



Saxon Wood School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116634
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 290572
Inspection date 25 January 2007
Reporting inspector Anne Berger HMI

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Rooksdown Barron Place
School category	Community special		Basingstoke
Age range of pupils	3-11		RG24 9NH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01256356635
Number on roll (school)	40	Fax number	01256323713
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Chris Howard
		Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Cannon
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2001		

Age group 3-11	Inspection date 25 January 2007	Inspection number 290572
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one HMI for one day.

Description of the school

Saxon Wood School serves a very large geographical area. Pupils travel from the whole of north Hampshire and some adjacent authorities. The school is much smaller than average. Pupils have a complex physical disability or medical condition. Those who join the nursery are always delayed in one or more areas of development, particularly physical and independence areas. Most of those of school age have additional moderate learning difficulties over and above their physical disability. Over the last three years an increasing number of pupils with severe learning difficulties have been admitted to the school. A significant group of pupils have severe communication problems associated with their physical disability.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Pupils with complex needs thrive at this outstanding school. The very high levels of care alongside a strong focus on academic achievement and personal development ensure that the pupils make consistently good progress. The pupils overcome the many barriers to learning by acquiring outstanding skills in communication.

Significant improvements have been made to adapt to the changing population. Teaching and learning are good. The pupils with the most severe needs are taught well although there are a few missed opportunities to ensure they can participate fully in the planned activities.

Teachers set challenging targets and are constantly pushing the limits of what pupils can do. All classroom staff, together with the health and communication teams, monitor the targets frequently and revisions are made where necessary to introduce higher levels of challenge. This is well illustrated by one teacher's comment that she plans tasks which are sometimes slightly too difficult to make sure that she does not underestimate the pupils' capabilities. The curriculum is very well planned and adapted to the range of different needs and the pupils enjoy the interesting and active lessons. The school has an effective system for teaching reading although for a few pupils there is insufficient emphasis on learning to link sounds and letters.

Exceptional attention is paid to the pupils' health and safety and the school works very well in partnership with the other agencies involved. The current outreach service has developed good links with partner primary schools but there is no strategic plan with the local authority to develop the service further so that the particularly high levels of expertise can be spread more widely across the area.

The pupils enjoy helping others through raising money for other communities. They have many opportunities to offer their views about school developments. Many opportunities are created to help pupils make choices and express their views. The school makes an outstanding contribution to their personal and social development. Independent thinking is encouraged and barriers to some pupils' participation in school and community life are removed wherever possible.

All this is achieved because of the high quality of leadership shown at all levels. Anyone with a responsibility for a development leads by example and provides strong direction for colleagues. The new headteacher, very well supported by the deputy, is effectively building on the strengths of the school, whilst continuing to make necessary improvements. The governing body and senior leadership team have a very good understanding of the school and identify in their own plans suitable further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- continue to find ways of ensuring pupils with the greatest need can participate fully in lessons
- provide further training for reading

- work in partnership with the local authority to consider how they can extend their role to the whole community

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school has a clear view of what is good progress. Most pupils are expected to improve by at least one P-level every two years and this provides a good level of challenge. Most achieve this and a few pupils exceed these expectations. Analysis of all Annual Review Meetings held in 2005 shows that most parents consider that their child is making at least good progress. Other data collated by the school confirm this. However, pupils with the greatest levels of need do not make the progress they could when, occasionally, their needs are not as effectively planned for.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Outstanding work is undertaken to develop pupils' self esteem and feelings of worth. Each pupil is valued as an individual. There are excellent opportunities to listen to pupils' views and help them make choices using the outstanding range of communication aids developed for each individual. Information and communication technology is particularly well-used to ensure that the pupils can work on their often very limited and tentative physical control. Voice output communication aids and switch technology are used to outstanding effect. Pupils work exceptionally hard to listen and respond in lessons using these aids.

Pupils are developing good social skills, for example, through a number of fund-raising activities where they interact with the public and use their developing communication skills. The work this term about the life of people in Kenya is a good illustration of the considerable efforts made to introduce pupils to other cultures. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. They take great care of each other, learning respect and tolerance through the way they are treated by staff.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is nearly always good and often outstanding. All work is carefully planned and very good attention is paid to helping everyone participate at their own level. The work is challenging and interesting and as a result the pupils enjoy school. In a few lessons the least able pupils do not have a wide enough range of concrete objects to help them join in with lessons fully, although a very good start has been made to build up this resource bank.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is well adapted to meet the interests and needs of the pupils. Units of work are exciting and interesting. The work is very well planned and the pupils' physical management programmes and curriculum work are woven effectively through the day to ensure time is used to greatest effect. The after-school club is particularly enjoyed by the older pupils. Staff show a very high level of commitment to providing additional opportunities despite the many practical challenges they present.

The PSHE curriculum is very well-designed to meet the needs of the pupils. It takes account of situations which they may encounter as a disabled person and offers opportunities for pupils to explore their concerns and worries.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The pupils are treated with dignity and respect and all their care needs are attended to effectively. The partnership with the health teams is outstanding and everyone's efforts are directed to ensure the pupils can participate in their learning. The pupils' achievements are tracked and monitored very carefully and parents, teachers and other staff know what the pupils need to do to achieve their next step of learning. Wherever possible the pupils are also made aware of what they need to do to make progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The way that everyone shows leadership in their work is impressive. Everyone is fully involved in the development of the school and communication between staff is outstanding. The monitoring and support to improve the performance of staff is rigorous. Even though there have been some considerable changes in staffing, the school has maintained a good quality of teaching and support at all times. Any weaknesses are swiftly identified and suitable training is given. Changes identified by the new headteacher have been welcomed and staff are willing to learn, change and develop.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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?	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	1
The attendance of learners	1
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?	2
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.

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	1
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

Please see separate document attached

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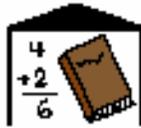
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26 January 2007

Dear Pupils,

Barron Place
Rooksdown
Basingstoke
Hampshire
RG24 9NH



Your school is outstanding!



All your work is good.



Thank you for being so helpful.

Ann Berger HMI