



# Riverside Special School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 118148  
**LEA** East Riding of Yorkshire  
**Inspection number** 280248  
**Inspection dates** 28 November 2005 to 29 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Noreen Buckingham

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	Ainsty Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Goole
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 16		East Riding of Yorkshire, DN14 5JS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01405 763925
<b>Number on roll</b>	75	<b>Fax number</b>	01405 763925
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr John Speight
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Lynne Jarred

<b>Age group</b> 5 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 28 November 2005 - 29 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 280248
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Riverside is a day special school for pupils aged between 5 and 16 years. The majority of pupils have moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities but this is changing and an increasing number have more complex needs, including autistic spectrum disorder. Pupil numbers have grown steadily over the last five years. Because of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities, pupils' standards on entry to the school are low for their age. All have statements of special educational needs. There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Riverside is an effective school that gives all its pupils a good education. This is because leadership and management, teaching and learning are all good. As a result, all pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Their personal development is also good because of the good care, support and curriculum they receive. Parents and pupils are very happy with all that the school offers.

The school has a good understanding of its own strengths and areas that need to improve. It gathers a wealth of assessment information about pupils and uses this well, for instance to evaluate its own performance. It also recognises the need to check the reliability of this information more rigorously so that pupils' targets are always accurate enough to maintain their best rate of learning. Similarly, the governors know that they need to involve themselves more actively in monitoring the school's work.

The school has successfully tackled the issues arising from the previous inspection and has carried out other good developments. It has initiated work leading to awards such as Artsmark and Activemark, and is working towards the Healthy Schools Award. It has a good capacity for continued improvement and it gives good value for money.

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

- Develop systems that will give a more accurate picture of pupils' progress.
- Check pupils' literacy and numeracy targets across the curriculum to find out how well pupils are adapting and using basic skills.
- Create opportunities in all lessons for pupils to use their skills in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Develop a more active role for the governing body in checking how well the school is making progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. Pupils' attainment on entry is low because of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All make good progress and achieve well in relation to their capabilities but their attainment remains low compared to national expectations. All pupils are fully included in the activities provided, and boys and girls and groups of pupils with different learning difficulties and/or disabilities all do equally well. The school uses assessments well to measure the small steps in progress that some pupils make. Pupils' individual education plans have sharp targets which focus well on improving basic skills and are reviewed each term. Clear whole-school targets stem from an analysis of the most recent assessment data. However, some limitations in the accuracy and use of assessment lead to brief periods when the rate of progress stalls.

Pupils develop high levels of maturity and confidence because of the emphasis on supporting their personal and social skills. They make good progress in their speaking skills and are confident in asking questions, giving information and reading aloud.

Older pupils achieve well in nationally accredited examinations. These include: general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) in English, mathematics, science and art, and Entry Level in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and religious education. The good range of other accreditation reflects the school's determination to give all pupils access to awards.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, with some outstanding features. Their behaviour is outstanding and their attitudes to work are also very good. Pupils are friendly, polite and keen to chat to visitors to tell them about their school. Their attendance is well above national averages and shows how much they enjoy coming to school. They are proud of their school and eager to say, 'I like this school'.

Personal development is promoted in a number of ways, such as the school council, the prefect system, lunchtime helpers, and the 'buddy system' at break times. Pupils know the rewards system and respond positively. Whilst they are encouraged to become independent, this has not yet been extended to independent travel.

Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good but, because of fewer opportunities to promote it, their spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils benefit greatly from many opportunities to learn about how to keep safe and about healthy lifestyles. They get involved in many community projects, such as fundraising, supporting a child in India and buying a cow for a family in Africa. Their Young Enterprise initiative is giving them a good insight into basic economics whilst also supporting the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall and this agrees with the school's own evaluation. Lessons are well planned and a good use of group targets means that work matches pupils' different needs and enables them to succeed. Plans for literacy and numeracy relate clearly to targets on pupils' individual plans and this helps to monitor individual progress. However, teachers miss opportunities to monitor how well pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum when these particular targets are not identified elsewhere.

Teaching assistants are deployed very well and the teamwork in classrooms is good. The very positive relationships help pupils to do their best. Their behaviour and attitudes in lessons are excellent. Most teachers share each lesson's learning objectives

with the class so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Pupils are generally engaged and keen to learn, particularly when lessons are lively, resources are interesting and the tasks challenge them to extend their thinking. In these circumstances pupils achieve well. On odd occasions when lessons are routine and the pace is slack, pupils do not sustain their interest or achieve as much as they should.

Assessment data are used well to inform planning and to set suitable targets for improvement. Pupils are assessed termly and new targets set. The school has a wealth of information and analyses it well. However, it is at the early stages of introducing portfolios of work and needs to check the accuracy of data more rigorously to bring more consistency and reliability to the assessment process.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all pupils. It is well planned and all statutory requirements are met. The good curriculum for personal, social and health education strongly promotes pupils' personal development and raises their understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. However, pupils need better opportunities to develop their skills in ICT. Specialist teaching in subjects such as design and technology and science gives the curriculum more depth, and pupils enjoy the practical elements of these subjects in particular.

Strong links with primary and secondary schools and with colleges give pupils good opportunities to extend their learning and social skills by working alongside pupils in other settings. Younger pupils read with mainstream pupils and older pupils have the opportunity for work experience and receive good support from Connexions. The recent Young Enterprise initiative is also giving older pupils good experience of running a business. The many enrichment opportunities, including residential visits, lunchtime clubs, breakfast club and after-school club, are enhanced by a wide range of visitors into school and visits to places of interest.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils feel very well cared for. They explain how staff help them, 'my behaviour has improved because when I feel angry teachers talk to me and it goes away'. The very positive relationships across the school create a good community spirit. Pupils are welcomed at the door in the morning to give them a happy start to the day.

Child protection procedures are very good and are followed rigorously and risk assessments are regular and thorough. Pastoral plans, as well as care plans, ensure that pupils' well-being is carefully considered. Good support is available from Connexions, health professionals and other education personnel. The well-established school council discusses issues very sensibly and is currently considering how best to support pupils' play at break times. The 'new pupil' day gives older pupils the opportunity to show new pupils around school and make them feel welcome. They see this as important because, 'I remember how frightened I was when I first came'.

The tracking of pupils' progress is very thorough, although accuracy could be improved by a more effective moderation process. Pupil self-evaluation is at an early stage and, while some pupils are aware of how they can improve, others are not so sure. Although the links with mainstream schools and colleges are good, evidence of their impact on pupils' overall achievements is limited to verbal comments such as, 'I love the hairdressing course at college'.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. This confirms the school's own judgement. The headteacher's strong leadership and positive approach, coupled with her drive and determination, are major factors in moving the school forward. The appointment of two assistant headteachers has created a settled senior management team who have a shared vision for future development. The headteacher has managed to maintain the good teaching and pupils' good achievement during a period of increasing pupil numbers and high staff turnover. The recently recruited specialist teachers are beginning to improve pupils' achievements and also to develop their role as subject leaders.

The school's self-evaluation procedures are largely accurate. The senior management team knows what it needs to do to improve and the detailed management plan identifies good targets to move the school forward. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are well established, and so is the assessment process. However, the school knows that the accuracy of assessments needs to be stringently checked so that it can make even better use of the data it collects.

Governors are very supportive of the school and fulfil statutory requirements. The chairman is a frequent visitor to the school and is well known by pupils and staff. However, the governing body as a whole is not actively involved in checking and evaluating the schools' progress against the targets in its management plan. The large surplus in the budget will finance the building of more classrooms, thereby extending pupils' learning opportunities.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE  
T 0207 421 6800  
F 0207 421 6707  
www.ofsted.gov.uk  
Ofsted helpline  
08456 404045

Riverside Special School  
Ainsty Street  
Goole  
East Riding of Yorkshire  
DN14 5JS

30 November 2005

Dear Pupils

I am writing to thank you for making me so welcome in your school this week. I want to let you know what I found out about your school. You were very friendly and polite and I really enjoyed talking to you about your work and what you do in school. I also enjoyed my school lunches.

I think your school is good. Some of the good things I noticed are:

you are very well behaved and proud of your school

the headteacher and all the staff make decisions with your best interests at heart and they are trying to make your school even better

you think of others less fortunate than yourselves and try to help by raising money for them

you work hard and enjoy going to other schools and colleges

you are kind and helpful to each other and you have very good relationships with all the adults who look after and teach you

you know you can talk to the adults in school

your parents are also very happy with what the school does for you and how well it cares for you.

Even though I thought your school was good, I asked your headteacher to make your school even better by:

giving you more opportunities to use the computers in more lessons

encouraging the governors to come in to school to see how hard you work and see if things can be better in any way

looking more closely at how well you are doing and checking to see if you can do better.

Noreen Buckingham

Lead inspector