

# St Ann's School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101971
<b>Local Authority</b>	Ealing
<b>Inspection number</b>	307863
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Goodchild

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>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	77
6th form	25
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Sian Vaux
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Gillian Carver
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2005
<b>School address</b>	Springfield Road Hanwell London W7 3JP
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8567 6291
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8840 4664

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<b>Age group</b>	11-19
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a special school for pupils with severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties or a combination of severe learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders. Over half the pupils are unable to communicate verbally. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds: most are of minority ethnic heritage and many are at early stages in learning English as an additional language. The largest groups are from Black or Black British African and Asian or Asian British Indian backgrounds. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The school is an Investor in People and has both Healthy School and Sports Mark status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with good features. Parents who expressed their views about the school are generally pleased with its work. They say that the staff are 'compassionate, extremely professional and treat each child as an individual'.

Through close collaboration with other agencies, the school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. They make good progress in their personal development and the school manages pupils' behaviour very well. Pupils enjoy school and are happy and confident. The school places a high priority on raising pupils' self-esteem and makes it clear that they are valued. As pupils move through the school, they develop increasing independence and respond well to opportunities to take responsibility. By the end of their time in post-16, they are well prepared for the future.

The extent of pupils' learning difficulties and disabilities means that standards are well below the national average but achievement is satisfactory overall and good in some areas. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in communication, in personal, social and health education, in gaining independence skills and in art. The curriculum is matched well to the needs of different groups of pupils. The school is working towards recognition as a Makaton Centre of Excellence and signing is used consistently. Teachers promote pupils' communication skills well and make good use of a range of resources to make new ideas accessible. Satisfactory systems have been put in place for assessing pupils' attainment and they now have annual targets in English, mathematics and science as well as termly targets in their individual education plans. However, not all teachers are yet confident in identifying accurately what pupils can already do and what they need to learn next. Partly as a result, teachers do not make as much use as they should of assessment information when planning lessons to ensure that activities are matched consistently to the next steps in the learning of individual pupils. Although teaching contains a number of good features, it is therefore satisfactory overall.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, with important strengths in some areas. The headteacher and deputy head provide good direction to the school's work, and their strong leadership underpins effective care, guidance and support. Good links have been established with other local schools, which particularly support pupils' social development, and the new accommodation provides a high quality environment at post-16 and in some subject areas. However, long-term absence through illness within the senior team has followed an extended period when leaders' attention was taken up with extensive building work. Both factors have diluted the impact of the senior leadership team's work since the last inspection and slowed the rate of school improvement to satisfactory. There has been substantial improvement in information and communication technology (ICT) and the work of the governing body has been strengthened so that governors now provide good support and challenge. Assessment is much better than it was and the school is now at a stage to begin using and analysing assessment information to judge its own effectiveness and to raise achievement. The staff are all dedicated and work very hard in their efforts to meet pupils' needs. However, self-evaluation is not yet as focused or strategic as it should be. The school's capacity to improve is therefore satisfactory overall.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

The school makes good provision for students at post-16. They are well cared for and make good progress in their personal development. They make significant gains in their sense of self, relate very well with the staff and with each other and become increasingly independent. Resources are often used imaginatively to make learning fun and teamwork is strong. However, teaching is satisfactory overall because teachers do not make enough use of assessment information in their planning. Achievement is good, nevertheless, because students benefit from the breadth of experiences provided within the community and at college. The curriculum is matched well to their needs and places emphasis on preparation for life after school. Although self-evaluation is less developed than it should be, leadership at post-16 is good overall, providing much enthusiasm and a positive climate for learning. This ensures that students are prepared well for the future.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement by ensuring that all teachers assess pupils' attainment accurately and make specific use of assessment information when planning lessons.
- Ensure that self-evaluation is rigorous, including through the analysis of performance data, to provide a clearer picture of what is working well and what needs to be improved.

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: 3

#### Grade for sixth form: 2

Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans and most meet, and some exceed, their individual targets in English, mathematics and science. Pupils do particularly well in art, working in both two and three dimensions, and have good opportunities to work with a range of media and techniques. Pupils make good progress in some lessons and activities broadly meet the needs of different groups of pupils but teaching is not based frequently enough on what individual pupils can already do and on what they need to learn next. The school has gathered some information about how much progress pupils have made over time and this suggests that there is no significant difference between the achievement of different groups of pupils. In lessons, pupils of minority ethnic heritage make similar progress to their peers and where pupils receive specialist support for English as an additional language, they make good progress. All pupils gain accreditation through ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Transition Challenge at Key Stage 4 and Towards Independence at post-16.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

#### Grade for sixth form: 2

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils have positive attitudes, enjoy school and most attend regularly. Behaviour is good. Pupils

develop a good understanding of the importance of healthy living. Older pupils learn to cook healthy meals and pupils throughout the school take part in a wide range of physical activities. They make a good contribution to the community through recycling, collecting for charity, as members of the school council and taking part in school performances. Pupils help to make decisions about how money is spent, for instance, for improving the playground, and they are involved in mini-enterprise projects. Some older pupils are members of the Makaton Peer Tutor Group, where they learn to support others' communication through signing. In the school as a whole, pupils make satisfactory progress in gaining skills in literacy and numeracy and good progress in ICT. At post-16, students gain a range of valuable independence and life skills and become more confident in expressing themselves so that they are well prepared for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Teachers make good use of a range of visual and practical resources to support communication and to make new concepts accessible to pupils. ICT is used well throughout the school to support pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards and pupils who need them have switches or other aids to support their self-expression. Many teachers are skilled in asking questions to get pupils to think and to involve them as active participants in learning. Teachers generally use their teaching assistants well so that they make a significant contribution to pupils' development. However, assessment information is not used consistently when planning lessons even where teaching otherwise contains a lot of good and even outstanding features. This means that teaching and learning are less focused than they should be, despite the many other strengths.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The curriculum is good. It provides pupils with a range of learning opportunities matched well to the needs of different groups and prepares them for taking their place as fully as possible in society. There is appropriately strong emphasis on personal social and health education and a good range of enrichment activities adds to pupils' enjoyment of school. Specialist staff who support pupils for whom English is an additional language make a good contribution to their progress. Music and art remain strong features of the school's work and it has gained a number of awards in the arts and in recognition of its promotion of physical activity and healthy living. Opportunities for accreditation at Key Stage 4 and post-16 meet the needs of most pupils well. The school has introduced a new course for more able students at post-16 and is, rightly, looking to extend accreditation and to provide additional opportunities for them to learn about the world of work.

## Care, guidance and support

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Parents are confident that their children are very well cared for, however, some express concern about the amount of therapy time available to support the physical aspects of their children's development. The school works very closely with speech and language therapists in meeting pupils' communication needs and makes full use of the support that is available to it from other therapists and external agencies. Appropriately robust systems ensure that pupils are safe and well looked after and child protection procedures are well established. Good systems are in place for monitoring attendance and the school does all it can to ensure parents send their children to school regularly. Partnership with parents is good and, in caring for their children, the school goes beyond the call of duty in supporting families. Pupils receive effective guidance as they prepare for leaving school and older pupils are involved in the review of their individual education plans. Systems for tracking pupils' academic progress are satisfactory, based mainly on checking progress towards targets in individual education plans and Annual Reviews.

## Leadership and management

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The headteacher and the deputy head provide good leadership and work well as a team. They are strongly committed to making the school as good as possible and their complementary skills ensure that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. They have worked closely with staff to ensure that targets set annually for pupils are more focused than they were, with identifiable and measurable outcomes. The headteacher and deputy check various aspects of the school's work and other teachers with leadership responsibilities undertake some monitoring. The school improvement plan is better focused than at the time of the last inspection but self-evaluation is not yet contributing as much as it should to school improvement. The recent appointment of an assistant headteacher has gone some way towards strengthening the senior leadership team, although continued absence through illness within the team reduces the amount of support available to teachers at Key Stages 3 and 4. Staff have very good opportunities to increase their skills through training, although the impact of this is not fully evident. Governors now provide good support and challenge the school well: they have established links with subjects and visit the school regularly to collect evidence for themselves.

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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?	3	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?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	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	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
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?	3	3
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

<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>	3	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	3	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
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

03 March 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of St Ann's School, London, W7 3JP

Thank you for making me welcome when I visited your school before half-term. I am writing now to tell you what I found out about the school.

The school is satisfactory and some of its work is good. Most of your parents are pleased with the way it helps you and some of them wrote to say how much you enjoy going to school. I could see that you get on well together and trust the people who work with you. The teachers, teaching assistants and therapists look after you well and they are very good at helping those of you whose behaviour is sometimes difficult. This helps you to stay calm so that you can get on with your work. You are all making good progress in communication and in personal, social and health education, and I was really interested to see the lovely artwork on display. The way everyone uses signing as well as speaking helps you very much. Those of you in the older classes are becoming more independent and learning important skills that will help you later in life and becoming much more confident in those last few years at school.

The headteacher and other staff want to make the school as good as they can for you and I have asked them to:

- help the teachers to be really sure about what you can already do and what you need to learn next
- think even more carefully about what is working best in the school and what could be improved.

I hope you enjoy the rest of your time at St Ann's.

Best wishes

Ms M J Goodchild

Lead Inspector