

Hay Lane School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101583
Local Authority	Brent
Inspection number	307743
Inspection dates	15–16 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Kay Charlton

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	4–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	115
6th form	30
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Mary Henderson
Headteacher	Ms Jenny Drake
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2004
School address	Grove Park Kingsbury London NW9 0JY
Telephone number	020 8204 5396
Fax number	020 8905 0971

Age group	4–19
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Hay Lane is designated for pupils with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties and all have statements of special educational need. Increasingly, pupils entering the school have a much greater diversity and complexity of need than in the past. They come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and a significant percentage are of Indian, Pakistani and African origin. Many have English as an additional language. The school is subject to reorganisation proposals to create a joint post-16 department with an adjacent special school. This is scheduled to be completed by May 2008. Refurbishment of the main school is planned to take place during the current academic year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hay Lane is a good school with outstanding features, notably in pupils' personal development. Comments such as 'My child loves school' and 'My son does not like to miss a day' show how positive parents are about the school's provision. The school has improved significantly since the last inspection. Its self-evaluation is accurate and clearly identifies the areas that are most in need of further development.

Pupils, including those of different backgrounds and abilities, achieve well. Although standards are exceptionally low, almost all pupils achieve their challenging individual targets. This represents good achievement and is based on good teaching and the very effective way in which staff support pupils in developing their confidence and independence. Excellent relationships are established between pupils and staff. Along with a consistent approach to behaviour management, these help to bring about significant improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour, both of which are outstanding. Staff work well as a team, make very good use of resources and ensure that learning is fun. There are occasions, however, where they do not fully challenge the learning of all, particularly those pupils with the most complex needs.

Overall, the curriculum has a good balance of academic and vocational courses that prepare pupils effectively for life after school. A very varied programme of enrichment makes an important contribution to developing pupils' motivation and aspirations. An identified school priority is to review the provision to ensure that the increasingly complex needs of pupils are fully met. The school has excellent links with others and pupils make an outstanding contribution to both the school and the wider community. The care that pupils receive is of a very high quality, and support for their personal development is excellent. The support and advice that pupils receive for their academic development is good and, in a safe and secure environment, they gain the skills needed in the wider world.

The headteacher gives a very strong lead and, along with the senior team, provides clear vision and direction for the work of the school. They work together well with staff to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged, particularly by the accommodation, which a Local Authority (LA) review indicated is in need of substantial improvement. Governors play an important role as the school's critical friend and, with the headteacher, are proactive in ensuring the planned refurbishment of the accommodation and the new sixth form provision are implemented successfully. Excellent links have been established with parents and others to help take the school forward. The school has a good capacity to improve in future.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

Students make good progress and achieve well as a result of good teaching. The curriculum is reasonably broad and balanced, and is very strong in promoting students' personal development. The school has rightly identified that further changes are a key priority to address the changing needs of the students and the new arrangements for the joint sixth form provision. As a consequence of the very high quality care and good academic guidance given to students, virtually all move on to further education. The leadership provided by the senior team and the head of the sixth form, working together, is good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's achievements and progress are good. Staff provide a safe and secure environment and children settle quickly into the school routines. Children's skills are carefully assessed so that teaching is usually well matched to their needs and abilities. However, as in other parts of the school, there are occasions when staff do not fully challenge those with the most complex needs. The curriculum covers all the expected areas for children of this age with effective use of both the indoor and outdoor environment. Along with the excellent relationships that are established, this plays an important part in helping children quickly gain good levels of confidence and independence. Overall, leadership of the Foundation Stage is good and there is clarity about the ways in which future improvement should take place.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that, at all times, staff fully challenge the learning of all pupils, particularly those with the most complex needs.
- Implement the planned changes to the curriculum, particularly in the sixth form, to ensure the increasingly complex needs of students are fully met.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Pupils of different backgrounds and abilities achieve well in relation to their attainment on entry, which is extremely low. Throughout the school, pupils try hard and invariably reach their challenging personal targets. By age 19, virtually all students attain a good level of success in nationally accredited courses given the nature of their learning difficulties. The school's strong focus on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) ensures that pupils, including those who have English as an additional language, make good progress in developing the key skills they will need in later life to support their economic well-being. The school is actively working to improve the progress of pupils with the most complex needs even further.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are central to the school's work and are outstanding. Pupils make impressive gains in developing their self-esteem, independence and social skills. They develop a clear understanding about what is right and wrong, and show a keen sense of enjoyment; for example when discussing the photographs they had taken during a visit to a local wildlife park. All take great pride in their school, and attend regularly. They work and play together in a racially harmonious atmosphere and their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are clear that their views count and know that the staff will take time to listen to them if they have any concerns. They develop a good understanding of healthy living. They are extremely aware of the need to be safety conscious, for example, when using the new playground climbing equipment. They make an excellent contribution to both the school and the local community, for instance when working with local

schools on an ICT project. Comments made by those who work with pupils outside school are a testament to how well pupils are gaining the skills needed to act as members of the wider community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Across the school, teaching is good. Staff are very positive in their approach and use praise exceptionally well to increase pupils' motivation and to improve both their concentration and behaviour. Support staff are an important part of the team and make a valuable contribution to pupils' development. Teachers plan lessons conscientiously, and use resources very well, particularly in classrooms that are often short of space. There are models of outstanding practice, where staff not only make excellent use of pupils' individual targets but also an exceptionally wide range of strategies, including using signs, symbols and gestures, to challenge the learning of all, including those pupils with the most complex needs. A good example of this was seen in a literacy lesson with primary aged pupils. However, this practice is not sufficiently consistent across the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Overall, the curriculum is good. Coordination has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection and a well focussed review of provision is currently taking place. This is to take account of the fact that the school has recently changed its organisation to better reflect the increasingly complex needs of its pupils. There is still more to do to ensure that the curriculum fully matches these organisational changes. Across the school, a high emphasis is given to personal development and the provision builds well on the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and ensures a systematic development of pupils' key skills. The provision for music and physical education (PE) is outstanding. Enrichment is very good with a wide range of visits, including residential trips, undertaken. The accommodation presents difficulties, for example, some specialist facilities are upstairs, but the school works well to minimise any adverse effects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. There are outstanding features in care as well as in the support pupils receive to develop their personal skills. Staff show a strong commitment to putting the pupils' needs first. Health and safety are given high priority and teaching and support staff are vigilant at all times. Risk assessments are thorough, and child protection procedures are robust and effective. Staff implement the school's procedures conscientiously and the pupils say that '...the teachers help us a lot'. The excellent support for pupils' personal development ensures that pupils make impressive gains in this area.

Information about the pupils' academic performance is used effectively to set challenging targets for each individual. There are occasions, however, where staff do not make best use of

these to ensure that all pupils are fully challenged in their learning. Parents are actively involved in reviewing the progress their children have made and in determining how further improvements might be achieved. Pupils receive helpful advice when decisions have to be made about their next steps after school. Link courses at a local college enable them to experience a range of vocational options before choices are made.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The school benefits from the very strong leadership of the headteacher. Along with the senior team, she gives a very high focus to the professional development of all staff, so that the school is continually improving. Governors work closely with the headteacher and are effective in supporting the school's drive for improvement. They ensure that finances are managed carefully and that all statutory requirements are met. The school's self-evaluation procedures are good with very discerning input from senior staff. Governors show good insight into the changing needs of the school and they ask searching questions to ensure that the challenging targets they set are fully met. Middle managers are developing their skills well and are making an increasingly active contribution to whole school reviews. The use of ICT to present the data collected from monitoring is making it easier for the school to analyse of patterns and trends in pupils' achievements over time.

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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	16-19
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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	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	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	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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	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

25 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hay Lane School, London, NW9 0JY

Thank you for all the help you gave me when I visited your school on 15 and 16 January 2008. You told me that you are proud of Hay Lane School and that you really enjoy all the things that you do when you are there. I agree that Hay Lane is a good school and it is particularly effective in helping you develop your confidence and independence. Excellent links have been established with parents and others to help you achieve of your best and to make sure the school improves further.

Teaching is good and teachers make learning fun. Staff use a wide range of resources and also arrange a very varied range of extra activities so that you are keen to learn. You mentioned that you really enjoy swimming, games and PE and that you like going out on visits, such as the one to Paris. The excellent relationships that staff have established with you are used very effectively to help improve your concentration and behaviour, both of which are excellent. All staff care for you very well indeed and make sure you are safe at all times.

Members of the senior team have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are keen to see that Hay Lane improves even further. I have asked them to work with the staff to make sure that, at all times, every one of you gets work that really makes you think. I want them to ensure that the curriculum fully meets the needs of the increasing number of pupils with complex needs. You can play an important part by trying your hardest at all times.

Yours sincerely,

Kay Charlton

Lead Inspector