achievement for the children and is a very good management tool to move the school forward. Financial planning is outstanding. The school has successfully budgeted to enable all teachers to get their entitlement to planning and preparation time.

The governors are very effective. They provide outstanding support and challenge to the school based on knowledge of the needs of the children. Through a steering group the governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities exceptionally well.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

N/A

Thank you for your very kind welcome to me as a visitor to your excellent school. You were so keen to tell me about what you enjoy in school. It was lovely to meet you and your teachers and teaching assistants.

What I like most about your school

- Your hard work and determination to succeed
- The opportunities you are given to learn alongside children from other schools
- The good and outstanding teaching and fantastic care you receive
- The outstanding progress you make in communicating; moving around by yourselves; and in eating sensibly using a knife and fork
- The good progress you make in mathematics, science and ICT, and the outstanding progress you make in art
- Your kindness and helpfulness to one another
- Your headteacher and staff manage your school superbly well
- The school works so hard to ensure that you keep fit, healthy and safe.

What I have asked your school to do now

- To show the small steps of progress you make in English and science.

Please keep up your enthusiasm for learning so that Norfolk Park School remains an outstanding school.