



The Endeavour School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115462
Local Authority ESSEX
Inspection number 290232
Inspection dates 29–30 November 2006
Reporting inspector Alan Lemon

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Hogarth Avenue
School category	Foundation		Brentwood
Age range of pupils	5–16		Essex CM15 8BE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01277217330
Number on roll (school)	77	Fax number	01277225157
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr P Franklin
		Headteacher	Mr M Southgate
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
5–16	29–30 November 2006	290232

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils have moderate learning difficulties. There is also a small group who have severe learning difficulties. Many pupils have additional learning difficulties or disabilities including autism, emotional and behavioural difficulties, problems with speech and communication and physical disabilities. A few pupils, whose learning difficulties are more complex than most occasionally display challenging behaviour. The nature of the pupils' difficulties means they are working well below national expectations. Just under half live in the vicinity of the school and some come from the neighbouring local authorities of Thurrock and Havering. Many travel long distances to school each day. Almost all pupils are of White British background and most are in Key Stages 3 and 4. There is barely any movement of pupils into or out of school other than at the usual times. There is minimal turnover of staff.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides all its pupils with an effective education and its value for money is good. Parents express positive views and praise the school for the considerable progress they see their children making in their studies and personal development. One parent regards it as: 'a fantastic school run by fantastic people'. Leadership and management are good. Staff share a common sense of purpose and, working effectively as a team, they bring about continual improvements in the quality of education. Good progress has been made in tackling several significant weaknesses identified in a local authority review, carried out in 2005.

Teaching and learning have improved and are now good. This is the result of teachers observing each other and evaluating lessons to gauge how much teaching contributes to pupils' progress. The school has developed a systematic means of tracking pupils' progress which also highlights where teaching and learning is effective or not. As a result, considerable efforts have been invested in sharpening the focus of lesson planning, developing variety in the ways pupils learn and in accurately assessing their learning. While this has succeeded in many lessons, good practice is not embedded in all lessons to the same degree. Nevertheless, pupils identify the quality of teaching as one of the strong features of the school they most appreciate. They learn effectively, make good progress and achieve well, particularly in the outstanding ways they are prepared for leaving school.

Pupils' personal development is exceptional and this adds to their capacity for managing the demands of future life. Throughout the school pupils' self-sufficiency and independence is nurtured very effectively. They learn very well how to care for themselves and each other. This is given particular emphasis in the curriculum through the strong provision made in personal, social and health education as well as citizenship. There is close attention to teaching pupils about their personal safety and the benefits of healthy lifestyles. Their response is exceptional in shaping their attitudes and behaviour accordingly. The range of work and additional activities provided by the curriculum is good and ensures pupils derive the maximum enjoyment for school.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. The school takes outstanding care of pupils and the good support and guidance they are given improves their work and progress. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent, which encourages the good behaviour of most. The challenging behaviour of the few pupils with more complex learning difficulties very occasionally disrupts learning.

At present the vision of a wider role for the school is limited because partnerships with other schools, while satisfactory, are only partly developed. It offers a small 'outreach service' giving support to local schools in dealing with learning difficulties. While it is keen to develop further models of good practice it is not sharing knowledge and understanding sufficiently in its partnerships with other special schools.

What the school should do to improve further

- - Improve teaching and learning by sharing models of good planning and practice that show clear learning outcomes for pupils and promote the use of successful approaches to learning.
- - Strengthen partnerships with other special schools to share good practice.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils throughout the school achieve well with no significant variation in relation to pupils with different learning difficulties or disabilities. Pupils, whatever their needs, are effectively included in all the school offers and this supports them making good progress. The school is increasingly accurate in analysing information on pupils' performance and this confirms they are achieving well. This is matched by the good rate of pupils' progress in lessons and from what can be seen in their workbooks. Examination results in Key Stage 4 are good. Pupils on average gain around 5 Entry Level Certificates and the majority of entrants achieve at the higher levels. Assessment shows that pupils' targets in English, mathematics and science were met and often exceeded. It is not clear whether targets have always been challenging enough. However, as the school now has sufficient information on the trend in each pupil's performance and the levels they are attaining in each subject it is increasingly able to determine sufficiently challenging targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. Attendance is good and pupils enjoy school thoroughly. They thrive on the active part they play in the life of the school. Pupils take the many responsibilities they are given in school very seriously and make a good contribution through the school council and by helping each other. The youngest pupils are encouraged very effectively and learn well to be self-motivated and independent. By the time they are ready to leave school, pupils are thoroughly equipped with self-confidence, excellent attitudes, good key skills and understanding of the world and work. Pupils make excellent progress in their moral and social development and good progress in their spiritual and cultural development. Relationships are excellent and most pupils behave exceptionally well. Pupils' health and safety is given high priority and, as a result, they have an excellent understanding of staying safe and have really taken on-board the importance of living healthily.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. The good rapport between adults and pupils create the conditions encouraging pupils to cooperate and engage effectively in learning. They are supported effectively and thoroughly enjoy their lessons as a result. Most lessons are planned well and focus effectively on developing learning skills that equip pupils well for the future. Work and activities provide good opportunities for pupils to learn new vocabulary and improve their communication skills. Numeracy and computer skills are also well promoted. Pupils' independence and their ability to work collaboratively are developed successfully. Work provides pupils with interesting and good challenges, which they confidently tackle on their own and with each other. As teachers' command of subjects is good, their questioning often makes pupils think hard and give answers that are precise and accurate. However, a few lessons are not planned as thoroughly as most. Here, learning objectives are not expressed so clearly, the assessment of learning does not have its usual thoroughness and the focus on what pupils should learn is not as sharp.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum and other activities is good. All pupils have access to a range of interesting work and activities which would be improved with the opportunity to study a modern foreign language. Pupils enjoy the curriculum and it encourages their good attendance, behaviour and achievement. There is good development of key skills in communication, literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum. The programmes for personal, social and health education including citizenship are well developed and make meaningful contributions to pupils' personal development. Vocational education opportunities effectively support pupils' transition to further education and employment.

A good range of sporting, musical and other activities enrich the curriculum. Pupils regularly take part in sporting and other activities which successfully promote a healthy lifestyle, team work and decision-making. The school makes good efforts to provide a variety of lunchtime clubs and activities which make up for some limitations in providing for pupils who live long distances from school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures for child protection and the health and safety of pupils are in place and the school is complying with the new government guidelines on safeguarding pupils. The care and pastoral support for pupils is excellent. Teachers and support staff know their pupils very well, and are extremely effective in promoting good behaviour and in creating an atmosphere in which pupils learn to care for, and respect, one another.

Pupils are confident that staff deal promptly and effectively with any incidents of bullying. Pupils are successfully encouraged to be independent and to make their own decisions. The support and guidance to help pupils see the progress they are making and for improving their work is good. The school makes good use of assessment and its analysis of progress in this respect.

While the management of behaviour for the great majority of pupils is good, risk assessments and behaviour plans need further reinforcement to fully support the few pupils who occasionally display very challenging behaviour. The advice of support agencies has been too limited to help in devising strategies for meeting these pupils' needs.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Responsibilities are shared effectively throughout the school as a result of recent restructuring of leadership roles. This has helped sharpen the focus on improving pupils' learning and raising achievement. The staff are a well motivated team working with a clear sense of purpose and the school is supported effectively by governors. The school has made good progress since July 2005 when a local authority review highlighted significant weaknesses in the school's effectiveness, particularly in teaching. This led to a thorough teaching and learning policy being written and implemented, strengthening lessons. Good approaches to planning lessons and assessing learning are now being embedded. Learning is more effective as a result. Pupils point out that teaching is something they see as strong and beneficial to them. While there is more to be done to refine teaching and make it fully consistent with policy, the systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are effective in pinpointing where improvement is needed. Priorities in the school's current improvement plan set a clear direction and demonstrate the school's good capacity to make further improvement. The partnership with other schools exists through a small amount of support given to helping them with pupils who have learning difficulties. While links have been made with other special schools, these are not as active as they could be in developing and sharing good practice.

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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?	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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	2
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?	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?	2

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.

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	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

1 December 2006

Dear Pupils

The Endeavour School, Hogarth Avenue, Brentwood, Essex. CM15 8BE

Thank you for the very warm welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking with you and greatly appreciated the contributions made by the school council representatives who met with the Inspectors.

These are the things we found best about your school:

- You make good progress and achieve well because you are prepared to work hard.
- You behave well and are very willing to help each other in lessons and at other times.
- All staff look after you extremely well and keep you safe.
- You have a good choice of activities outside lessons that are interesting and enjoyable things to do.

This is what we have asked your teachers to do to improve your school:

- - Make sure your lessons are all as enjoyable and challenging as the best.
- - Share good ideas with other schools so that your work and activities become even better.

We hope that you continue to enjoy your time at school and send you all our best wishes for the future.

Alan Lemon

Lead Inspector