

Childrens Hospital School at Great Ormond Street and UCH

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100060
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	323221
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Lynne Kauffman

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	5–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	104
Sixth form	1
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Fane
Headteacher	Mrs Yvonne Hill
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Great Ormond Street GOS Hospital for Children London WC1N 3JH

Age group	5–19
Inspection dates	11–12 March 2009
Inspection number	323221

Telephone number
Fax number

020 7813 8269
020 7813 8269

Age group	5-19
Inspection dates	11-12 March 2009
Inspection number	323221

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The Children's Hospital School at Great Ormond Street (GOSH) and University College Hospital (UCH) is a foundation special school. The school's management and governors have responsibility for education on both sites. The roll varies, sometimes on a daily basis. The school can serve over 1,500 children per annum with complex and often life-threatening medical problems. Each child is unique in his or her educational and medical needs. Pupils join the school with a wide variety of abilities from those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to those who are gifted or talented. The school has gained numerous awards such as Camden OSCA for Outstanding Service to the Community and the Healthy School Award.

Given the small numbers of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the unique situation, the school is seeking exemption from the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The Children's Hospital School at Great Ormond Street and UCH has an international reputation for excellence in both education and care. The school admits pupils from all over the world with very complex medical problems. This outstanding school offers a stimulating, caring, supportive and positive learning environment.

The high-quality collaboration of the senior management team, the governing body and both hospitals encourages pupils to thrive during a time of worrying health concerns. One parent explained, 'It is school that keeps my daughter going forward through all her troubles.' Parents are overwhelming in their praise for the school because it supports the whole family. When families travel distances to the hospital and their child has prolonged treatment, siblings are offered time in the school. With this in mind, the school continues to support the GOSH Trust's initiative to develop the accommodation and to include a children's centre to meet the needs of younger patients and their families.

Personal development and well-being are exceptional. Pupils' optimistic attitudes to their school and their peers make it a warm and nurturing environment, where they feel safe. One carer expressed this so well when she said, 'The love from the staff in this school is what makes our children flourish.' Pupils enjoy their time in the hospital school because of the variety of activities and effective staff support. They improve their understanding of the wider world and economic understanding by using the internet on their computers and enjoying the many visitors to the school. Pupils work together well and gain confidence through working in a harmonious atmosphere. Pupils enjoy the school's high-profile reputation that makes it a magnet for personalities wishing to give their services to the school; a famous illustrator, for example, designed the school logo.

The detailed information the school maintains on pupils is a significant element in its success. This helps ensure the continuity of learning between the home school and the hospital school. Pupils' personalised learning pathways are planned meticulously because all staff have quick access to their current records on the database and provision is consequently kept up to date. The school is working on further information and communication technology (ICT) to provide even greater independent learning opportunities for pupils with the most complex needs.

A rich range of visiting experts in drama, art, music, food studies and physical education contributes to an excellent, broad and balanced curriculum. Exciting projects support pupils' confidence and self-esteem very well. The effective monitoring of excellent, well-planned and personalised teaching and learning ensures standards achieved in the home school are improved while pupils attend the hospital school. The high-quality and sensitive care, guidance and support for pupils extend to their families, which has a huge impact on pupils' self-worth and their families' confidence in the work of the school. The school's and hospital's mission, 'The Child First and Always', encapsulates the ethos of the school and supports its excellent drive and capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The school rarely supports more than one sixth form student at a time, but records show that progress is generally excellent. Typically, students achieve exceptionally well and maintain average standards. The school's information database on all pupils gives equal attention to any

sixth form students. The level of individual academic guidance and support, coupled with the pastoral care provided, helps ensure that care, guidance and support are excellent overall. On a daily basis the adults very effectively review the individual needs of the students and plan accordingly. Leadership and management are the same as for other pupil groups.

Information on students' learning needs is collected through very effective links with the student's home school. Such information includes work forwarded from the home school. Teachers then use this work effectively to set challenging and relevant work for the students. This close cooperation with the home school ensures that collaborative planning maintains students' progress towards their examination courses. The curriculum for each individual is consequently delivered well.

No sixth form teaching could be observed on this visit.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

There are few long-stay Early Years Foundation Stage pupils. Those children that attend have their care and welfare needs extremely well met. Daily handover meetings enable the staff to tailor the curriculum to individual needs very effectively. Strong relationships exist between children and adults and consequently personal development of the children is outstanding.

Teachers' planning gives good attention to the special needs of this group of pupils and excellent progress is made across all areas of learning. Lively and inspiring teaching builds pupils' confidence, which has a direct impact on their outstanding achievement. The staff continually use the school's information database to keep the provision relevant and up to date, and the children are challenged accordingly.

What the school should do to improve further

- Persist in improving the accommodation and develop thinking towards a children and family centre.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievements are outstanding because of the excellent education, care and support they receive. Standards attained are understandably only satisfactory, because the school provides only temporary support while pupils are inpatients at the hospital. Detailed tracking of progress ensures standards improve for the short time pupils attend the hospital school. The school is confident that pupils make outstanding progress because the records kept are very detailed and ensure each pupil's unique needs are met and tracked through clear targets. Liaison with medical staff on the wards, and contact with the home school and pupils' families daily ensure a match between teaching and individual needs. Longer-stay pupils have a personal education plan to guide their time in the school. The overwhelming majority meet the challenges set by their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. The school aims to make pupils' lives as 'normal' as possible. Despite pupils often being in pain and having constant medical treatment,

they understand healthy living. Many enjoy the exercise and friendly competition from their 'Chance to Shine' physical education programme. Those confined to bed manage to keep up some gentle physical exercise. Pupils cope well with a wide range of acute emotional difficulties. One mother explained, 'My child has confidence to confide in his teachers, something he has not done before.' Pupils value each other's cultural differences and friendships are strong. Attendance is dependent on each pupil's daily medical need and the school does all it can to encourage pupils to attend, even when it means bringing mobility aids to the schoolroom. Good opportunities for small-group discussion help pupils to develop good social skills. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. Opportunities for spiritual reflection and empathy are frequent in the schoolroom. When the snow arrived earlier in the year, the awe and wonder of their first experience of snow prompted the pupils to produce a wonderful snow frieze. Social, moral and cultural development is strongly promoted throughout the day - pupils respond well to the superb staff role models.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers' excellent planning produces a bespoke programme for each pupil that contributes to their outstanding development. In addition, the good and often outstanding lessons provide inspiring chances for learning throughout the day so that not a moment is wasted. Bedside learning is a challenge to staff; most pupils enjoy these one-to-one opportunities to develop their studies. However, there is some variability in the way teachers identify learning outcomes for bedside teaching. Small-group work in the schoolroom is a real strength. The school uses a dynamic group of external professionals to inspire art, drama, music, food studies and physical education. The challenge and stimulation of their work has an immediate impact on pupils who may previously have found communication very difficult. The core areas of English, mathematics and science are taught well. Teachers have lively approaches to learning and use a wide range of styles to enthuse and challenge learners. Pupils not only clarify their misunderstandings as a result but also develop a thirst for more knowledge.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The very well-considered curriculum ensures a happy balance between basic skills and exceptional cross-curricular activities. The school takes great care to match pupils' individual plans to that of the home school curriculum. There is a very wide range of enrichment activities with art and ICT providing imaginative links to the outside world. A celebrity visit to one of the girls was a thrill that had a tremendous impact on her positive attitude to life. Pupils enjoy the practical activities planned in English, mathematics and ICT. The school's displays are a testimony to the breadth of experience offered to pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

There is exceptional provision for pupils' care and guidance. The school's safe, supportive ethos and excellent relationships with a wide range of health professionals effectively emphasise pupils' dignity and self-esteem. The child protection procedures are rigorous, annually reviewed and monitored closely by a lead professional who is part of the governing body. Risk assessments

are updated very regularly. Inclusion is a priority in the school. All staff have a high level of commitment to quality, assuring all systems and procedures to maintain constant reflection on inclusion. Monitoring pupils' progress has developed over the past two years and presents an outstanding approach to monitoring and challenging all pupils. Comprehensive monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development covers all aspects of the child's life and development, both in and out of school. Active use of the school's information database in handover meetings, multi-professional meetings and lesson-planning has a significant impact on learners and effectively monitors development of the school's transient population. The school's very detailed records of pupils' progress translate effectively into reports for parents that keep them well informed about their child's progress. The school makes good provision for pupils experiencing mental health problems. Careful monitoring ensures these pupils pose no risk to other pupils or staff.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership, management and governance are outstanding. The charismatic headteacher drives school development through demanding, yet responsive leadership. The energetic and dedicated management team has very clear lines of accountability and this supports the quality of the work of the highly committed staff. The Children's Hospital School at Great Ormond Street and UCH is an extremely thoughtful and reflective school. Nothing happens without consultation that involves all the stakeholders. The resulting analytical self-evaluation tracks the school's development effectively. This helps to map the school's future direction through a well-conceived development plan, operating within a tight financial structure and challenging the school to improve. The school recently passed its Financial Management Systems in Schools audit, showing very good value for money.

Points for action from earlier inspections have been successfully addressed; however, the school is still unable to solve the issue of the restricted accommodation, which does not allow for the development of provision such as a children and family centre. Effective monitoring of performance management has developed over the past two years and restructured staff responsibilities are a better match to the school's needs. An example of this development is the introduction of the role of PLOs (Pupil Liaison Officers). These roles provide a vital link to pupils' home schools, their parents and the hospital. The PLOs' role is central at all handover meetings at the start of every day; at this point pupils' needs and any concerns are highlighted, before assigning key workers to each child.

The first class strategic development work of the governing body rigorously holds the school to account. The governors' tight committee structures and regular visits to the school ensure they have precise knowledge to enable them to ask effective questions of the leadership team in all aspects of the school's work.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
---	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1	
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1	
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1	
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1	
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1	
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1	

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

²IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	IE ²
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
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	1	

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

25 March 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Childrens Hospital School at Great Ormond Street and UCH, London, WC1N 3JH

Recently I came to your school to see how you were getting on and whether I could suggest anything to make the school better. You made me feel very welcome, and I enjoyed meeting you in your classroom and on the wards, especially seeing some of the wonderful artwork you were completing. Congratulations on your work! I could see that you enjoyed school and I agree with your parents and your many visitors that your school is outstanding. Here is a list of the things that I particularly liked on my visit.

- You work hard and make excellent progress.
- The many special people in your school and on the hospital wards look after you very well.
- You do many interesting things that help you to keep up with studies in your home schools, so that you do not get behind with your work.
- All adults who work with you give such interesting topics to cover, for example felt-making in art and working with the Chance to Shine team in PE.
- Your headteacher, the senior management team and the governors run the school very well, so you all have the chance to do your best.
- Your parents and carers give the school excellent support.

The school could improve even further if there was the opportunity to increase the rooms and spaces where you work.

Please thank your parents and carers for all their comments on the questionnaires and especially your parents who came to speak to me.

Best wishes to you all.

Yours faithfully

Lynne Kauffman

Lead Inspector