

John Chilton School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101969
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	298242
Inspection dates	4–5 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Heather Yaxley HMI

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	4–17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Maureen Keaveney
Headteacher	Mr Simon Rosenberg
Date of previous school inspection	30 October 2000
School address	Compton Crescent Northolt UB5 5LD
Telephone number	020 8842 1329
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Age group	4-17
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

John Chilton is a local authority special school that was relocated, along with the West London Academy, into a new building just over two years ago. The school caters for pupils whose primary need relates to a physical, medical or sensory difficulty. Many of the pupils use wheelchairs or walking frames. An increasing proportion of pupils have additional learning difficulties. Pupils join the school at any time. Most live within the London Borough of Ealing, representing a diverse range of cultural heritages. Almost half of the pupils speak languages other than English at home.

The school's location within the all-age academy is very unusual and provides all John Chilton School pupils with opportunities to integrate into the primary and secondary departments for some lessons.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

John Chilton School provides a satisfactory standard of education and good care, guidance and support for its pupils. The relocation of the school has led to some difficult and uncertain times for the staff. However, with the best interests of the pupils at the heart of all that they do, the staff and governors have ensured a smooth transition for the pupils and their families. With this as their main priority over the past two years, the senior management team has given less attention to some strategic issues that the school now needs to address.

The pupils are extremely happy in school. They love their lessons and there is a very purposeful learning atmosphere throughout the school. They are extremely well behaved. When they join the academy for lessons, the pupils do so with confidence. Throughout their time at the school, they develop good personal skills and become increasingly independent. Their families are very pleased with how well they make progress and are very appreciative of how the staff help their children to overcome their difficulties.

This is a school where staff work very well as a team and with support services. Together they have an outstanding effect on removing any potential barriers to learning as much as possible. This means that younger pupils develop very good attitudes to learning and that, as they get older, they are increasingly able to join mainstream lessons and achieve qualifications that will allow them to continue their education after the age of sixteen. It is a feature of good teaching and care that pupils of all ages are challenged sensitively yet firmly to aim high. As a result, the pupils make good progress in both their academic and personal skills, and respond well to opportunities to develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

The development of the curriculum requires more attention. Subject policies and schemes of work need revising because many are out-of-date and do not always give sufficient detail to support teachers in their planning. Some subject leaders are new to their responsibilities and are not yet carrying out the full range of monitoring activities. This links closely with the need to improve the way in which the school tracks pupils' progress because current systems do not give a clear picture of how much progress the pupils are making.

The leaders and managers of the school generally have an accurate picture of what needs to be done as well as the areas of their work that are good. The way in which staff and governors compile and use improvement plans is not sharp enough. There is insufficient focus on how actions will make a difference to the pupils and how the plans are monitored. Nevertheless, the school has the drive and satisfactory capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of provision for the youngest children is good. It allows them to explore all aspects of learning in a lively, yet safe setting. The Foundation Stage leader has made good changes to the way in which the children's skills are assessed and collated. Planning for the required areas of learning is thorough and this, together with regular opportunities to meet together, helps the staff team to target their attention on particular activities with particular children. In this way, the children have a good balance of guided activity as well as being able to make independent choices. This also ensures that not a minute is wasted, contributing significantly to the good progress that they make towards the early learning goals.

The children are not able to use the outside area as much as they should. Its shared use with the academy nursery allows good opportunities for integration with others. However, the lack of appropriate shelter for the needs of John Chilton School children restricts its use to fine weather only.

What the school should do to improve further

- Establish clear systems for targeting and tracking the pupils' progress over time.
- Improve the effectiveness of subject leaders so that they play a full part in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
- Revise the school improvement plans to include specific success criteria and monitoring arrangements.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter the school with a wide range of ability and learning needs. The standard of work that they achieve during their time at the school is often well below that found nationally as would be expected in relation to their complex needs. But this masks a wide range of attainment. Over the past two years, the youngest children have achieved early learning goals that match national expectation. Similarly, older students gain GCSEs across the range of levels from Entry Level to grade A. All students leave school with nationally accredited qualifications. This not only represents good progress from their starting points but also prepares them well for further education at college.

Teachers make regular assessments of the pupils' work and this information is collated to show the National Curriculum levels that they have achieved. But, the way in which the school tracks pupils' attainment does not give enough information about how much progress that represents. Similarly, although statutory targets are set for the end of each key stage they are not used to check how well the pupils are progressing towards the targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have positive perceptions of themselves as learners. They speak very positively of their education and the support that they get from staff. They enjoy joining classes in the academy and are keen to play their part in the wider school community. All students in Key Stages 3 and 4 start their day with registration in academy tutor groups. They all wear the uniform of the academy and are proud to do so. Some of them are student leaders. There is a John Chilton School student council at which pupils like to discuss issues such as food and school trips. The pupils take good advantage of opportunities offered to them to stay safe and healthy. This is seen by the way in which they take care of themselves and one another. Pupils of all ages are determined to do well. Most are able to move around the building independently, including older students who spend most of their time in the academy. These students use the lifts independently and are given guidance for independent travel, enabling them to access courses in the community in the future. The building currently poses some limitations for older students

to get around by themselves. For example, they need to rely on the help of others to open doors.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Established classroom routines and high expectations to participate in lessons helps pupils to make good progress in their learning and personal skills. Skilful use of questions allows pupils of different abilities to contribute answers and ideas. Teachers are very skilled at taking the contributions that pupils make in lessons and using them to extend learning. This helps pupils to build upon what they know and to become confident learners. Lessons are planned with an appropriate focus on developing speaking and listening skills. Teachers use subject-specific vocabulary well to reinforce the acquisition of knowledge. Pupils are given good oral feedback on how well they are doing. They have individual targets for personal skills and for different subjects. However, the way in which these are used in lesson planning and teaching varies.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall with some areas of strength. The curriculum for each key stage covers the full range of National Curriculum subjects and this ensures that when pupils go to lessons in the academy there is continuity in the work taught. At Key Stages 1 and 2, there is an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics and a range of practical subjects such as food technology. The school shares a hall with the primary department for physical education, and the demand on its use sometimes limits the time available for John Chilton School pupils. At Key Stages 3 and 4, the curriculum is more personalised to enable students to take lessons in the academy as much as possible. They are able to take advantage of the specialist teaching facilities and this enhances the range of courses available to them. For some subjects this is difficult to arrange because the academy timetable goes on beyond the time at which transport is available to take the students home. But the school does all that it can to minimise these limitations. There is a secondary school base within the academy for students to work with John Chilton School staff. Here staff give additional help to students so that they can keep up with their studies and also to take alternative courses. All students follow courses that lead to nationally recognised accreditation including a range of Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) programmes.

Schemes of work and subject policies do not always reflect the particular needs of the pupils sufficiently. Some areas of the curriculum rely on published schemes, which the school uses as a starting point to provide an individualised and differentiated curriculum. Because it is not apparent where these have been tailored to meet the specific needs of the pupils, they do not provide enough planned opportunities for the development of personal and social skills to take place.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The support that nursery nurses and teaching assistants provide in lessons throughout the school and academy ensures that learning proceeds smoothly. Pupils are given the help that they need without compromising their independence, dignity or individuality. The work of the

therapists contributes significantly to the pupils' mobility and language development. Detailed individual plans ensure that programmes are followed effectively. Teachers give good feedback in marking and through discussion so that the pupils know how to improve their work but there is more work to be done to ensure that individual targets are used to support learning more effectively.

The school maintains excellent relationships with pupils' families. When children start in the Reception class, their parents and carers are given good information about the work of the school. Good relationships between home and school ensure that the children settle very quickly. At the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils and their families are well-supported to ensure that there is a smooth transition to the secondary department. As a result of excellent transition arrangements during Year 6, the students settle quickly to the different and demanding expectations for Key Stage 3 where they socialise and learn with a much greater number of students. The transition work also ensures that academy staff have good information about the students that join their classes.

The school also supports pupils in other schools within the borough through its outreach work. Schools value the help that this gives them to develop their practice.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. Although the day-to-day management of the school is good there has not been sufficient attention recently to developing strategic aspects of its work. This includes the development of the curriculum and the use of assessment information to target and track pupils' progress more effectively. The governing body has been very supportive to staff during the recent period of uncertainty, but it too has given less attention to monitoring the work of the school. There is a huge commitment by all staff to support and improve the learning environment and opportunities for the pupils. This is testament to the steadfast attention to detail by the headteacher and his team.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	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?	3
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

14 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of John Chilton School, Northolt, UB5 5LD

I am writing to thank you for your help when I came to inspect your school last week. I remember that the primary department were practising for your Christmas assembly when I came. It was a pleasure to spend time with you, to hear what you had to say and to see how well you are doing with your work. I was able to see many of you working in class and some of you in lessons in the academy. I want to let you know what I found out.

I think that John Chilton School gives you a satisfactory education that helps you to make good progress in your work. The good care and guidance from staff helps you to become independent and to persevere at some of the things that you find difficult. Your behaviour in class and around the school and academy is excellent. Your families are very pleased with how well you are doing in school. Please pass on my thanks to them for writing to me.

Mr Rosenberg is always looking for ways that he can improve your school and I have asked him to look at a few things that I think will help. The way that staff keep an eye on how well you are doing needs to be improved. I also think that senior staff and the governors need to look more carefully at how they check up on how good the school is.

Many thanks again for your help and I hope that some of you will read my full report with your families (it's not too long!).

Yours sincerely,

Heather Yaxley

Her Majesty's Inspector