

Hinderton School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111510
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	288980
Inspection date	18 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael McDowell

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3–8
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll	
School	30
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Linda Pritchard
Headteacher	Mr Liam McCallion
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2002
School address	Capenhurst Lane Whitby Ellesmere Port Cheshire CH65 7AQ
Telephone number	0151 3552177
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Age group	3–8
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Hinderton is a primary, special school in Ellesmere Port. It formerly provided for pupils aged 3 to 7 but recently the age range changed and it now provides for 32 pupils aged from 3 to 11, most of whom live in west Cheshire. All have statements of special educational need because of their severe social communication difficulties. Most have Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The great majority of pupils are White and all have English as their first language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school is outstanding. The significant change in age range has been handled very well. Achievement of pupils and the quality of provision are exceptional. Because of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the social and language development of children entering the Foundation Stage is well below average. However, they make excellent progress and their achievement is exceptional. The achievement of pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is similarly outstanding. Their progress is, consistently, very good in all subjects and compares very favourably with those in similar schools.

Pupils' personal development is exemplary. Over time, they become more tolerant of, and concerned for, others. They develop a sense of community and learn to work and play in groups. They are enthusiastic about electing a school council and use this to suggest improvements. Pupils' responses in lessons and breaktimes show that they enjoy school. Attendance is good. Pupils know about healthy lifestyles. They like the opportunities for exercise provided and eat their healthy snacks enthusiastically. On occasions, when disturbed by the behaviour of others, they say they are not fearful and feel safe in the care of the adults around them. They encourage one another to act safely and have drawn up rules for playtime and for the cycle track.

Teaching and learning are excellent. Teachers have exceptional expertise and confidence in managing pupils with ASD. They know their pupils very well and adapt their lessons to take account of how each learns best. The excellent resources in the classrooms are used very effectively and teaching assistants are of very high quality. Pupils flourish in response to the excellent teaching they receive. They become engaged in their tasks and increasingly able to collaborate with others. The outstanding curriculum and other activities fully address the needs and interests of the pupils.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pupils' progress and development is carefully monitored and they are helped to understand what they must do to improve. The school makes very good provision for vulnerable pupils and works very effectively with other agencies. It has robust and regularly reviewed arrangements to ensure children are protected, healthy and safe.

Leadership and management are excellent. The leadership of the school has steered it successfully through a period of change. All staff share the vision of a school in which every individual matters and deserves the best care and education that can be provided. The governors oversee the school and carry out their statutory duties well. The leadership has a highly accurate view of the school's quality and is well placed to improve further. It provides exceptional value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

There are no significant areas for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding. However, because of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities pupils' standards are well below average. Those in the Foundation Stage class make excellent progress from their starting points towards their learning goals, especially in language and communication. The progress of pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 is also exceptional. They achieve very well and reach the challenging targets set for them in their individual plans. Pupils of all

levels of capability move on consistently. Their gains in English, mathematics, science, and personal, social and health education are uniformly high. Through a national project, the progress of pupils in all age groups is compared to progress made by pupils with similar starting points nationwide. This comparison shows that their average scores are well above those of the national cohort. The pupils' achievement in developing language and communication is exceptional. They make excellent use of alternative communication strategies, including pictures, signs and symbols to increase their understanding of words and to convey their own wishes and feelings. Most, swiftly become competent and increasingly confident communicators. This is verified through the regular assessments made by speech and language therapists.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is excellent. Over time, as they learn to trust the adults around them and improve their communication skills, pupils come to enjoy and take a full part in their lessons. They become more aware of the needs of others and competence in simple social skills such as taking turns becomes more established. Most pupils are attentive and committed learners. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. Pupils work with and alongside each other in class and sometimes play together. This is a remarkable achievement given their learning difficulties. Pupils help others in school and in the wider community. The elected school council takes its responsibility very seriously and has made suggestions for improvement that have been acted upon. Pupils conform to school rules and most understand why these are needed. Some pupils have concerns about the behaviour of others but they are confident that adults will always keep them safe and they are not fearful. They are aware of the need to eat sensibly and to take exercise in order to stay healthy. They enjoy the fruit that they eat at snack time and they have firm views about what they prefer. Many are excited by the 'Golden Mile' challenge that is set by the school to encourage them to run or jog on a playground track each day. They enjoy coming to school and attendance is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. The positive impact of teaching is seen in the excellent progress made by pupils. Teachers are extremely well informed about the individual needs of their pupils and assessment is very thorough. They also have good knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum. They plan their work very effectively and use a variety of methods to ensure that in each case, the needs of individual learners are met. Teachers and teaching assistants have great expertise in helping pupils to communicate fully. Management of pupils is calm and very effective. Pupils are encouraged to work together, either as a class or in small groups, and this is very beneficial in promoting their awareness and tolerance of others. The school recently sought endorsement by the National Autistic Society. In accrediting the school's practice, the Society commented very positively on the high quality of teaching and on how well it met the needs of pupils with ASD.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. At all stages it meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and it is exceptionally effective in meeting the individual needs of pupils. The social language and communication difficulties of pupils are particularly well understood and provided for. Teachers make very good use of specific training which is known to be effective in enabling pupils with ASD to learn. Where necessary, learning is promoted by techniques that make use of all the senses. A strength of the curriculum is the excellent access that it provides to speech and language, and music therapies. Provision for physical activity is very good. The school has been awarded the 'ActiveMark' to recognise this. Pupils are helped, greatly, by the school's personal, social, health and citizenship programme, to become active members of the community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school works very effectively with other professionals and with external agencies to support the learning and well-being of its pupils. It monitors pupils' performance and personal development very thoroughly. A range of rewards that the pupils value highly promotes pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes very well. Individual education plans and challenging targets help pupils to succeed and to know that they are succeeding. Through reviews of plans, pupils come to understand what they must do in order to improve. First rate collaboration with speech and language therapists leads to the production of excellent practical programmes to meet the needs of individual pupils. The school safeguards its pupils very well. The welfare of the most vulnerable pupils is given appropriate priority. There are effective relationships between the school and social services that help this. Risk assessments are made of pupils' activities, including out of school visits. The school seeks and takes into account well the views of its parents through questionnaires and at annual review meetings. It also takes into account very effectively the views of pupils expressed through the school council.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The leadership has successfully maintained, and, in some areas, improved upon, the very high standards of achievement and quality of provision, when the school was last inspected. Staff numbers have increased, the curriculum has developed for older pupils and the building has been enlarged. These changes have been managed very well. The leadership maintains high standards by keeping the school under review and by very close monitoring of the progress of pupils and the work of the staff. The leadership is very clear about how the school should continue to develop, a vision shared by the staff and the governors. Governors are familiar with the strengths of the school and are frequent visitors. They carry out their duty to oversee the school well. The management of the school is very good and its day to day operation is smooth and unobtrusive.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Hinderton School, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire L65 7AQ

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when I visited your school this week. I enjoyed talking to you, seeing your lessons and being in the playground with you at breaktime.

What I saw, heard from you, and discovered from talking to Mr McCallion and your teachers, leads me to say that your school is excellent and that it helps you very much.

You work very hard and achieve so much because your teachers know and teach you so well. They give you very interesting things to do and there is always someone in the classroom to whom you can turn when you need help.

Those of you who have been at school the longest are much more at ease with one another and with people that you know. You think about others as well as yourself. You say you are happy at school. At snack time it was clear that you liked to eat healthy foods such as fruit and several of you told me about how well you were doing in the 'Golden Mile' challenge.

The school looks after you very well and keeps you safe. You told me that you trust your teachers and that you are not afraid when you are at school.

Mr McCallion and the staff lead and manage your school extremely well and they know what else needs to be done to improve it even more.

Thank you once more for being so helpful.