

# Chatsworth High

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106010
<b>Local Authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	309005
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christine Emerson

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	99
6th form	36
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Alan Bower
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Liz Loftus
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Chatsworth Road Eccles Salford Manchester M30 9DY
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 9211405
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 9211414

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a school for pupils with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. Currently, there are 24 pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties and a further, 17 pupils have an autistic spectrum disorder. All pupils have significant learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and as a consequence standards are very low. Pupils come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. Seven pupils are looked after by the local authority. Almost all pupils are of White British origin. Since the previous inspection, the school has moved to purpose built premises which it shares with a school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. It has recently gained specialist school status for communication and interaction.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school, providing good value for money. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and has a good capacity to improve further. The quality of care, support and guidance which pupils receive and their personal development are outstanding. Relationships with parents and carers are strong and parents value the high-quality individualised support which they report their children receive. For example, one parent observed that, 'a dedicated staff work extremely hard at putting every child first'. Consequently, pupils make very good progress in learning how to make choices to keep themselves safe and healthy. This is recognised by the Healthy School and Healthy Futures Gold awards which the school holds. Pupils enjoy exciting and creative activities such as those provided by the weekly youth group. These enable them to build relationships, keep fit and gain new experiences. Through activities such as enterprise manufacturing schemes and running a healthy snacks shop, pupils gain skills which will be useful in the workplace. The sixth form 'skills week' enables students to acquire a variety of useful practical skills. For example, one student designed how she would like her bedroom to look and learned to hang wallpaper. Pupils make a positive contribution to the local community and are confident to express their voice through the Young Disabled Person's Forum. A particular strength is the school choir which has performed at the Lowry Concert Hall and was invited to help launch the Salford 'Children and Young People's Plan'. Pupils make good progress in learning social skills and in distinguishing right from wrong. This is because all members of staff provide very good guidance to pupils about how to behave well and get along with others. Assemblies are used effectively to celebrate pupils' efforts and to enhance their spiritual development. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well. This is because teaching is good and adapted well to the particular needs of different groups of learners. However, because teachers do not always make it clear what individual pupils are to learn, it is sometimes hard to measure accurately the progress they make in lessons. The curriculum is good. The specialist status of the school is already clearly evident in the very effective promotion of communication and interaction in lessons and other activities. The range of accreditation has developed well since the last inspection and last year, all leavers gained accredited awards.

Although the present senior leadership team are only recently appointed, they have provided a strong steer for the school. For example, they have quickly begun to tackle weaknesses such as the lack of thorough evaluation of how well different groups of pupils are doing. Currently the roles and responsibilities of middle managers are insufficiently clear and this does not allow them to make the most effective use of their posts.

### Effectiveness of the sixth form

#### Grade: 2

The sixth form is well led and managed even though the parameters of the new post still have not been clearly established. A good curriculum is in place. The teacher works effectively to form links with other agencies and seek new opportunities for the students. For example, she has arranged to rent an allotment and developed useful links with a neighbouring garden centre, in order to provide students with both practical and employment opportunities. Students are encouraged to take responsibility and there is a very strong focus on developing life skills such as learning to travel independently. Consequently, their personal development is outstanding

and they become confident young adults. Students make good progress in their learning and achieve well because teaching is good. The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Procedures to support students' transition to college are very good. For example, a large number of service providers attend the 'Chatsworth High School Futures' event where parents can sample what is on offer beyond school.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that information gained from assessments is carefully evaluated to show the progress made by each pupil and different groups of pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of middle managers by clarifying their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure that all teachers make it clear what individual pupils are to learn during lessons.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Pupils throughout the school make good progress and achieve well in literacy, numeracy and personal, social and health education. Pupils' achievements in writing have improved since the last inspection because they are given plenty of opportunities to practise recording their work. Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties move forward in very small steps, but these represent good progress. The school's newly acquired specialist status is already impacting on pupils' progress. The focus on communication and interaction, which permeates all lessons, is very effective in developing pupils' confidence and skills to communicate using spoken language, symbols or signing. Consequently, pupils, including those with autistic spectrum disorders, make particularly good progress in speaking and listening. Last year, all Year 11 pupils gained external accreditation for units of their work and/or through a life skills programme 'First Steps in Broadcasting'. In 2007, all students leaving the sixth form gained accreditation through the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network Transition Challenge Award.

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

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

Pupils' attendance is good because they really enjoy coming to school. There have been no exclusions and pupils say that there is never any bullying. Pupils' behaviour is excellent both in lessons and when they go out to do other activities. They try very hard to produce good work and have very good relationships with staff. During the inspection, there were many examples of pupils showing care and kindness to pupils who were younger or less able than themselves. Pupils are confident to express their opinions. The school council is active and its members are proud of the changes they have made, such as improving the lunch menus. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a variety of opportunities to learn about the lives of people from different cultural backgrounds. Spiritual development is enhanced by the uplifting assemblies delivered with the support of the Bridge project, which is an outreach project from a local church.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Teaching is good overall with some outstanding practice. Teachers and support staff work very effectively together to provide very good individual support for pupils. This means that all pupils, irrespective of their disabilities, are fully included in lessons and make good progress. Staff are particularly skilled at using visual aids, signing and symbols to engage pupils and to support them to improve their communication skills. Teaching strategies are well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils; for example, staff ensure that pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are given sufficient time to respond. However, not all teachers make it clear what individual pupils are to learn during lessons and as a result the progress made by pupils during lessons is not always measurable.

### Curriculum and other activities

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The curriculum is adapted effectively to meet the needs of all groups of pupils. For example, in the classes for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, the low distraction environment and structured routines enable the pupils to focus well and make good progress. Since the previous inspection, the school has adopted a secondary model of curriculum delivery, where pupils are taught different subjects in specialist rooms by specialist teachers. This works well as it makes learning more interesting. The curriculum is enlivened through creative subjects such as art and drama, and the school is a lead school for Creative Partnerships. There is a strong programme for personal, social and health education which promotes pupils' independent living skills well. Good links with other schools provide opportunities for pupils to gain confidence through working in different settings. Pupils enjoy the after-school clubs and residential visits. Although the new building offers a very pleasant learning environment, facilities for outdoor play are limited and shared with another special school. This restricts the time available for play, particularly the use of large equipment.

### Care, guidance and support

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Systems to ensure pupils' health and safety are well established. For example, child protection procedures are fully in place. Staff are very sensitive to the care needs of pupils with more complex difficulties. Particularly vulnerable pupils are supported very well as a result of the strong links with health workers and a variety of agencies. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the support their children are given and how well communication is promoted throughout the school. There are good strategies in place to help pupils to learn to manage their own behaviour. Pupils are involved well in setting and reviewing their own targets. However, the information gained from assessments is not evaluated well enough in order to show the progress made by each pupil and different groups of pupils. The school has introduced effective

strategies such as a peer mentoring system, where older pupils support younger pupils, to improve pupils' academic progress.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The newly appointed senior leadership team, ably led by the acting headteacher, has moved the school forward at a cracking pace in the short time that it has been in post. The team has prepared an effective development plan which accurately identifies key priorities, such as the need to monitor more carefully the progress of different groups of pupils. The additional resources attracted by the school's specialist status are being well deployed to raise achievement. Teaching and the curriculum are properly monitored and the leadership team has a very accurate understanding of the quality of teaching throughout the school. Although middle managers are competent and enthusiastic, their impact is reduced because their roles and responsibilities are not defined clearly enough. Governors are experienced and committed. They have been effective in supporting school development, particularly in improving the accommodation.

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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	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	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	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
The behaviour of learners	2	
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?	1	1

<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>	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**

Inspection of Chatsworth High School, Chatsworth Road, Eccles, Salford, M30 9DY

I know that some of you find reading difficult, so your teachers will tell you about this letter. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school. I enjoyed finding out about the things you are doing and talking to you. It was very useful to know what you think about your school.

Your parents and carers think you go to a good school and I agree with them.

There are some things that are really good about your school:

- your very good behaviour and the way you help each other and your teachers
- the excellent care and support which you are given so that you feel safe and can do well
- the fun activities which you enjoy such as singing in the choir and going on residential trips
- the really good progress which you make in learning to communicate what you think.

All of this is possible because the staff do a good job and try their best to make the school as good as they can for you.

I have asked your teachers to improve three things to make your school even better:

- to work out exactly how much progress you are all making
- to sort out what jobs different teachers have to do
- to make sure that teachers know exactly what they want each of you to achieve in lessons.

I hope you carry on enjoying what you are doing and continue to help your teachers all you can.