

Hedgewood School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102465
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	286385
Inspection dates	13–14 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Maggie Woods

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr W King
Headteacher	Mr M J Goddard
Date of previous school inspection	28 May 2002
School address	Weymouth Road Hayes UB4 8NF
Telephone number	020 8845 6756
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties which is soon to be re-designated as a school for pupils with complex needs. Slightly more than half the pupils are on the autistic spectrum. The school provides an extensive training and outreach programme for mainstream schools and other local authorities. It runs weekly after school clubs which is part of the local extended school provision. The school aims to prepare learners for life and to provide an emotionally and developmentally supportive environment.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. It has made good progress in addressing the issues raised by the last inspection and is well placed to improve further. It provides good value for money.

Pupils make good progress in achieving the targets set out in their individual learning plans. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorder make particularly good progress in developing the social skills which enable them to become successful learners. Targets are closely linked to pupils' individual needs and are carefully monitored. Pupils make good progress in the areas of literacy, mathematics and science. However their progress in learning is not explained to them during lessons so they are not given the opportunity to develop an understanding of their own learning and what they need to do to improve further. They achieve well in response to good teaching and exceptionally good quality care. Parents greatly value this and express a very high level of satisfaction with the school. Pupils enjoy school a great deal and join in enthusiastically with the wide range of activities available for them.

Teachers and teaching assistants manage pupils' behaviour extremely well and ensure that they can learn in an environment that is calm and positive. As a result pupils' behaviour is exceptionally good. Staff have an excellent understanding of pupils' needs arising from their learning difficulties. The school responds with sensitivity to the needs of all pupils including those with autistic spectrum disorders. Staff make very good use of symbols and signing to explain to pupils what is about to happen and to help them to become more independent learners. They work hard to ensure that pupils are safe and learn to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has established a strong ethos based on commitment to respect and care for each individual. He is well supported by the deputy head and team leaders. Although there is a clear outline plan in place for the further development of the school it does not include strategies to check the impact that new initiatives have on the learning of pupils and their progress as they go through the school. The school has sound procedures in place to evaluate its effectiveness but self evaluation is only satisfactory because it is not used to inform planning for school improvement. The school has been innovative and outward looking in developing an outreach programme for other mainstream schools and local authorities based on providing training in its areas of particular expertise. It is now developing provision to offer an extended day through a popular programme of after school clubs. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well although they do not discuss the impact of new initiatives on pupils' learning during their meetings.

What the school should do to improve further

- Help pupils to reflect on their learning and to know what they have to do to improve.
- Monitor the success of initiatives outlined in the school development plan by analysing their impact on pupils' progress and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Although all pupils, including those with autistic spectrum disorders, achieve well, standards are exceptionally low as a result of their learning difficulties. They make good progress towards the targets in their individual learning plans which are monitored rigorously. As pupils move

through the school they make good progress in developing communication and social skills. They become settled and confident in the school environment and are able to enjoy learning with their peers. The wide range of pupils' work which is on display in the corridors and classrooms shows that pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding, particularly in mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well being are outstanding. They enjoy being at the school very much and parents confirm that their children are happy and as a result make good progress. One parent said that 'He is always happy to go to school and hates being off'. Attendance is very good. Behaviour is exceptionally good. It is managed very skilfully in order to enable pupils, including those with autistic spectrum disorders, to learn successfully. Pupils' moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is very good. They learn to respect others, to relate well to other people and to understand other cultures. Assemblies are used very well to develop pupils' awareness of cultural and spiritual issues. The school's strong moral code is based on principles of respect and care for each individual. This encourages pupils to support each other and to behave well. Older pupils take responsibility for supporting their younger peers, for example by playing with them at break times. Pupils are very confident and independent when carrying out tasks such as returning registers to the office. The recently formed school council gives pupils the opportunity to express their views on decisions about the running of the school. The quality of relationships between adults and children is exceptionally good. Pupils say that they trust the adults in the school and have confidence in them to resolve their difficulties. The talking partners system is highly valued by pupils and is very successful in enabling them to resolve problems. They make excellent progress in developing personal skills which prepare them very well for later life. Pupils learn to be healthy and take part in a range of physical activities with great enthusiasm. Staff are vigilant and work hard to ensure that pupils learn in a safe environment.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils are encouraged to develop their skills and to become independent learners. There is good use of a range of support for pupils' communication including use of signing and symbols. This helps all pupils to participate in class activities. Teachers are able to provide a good framework to help children build on their learning in small steps. There is high quality support from teaching assistants. This makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and to the effective management of their behaviour. Sometimes teachers do not give sufficient attention to helping pupils to talk about their learning so that they are involved in understanding how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It provides a very good programme for the extended day through after school clubs which children enjoy. For example, in the cookery club pupils were able to make

chocolate muffins as a mothers' day gift. This provides an opportunity for them to develop self help skills and to work with children from other classes. Classroom activities are planned for pupils by using their individual learning plans as a framework for learning in lessons. There is a good focus on helping pupils to develop skills which underpin all curriculum areas such as social and communication skills, independence, physical coordination and emotional literacy. However the use of ICT as a vehicle for learning could be further developed. Pupils have the opportunity to go to mainstream schools for group or individual activities where this is felt to be appropriate for them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The very thorough framework which is provided by the individual learning plans ensures that learning is very well tailored to pupils' needs with regular and rigorous monitoring of their progress in achieving their individual targets. There is an exceptionally well planned programme in place to enable pupils to make a smooth and successful transition to secondary school. The school has very good arrangements in place to ensure that pupils eat a healthy diet when in school and understand how to make healthy choices. Their emotional well being is supported extremely well. Arrangements for ensuring children's safety are fully in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and this is shared by staff and governors. However the impact of improvements outlined in the school development plan and their effect on pupils' learning are not checked sufficiently rigorously. For example, pupils' progress and achievement is not systematically tracked so that patterns of progress can be understood and addressed. The school has a strong and positive ethos based on respect for each individual. This creates an environment in which each child can thrive. Governors play an active part in the life of the school and share the head's view of its strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher, supported by the senior leadership team, monitors the performance of the school and addresses issues that arise but this analysis is not used as a basis for whole school improvement planning. Good use is made of a compact building to provide a good environment for learning. The school is well cared for and has been adapted imaginatively to create additional learning space. The school has good links with a wide range of partners. These include other local schools which offer opportunities for pupils to be included in their work. They also join in with the school's good quality professional development activities. The school provides a range of outreach services by making training available for local schools, other local authorities and higher education institutions. This includes training in provision for children with autistic spectrum disorders and an expanding programme of support for parents to which staff are keen to contribute.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed my visit very much. Now I am writing to tell you what I found about the school.

Hedgewood is a good school which is outstanding in the way that it cares for you and helps you to become as independent as possible. I was pleased to see how much you enjoy school and how you become more confident during your time there. Your school council told me that they enjoy working hard and feel safe at school. You are making good progress with your learning and do well to achieve the targets that are set for you. The teachers and teaching assistants work hard to help you to learn and behave well in school. I was glad to see that there are some good after school clubs for you to join. The chocolate muffins that the cookery club were making for their mothers looked delicious. I hope they were a lovely surprise.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead the school well. They are very keen to make it even better for you. I have asked them to check that new developments help you to learn even better. I also asked them to make sure that you know how well you are learning and what you have to do next in lessons so that you can make even more progress.

I hope that you continue to try very hard in lessons and enjoy being at the school.

Yours sincerely

Maggie WoodsLead inspector