

# Booker Park Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110588
<b>Local Authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	301993
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Melvyn Blackband

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	129
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr R Butcher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr R Westwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Stoke Leys Close Aylesbury HP21 9ET
<b>Telephone number</b>	01296 427221
<b>Fax number</b>	01296 433700

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<b>Age group</b>	2–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Booker Park Community School, which opened in April 2007, has been created from the federation of two smaller special schools and the primary aged children from an all-age special school. The headteacher was previously in charge of all three of the separate but federated schools. There are two parts to the present provision. The Whiteleaf Hall part of the school provides for pupils with a range of difficulties, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Bernwode Hall, which is in a separate part of the school building, caters for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). Most pupils are White British with a small number from Asian and Mixed White and Black Caribbean or Black Caribbean ethnic groups. Almost a quarter of pupils are eligible for free school meals.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Booker Park is an outstanding school. Both Bernwode Hall and Whiteleaf Hall are extremely effective and continually strive to improve the provision for all the learners. Because of their learning difficulties the standards reached by Whiteleaf Hall pupils are exceptionally low, but all pupils do well in their studies and most make outstanding progress. Pupils at the Bernwode Hall generally enter the school with low levels of attainment but make excellent progress in catching up with nationally expected standards. Some pupils are able to transfer back to mainstream secondary schools. The pupils love coming to school and parents are happy for their children to attend, knowing they will be safe and that the staff have high expectations of their progress. One parent commented, '...he runs to school each day!'

The monitoring and tracking of the pupils' achievement is outstanding and plays a vital part in ensuring all the pupils make such good progress. The pupils make outstanding progress also in their personal development. The quality of teaching is excellent in both parts of the school. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is of a high quality and the pupils achieve very well. This gives them an excellent start to their education. The pupils enjoy their lessons and respond by trying their best. Lessons in both areas are very well planned and the curriculum has a clear focus on meeting the needs of each pupil. It is enriched by the good use of off-site visits to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding. The accommodation in this brand new school is excellent and has been very well planned to enable pupils to have access to as many opportunities as possible, in order to reach their potential.

The pupils thrive within the supportive ethos. There is a strong emphasis on the pupils personal, health and social education (PHSE) on both sites. This promotes the pupils' emotional and behavioural development and they learn to stay healthy, to keep safe and to behave well. Teachers effectively mark and annotate the pupils' work. Good behaviour and academic effort are celebrated and pupils look forward to this. They are not clear, however, on how they can improve their work still further. There are good transition procedures for when the pupils move to secondary education.

All this has been driven by outstanding leadership and management. The governing body have been tireless and influential in the creation of the new school building. Governors are very supportive and give a rigorous level of challenge to the managers of the school. The headteacher provides excellent overall leadership and he is extremely well supported by the senior staff in both areas of the school. Their contribution is outstanding in ensuring the staff work in close knit teams and share the vision of maintaining high standards in all they do. There has been continual improvement in both areas of the school since the previous inspections. The school is extremely effective in evaluating its own progress and standards and as a result there is an outstanding capacity to make further improvement. The school's administration is managed very efficiently by a member of the management team. The school gives excellent value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their work further.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

The standards are very low at Whiteleaf Hall when compared to those nationally but all the pupils from the Foundation Stage upwards make excellent progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The pupils with PMLD also achieve very well. Pupils at Bernwode Hall make exceptional progress from a very low base when they enter the school and most pupils here, by Year 6, are achieving standards expected of mainstream pupils. The recording and tracking of pupils' progress is exemplary and this has a significant impact on their achievement. The pupils achieve outstanding success in meeting IEP targets which are carefully monitored to ensure a high level of challenge and which exemplify the high expectations of pupils throughout the provision.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The pupils' excellent progress in personal development in both areas of the school reflects the strong management of behaviour and the emphasis on moral and social values. The pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good. The pupils are calm and very well behaved because they feel safe and confident and know what is expected from them. The excellent PHSE programmes help pupils to gain an excellent understanding of exercise and healthy eating and they have many opportunities to take part in physical activity. The pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and those pupils spoken to reported no bullying or intimidation. Attendance is good and well monitored. Pupils reported that they enjoy school very much and feel they are making good progress. They develop an outstanding understanding of community involvement through activities in and out of the school. The outstanding progress which pupils make in basic skills helps to prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teachers know their pupils very well and this helps them to plan interesting and well paced lessons. The pupils benefit from the excellent partnerships and collaboration between teachers and the competent support staff in planning suitable activities. Teaching throughout the school is consistently good and the impact this has on the pupils' achievement is significantly enhanced by the outstanding assessment and recording of each small step in the pupils' learning. The management of behaviour is a strength in both areas of provision. In each classroom the pupils have access to a high level of personal tuition. As a result they gain confidence and this helps to improve their learning. The pupils like and respect their teachers and try hard to succeed. Pupils in the Foundation Stage are taught extremely well and this helps them to make excellent progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum has been very well adapted to the pupils' needs and programmes are closely monitored for their effectiveness. The Foundation Stage curriculum is soundly based on early learning strategies. High priority is given to developing basic skills. This work is based on

national strategies for literacy and numeracy which ensures rigour in the teaching and adds significantly to the pupils' achievement. There is an exemplary commitment to speech and language therapy for almost all pupils in Whiteleaf Hall. The strong school ethos of developing pupils' personal skills is underpinned by effective PHSE teaching. The new school offers excellent accommodation, which gives pupils better access to opportunities for learning, especially in facilities for hydrotherapy and sensory education for pupils with PMLD. The school also offers good facilities for therapists who come to the school. There are appropriate opportunities to take pupils out of the classroom to enrich their understanding.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

There are high standards of care and support for pupils. Child protection procedures are effective and there are secure arrangements for health and safety and risk assessment which are closely monitored by governors. The necessary checks on staff are in place. In both areas of the school the pupils have open and trusting relationships with staff and consequently benefit from a high degree of support for their learning and personal development. Extra support is available where necessary, for example in the successful deployment of an 'Expressive Therapist' at Bernwode Hall. Pupils are appropriately told when they make progress but they do not know how they can improve their work further. There is, however, an outstanding level of assessment and recording of the pupils' achievement. Parents thus receive a high standard of information at Annual Review meetings. This is enriched during the year by the excellent use of annotated photographic records. As a result parents are very pleased with their children's progress. One parent stated, 'I would walk over hot coals, every day, to get my daughter to Booker Park School!'

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher has shown outstanding leadership in managing the changes to the schools and the move to new premises. He has a strong determination to maintain the highest standards of provision. In this he is supported by a very able and committed senior team. A strength of the school lies in the effective way senior staff monitor, evaluate and improve on every aspect of performance. For instance the senior team are aware of the need to improve the pupils' knowledge of their own learning targets. The school's development planning is firmly focused on improving the pupils' achievement.

Communication is excellent. Staff at all levels are fully consulted and they feel involved and valued. There is very good professional training for staff. The governing body provides an outstanding level of support and challenge to the headteacher and his team. Governors have a secure grasp of strengths and areas for development and demonstrate very effective strategic guidance for the new school. There has been a continual rise in standards, despite the recent changes and the school has an excellent capacity to maintain this improvement.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

17 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Booker Park Community School, Aylesbury, HP21 9ET

Not long ago I came to the school to see how you are getting on and whether I could suggest anything to make Booker Park School better. You made me very welcome and I enjoyed meeting some of you in your classrooms and in the library and while I was eating my lunch. Thank you and well done.

I was with you for two days. That was long enough for me to realise that Booker Park is an outstanding school. One of the reasons is that you all enjoy school so much. There were lots of other things that I liked.

- You work hard and make excellent progress.
- The many different people at the school do their very best to look after you.
- All the adults in your class are very good at helping you to do well.
- Teachers plan lessons for you which will help you to make really good progress.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership.

There is one thing which I think would make the school better.

- Teachers should make sure that you know clearly how to make your work even better.

Please thank your parents for all the helpful comments they made on the questionnaires.

Best wishes and good luck.

Mel Blackband Lead Inspector