

St Anne's Community Special School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118145
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	312820
Inspection dates	31 October –1 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	2–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	73
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Cassidy
Headteacher	Mr Mike Stubbins
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2005
School address	St Helen's Drive Welton Brough HU15 1NR
Telephone number	01482 667379
Fax number	01482 334691

Age group	2-16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities serves a large area of the East Riding of Yorkshire. All pupils in the school have, or are being assessed for, a statement of special educational need which reflects either their profound and multiple learning difficulties, or their severe learning difficulties. A small proportion of pupils are looked after by the local authority, and almost all pupils are from a White British background. Boys outnumber girls by more than two to one. The school has an attached residence which provides 24 places for up to 48 weeks per year. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award and the Sportsmark Gold Award.

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. It judges its own effectiveness to be good and it is correct in that evaluation. It provides good value for money.

This is an inclusive school that makes great efforts to ensure that the care and support provided for pupils is of the highest quality. This high quality has been maintained despite recent difficulties caused by flooding and staff illness. Teachers and other adults know their pupils well. Relationships are excellent. The headteacher is an excellent role model in building these relationships and he is a key figure in the lives of the pupils. Despite the very good efforts of all staff in making improvements, the perennial limitations of the school's accommodation still adversely affects aspects of its work, such as movement around school and when there are large numbers in cramped classrooms. Residential accommodation is suitable in meeting the needs of all pupils and this contributes to the effectiveness of boarding provision which is also good.

The pupils' achievement is good and they make good progress. The school sets challenging individual targets which stretch most pupils to the limits of what they know and can do. This stimulates their interest and motivation.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils attend well and say that they like being in school where they feel safe and secure. Because of the strong and successful focus on improving pupils' communication skills, their self-esteem rises quickly and this ensures that attitudes to learning are positive. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to work and play together in groups, and pupils respect each other and the adults in the school well. Some pupils who present challenging behaviours are not always effectively managed and, as the school acknowledges in its self-evaluation, this sometimes interferes with the development of others. Pupils are well prepared for moving on to the next phase of their lives.

Teaching and learning are good. Dedicated, enthusiastic and committed teachers have the complete confidence and trust of the pupils. Good work is always celebrated. Learning is best when teachers have high expectations of their pupils and use assessment information well to plan activities for pupils to work independently on tasks which make them think for themselves. Pupils respond well to the challenges they are set and generally make good progress in most lessons. Occasionally, work is set which does not match closely enough the learning needs of all pupils.

The curriculum is good. Statutory requirements are met. A consistently strong focus on developing communication skills helps to build pupils confidence and gives them access to wider learning. Pupils say they enjoy the wide range of subjects they cover. Excellent links with local schools and colleges enables pupils to study art and design and, design and technology. The range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities is good, although some have yet to show their full impact on pupils' learning because they are new.

Care guidance and support are good. Safeguarding procedures are applied rigorously, and promote a safe environment. The school has an excellent assessment system for measuring, recording and tracking the progress pupils are making. The information this system generates is accurate, up to date, and reliable. It is not used consistently throughout the school to plan teaching to meet the needs of all pupils. When this occurs, pupils' progress in lessons is slower.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, whilst maintaining a focus on continuous improvement, has successfully created an inclusive, safe, happy and positive environment where the needs of the pupils come first. All adults subscribe wholeheartedly to this philosophy. Parents' views about the school are overwhelmingly positive, typified by the comment, 'My son has made brilliant progress, and I am extremely pleased with the school'. Not all leaders are involved in regular monitoring of learning so opportunities to improve practice further are sometimes missed. The school has addressed issues raised at the last inspection well. Capacity to improve is good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is good. It is well led and managed. Because assessment is reliable and relentless, the school quickly builds a clear picture of each child's needs. This ensures that learning is good, because the teaching closely meets children's needs. Children achieve well and make good progress in all areas of learning, especially in their personal and social development. Accommodation is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use information on pupils' performance consistently when planning teaching and learning activities.
- Increase the effectiveness of monitoring by involving all leaders in the evaluation of pupils' learning.
- Reassess the use of the accommodation to minimise any adverse affects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement throughout the school is good. All groups of pupils, whatever their learning difficulty and/or disability, usually meet their challenging targets. These are derived from detailed and reliable assessments. Pupils make particularly good progress in developing their communication skills, including the use of sign language. This builds their self-confidence and allows them to access, explore and enjoy wider social and learning contexts. Pupils become more confident conveying their thoughts and ideas through music and art and design; selecting and buying food to prepare and share with their peers; and being able to use their numeracy skills across a range of subjects. Pupils of different ages achieve well in social interactions with local primary schools, secondary schools and colleges. A well-balanced programme of physical education ensures good progress in developing physical skills and keeping healthy. Since the last inspection, pupils have begun to gain external qualifications such as those offered by the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network and Entry Level GCSEs. Because of pupils' significant learning difficulties and/or disabilities, comparisons with national standards are inappropriate.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They enjoy coming to school and this is clearly apparent on their smiling faces as they arrive in the morning. Their behaviour is generally good, and most respond well to the school's positive approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Attendance is good even when unavoidable absence due to illness is included. Pupils'

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The opportunities presented by living together in the residence, by eating together in the dining room and the residence, and playing together in the social and the play areas, ensures that their social development is excellent. Pupils understand about eating healthily, as shown by the selection of fruit and vegetables chosen from the local market. They enjoy and enthusiastically engage in the wide range of physical activity the school provides. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe, as they showed in a role play activity on learning when to say 'no' to something they do not like or understand. They make a good contribution to the community through their enthusiastic work on the school council. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their development by working with local commercial organisations, undertaking work experience, and sharing collaborative work with local schools and colleges.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Very positive relationships between adults and pupils are strong features throughout the school. This usually ensures that challenging behaviour is minimised and effectively managed. Typically, teaching challenges pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. In most lessons, teachers make good use of assessment information to ensure that tasks set are neither too easy, nor too hard. This sustains pupils' interest; they respond well and make good progress. Experienced teaching assistants work confidently and make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. Occasionally, work is set which does not match closely enough the learning needs of all pupils because the accurate assessment information is not used well enough to inform planning and teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are too low. This causes progress to be satisfactory rather than good. Well founded recent investments in information and communication technology resources and staff training have yet to show their full impact on pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. A flexible approach to planning ensures that it is relevant and delivered through a broad range of individual, small group or whole class activities. The very strong focus throughout the school on improving pupils' communication skills increasingly allows them to access a wider curriculum. This is strengthened by excellent links with local primary and secondary schools, colleges, and excitingly, through developing international links. A good range of visitors and performers enhance pupils' direct learning experiences, particularly in music and art. These bring the curriculum to life, and have helped four pupils gain nationally recognised qualifications in art in the last two years

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Child protection procedures and arrangement for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements throughout the school and residence. Systems to ensure the health and safety of pupils both in school and on visits are securely in place and checked regularly. Excellent caring relationships and a very strong commitment to the pastoral care of all pupils has created an environment in which pupils flourish. Excellent links with other agencies ensure that the specific healthcare

and other personal needs of pupils are addressed. The school has an excellent system for measuring and tracking pupils' progress. The information generated enables the school to set high, but realistic personal targets for every pupil. These targets are presented in priority order for each individual in their education plan. However, this highly detailed information is not always used well enough to plan work in lessons.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Leaders and managers are clear about their roles and responsibilities, they know the school well and their self-evaluation is accurate. The headteacher's personal determination to provide the school's vulnerable pupils with a secure environment in which they can learn to communicate and develop as happy and confident individuals is successful. He has good support from other leaders who share his vision of helping every pupil to achieve well in this very inclusive school. Dedicated adults in the school make appropriate early interventions when pupils are unhappy or have a concern. The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis. Though some accommodation in porta-cabins and separated buildings still presents a barrier to learning, senior leaders and other staff have made concerted efforts to ensure that, despite the difficulties, all pupils continue to be challenged and make good progress. Leaders at all levels readily acknowledge that monitoring and evaluation of learning is not done regularly enough to ensure that pupils are always enabled to learn and fully challenged. Governance is satisfactory. The governors, most of whom have been, or are, parents of children in the school, give very generously of their time and support the school well.

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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?	2
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	2

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	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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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?	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
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
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

2 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Anne's Community Special School, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU15 1NR

As you know, my colleague Mr Byrne and I visited your school last week. We were very impressed with the welcome you gave us and with the way everybody in the school gets on so well with each other. This is what we found out.

St Anne's provides a good education for you. Your headteacher leads the school well and makes sure that everyone works as a team, putting your interests first. As a result, you all get a good education. Every adult in the school takes very good care of you and makes sure that you are safe and happy. We could see this for ourselves as you entered school in the mornings with smiles on your faces. You told us that there is always someone there to help when needed. We found that the very strong efforts the school makes to ensure that you can express your thoughts and feelings are successful.

We also found that you are encouraged to be healthy, you eat well and you take plenty of exercise. The school provides a good range of activities, especially in art and music, which help you learn well and to be prepared for the next stage of your lives. Your teachers know accurately the things you are good at and also where you are having difficulty. This means they can help you to make good progress.

However, even though we believe that yours is a good school, we also believe that you could learn even more than you already do. So, to ensure that this happens, your school is going to:

- ensure that the work you are set in lessons consistently challenges you more, and encourages you to work on your own
- regularly check that you are all making as much progress as you possibly can in all areas of learning
- look at ways to overcome the difficulties with the accommodation.

Please continue to play your part in making St Anne's a good school. Keep working hard in lessons and keep enjoying being in school. Good luck to you all for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry McDermott

Lead inspector