

Hatton School and Special Needs Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102881
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	323706
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2009
Reporting inspector	James Bowden

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	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	130
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	Ms Caroline Ruben
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Blows
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Roding Lane South Woodford Green IG8 8EU
Telephone number	020 8551 4131

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2009
Inspection number	323706

Fax number

020 8503 9066

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school provides for pupils who have moderate or severe learning difficulties, speech, language and communication needs. It also caters for an increasing number of pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders - now almost two thirds of the pupils. Class groupings are based on dominant individual learning needs. All pupils, including those in the Nursery and Reception classes, follow a modified National Curriculum. The school and centre also have an outreach service, supporting 312 pupils in mainstream primary schools across the borough.

Currently, there are four times as many boys as girls. Approximately a fifth are from White British backgrounds, a third are of Asian origin and a quarter of Black British, African and Caribbean heritage. The remainder come from a range of different cultural heritages, reflecting the make-up of the borough. Approximately two thirds are at the early stages of learning English. There are a few pupils who are from refugee or asylum seeking families. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Approximately a third of these are for moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication needs.

The school and centre is subject to reorganisation proposals, which will extend the role of the outreach service. It gained Healthy School Status in July 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school and centre has built successfully on the strengths identified at the last inspection. It now provides an outstanding quality of education in both the Early Years Foundation Stage and the rest of the school. It fully meets its core aim of creating a safe, happy place where pupils develop their independent learning skills and increasingly gain the confidence to try new things. A particular strength is the progress pupils make in developing their communication skills, which in turn leads to improved behaviour and learning. Underpinning this is the highly effective and proactive leadership of the headteacher and her senior leadership team. There is a continuing focus on improvement through promoting learning and progress across the school. A further strength is the highly effective collaborative approach of staff who have specific expertise working at the school. This contributes significantly to pupils' personal development and well-being, enhances the quality of their learning experience, and supports particularly well their transition to the next stage of their education.

The outreach service is particularly effective and is valued highly by the mainstream schools it serves, both in terms of support for individual pupils as well as for staff. As a result of this, many pupils with learning difficulties are enabled to make good progress in their mainstream schools.

A strong culture of communication, collaboration and cooperation between home and school ensures parents are involved fully in, and kept informed of, the progress their child makes. Expressing the sentiments of many others, one commented, 'Our child will be leaving Hatton in one week and it will be a very sad time for us all. He is a changed child who has developed so much since attending the school. The staff are fantastic and have worked with us all the way'.

Pupils' achievement is outstanding because of the all-round education, therapy and support package offered. Attainment on entry is low compared to the national picture because of pupils' special needs. Nevertheless, the progress they make in relation to their starting points is excellent. The highly effective use of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) across the school enables pupils to make excellent progress in developing their communication skills.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including the spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural aspects, are excellent. On arrival at the start of the day, they are happy to be at school, with many smiling faces, positive comments and clear recognition of the adults who meet and greet them. Older pupils told the inspector that they get on well together in the school, have lots of interesting work to do and that 'teachers know lots of things'. Elections for the school council, the work of the council itself and an annual 'voting day' are particularly effective in enabling pupils to be involved in the life of the school, as well as being listened to. In lessons, they persevere and apply themselves very well, rising to the challenge offered by teaching. Pupils' progress in improving their key skills, prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Teaching and learning throughout the school are outstanding. Teachers plan their lessons to ensure the individual needs of pupils are met fully. A highly effective ethos for learning ensures that pupils make the best possible progress in lessons. All adults in the room are deployed effectively to ensure that all pupils receive support appropriate to their needs. They provide effective and positive praise and encouragement, which at the same time is not over-effusive.

The outstanding curriculum fully meets the needs of all pupils because it underpins the focus on improving communication skills, learning, independence and good behaviour. The quality of care, guidance and support across the school is a significant strength. Each pupil, including the most vulnerable, is supported in very specific ways, their progress carefully monitored, evaluated and tracked, and their personal targets reviewed regularly. This informs future strategies for learning. Nevertheless, procedures for tracking the progress made by pupils towards their individual and specific targets could be even more effective and, as a result, help them do even better.

Leadership and management at all levels are outstanding, which has enabled the school to build even further on the strengths identified at the last inspection. Improvement planning, including strengthening further the quality of teaching and learning, is highly focused as a result of effective self-evaluation. Excellent liaison and collaboration between staff ensures that every pupil really does matter, and therefore makes excellent progress. The governing body supports the work of the school well. In light of the vision and the clear direction for improvement set by the headteacher and her senior leadership team, and success in enabling all pupils to make outstanding progress, the school has excellent capacity to improve even further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The school has adopted the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance particularly well to meet the needs of its children. At the heart of this outstanding provision are the initial in-depth assessments that inform the individual programmes for each child. This then includes diligent tracking of their progress towards the goals set for children of that age. The carefully integrated therapies and learning activities enable children to make excellent progress; so much so, that a few have been able to return to mainstream provision. A parent commenting specifically about the Early Years Foundation Stage wrote, 'My child has developed some important skills at Hatton and now can cope with turn-taking, makes requests and is extremely happy'. All staff collaborate exceptionally well to provide a stimulating indoor and outdoor environment, including the use of the school's sensory garden and specialist indoor sensory rooms. Resources, including the highly effective use of information and communication technology (ICT), are exciting and motivate children to respond to external stimuli and improve their communication skills. Leadership and management are highly effective and focused.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen procedures for tracking pupils' progress towards the specific targets set for them in order to help them do even better.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

On entry, pupils operate at P levels - levels that are below the standard National Curriculum levels in schools. Although standards remain below the national average, this reflects the learning difficulties faced by pupils. Nevertheless, as they move through the school, they make excellent progress, particularly in literacy, numeracy and ICT. This is a result of carefully planned individualised learning programmes and the focus on improving communication skills. A few of the more able pupils progress to working at Levels 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum by

the time they are ready to leave. There is no significant difference in achievement between any of the different groups of special educational need, ethnicity or gender.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

All pupils make excellent progress towards the challenging targets set in relation to their personal development. In a lesson for pupils who have difficulties on the autistic spectrum, while the learning focus was on improving their number skills, there was much individual reinforcement in relation to targets for social skills such as waiting, listening and taking turns. Pupils are enabled to eat healthily and participate in a wide range of physical activities, including a residential activity, which has been recognised by the Healthy School Status award. Attendance is good. While some pupils may become a little frustrated due to their communication difficulties, they respond well to sensitive interventions from adults. A calm and purposeful atmosphere is the norm in lessons and behaviour is excellent. Pupils take turns, fulfil different roles and show an awareness and appreciation of each other's achievements. This was particularly evident, for example, in a class rehearsal for a forthcoming assembly they were due to be involved in.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers and other adults working in the room know their pupils well and are sensitive in their interventions and support. In a physical education lesson, for example, a pupil who lacked confidence in crossing low-level apparatus was supported exceptionally well. Because the teaching assistant modelled clearly the required task and joined the pupil on the apparatus, the pupil's confidence grew and the task was accomplished successfully. Teachers and other adults in the room model good teamwork and positive relationships for pupils. Carefully integrated classroom therapy and withdrawal support also contributes well to the excellent progress made by pupils. A broad range of creative activities are used to support progress in key skills as well as pupils' personal development and social skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

All pupils follow the National Curriculum, which is adapted to meet their particular learning needs and includes a wide range of specialist activities. Schemes of work and monitoring by leaders ensure that teachers' planning is thorough and supports individualised learning. The curriculum is highly effective in supporting pupils' personal and academic development. Extensive enrichment activities, both onsite and offsite, and a comprehensive personal, social, health and citizenship programme contribute highly to the breadth of pupils' experience. Pupils are also enabled to develop their understanding and awareness about the lives and faiths of other people through visits to the local community and beyond, as well as through visitors to the school. They also benefit from purposeful and guided recreation opportunities at lunchtimes, as well as the opportunity to attend clubs, including after school and during school holidays.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's outstanding ethos of care ensures pupils' well-being is at the forefront of its work. Excellent systems and procedures ensure all pupils are looked after in a safe, healthy and caring environment, and that they develop their personal qualities and make excellent progress in their learning. Immediately they arrive at school and leave the buses, learning time begins. The dedication, enthusiasm and commitment of all staff in working with pupils underpin this aspect of the school's provision. Highly effective relationships with other professionals contribute extensively. Absence has been reduced as a result of the school's hard work to maintain good attendance and meet the local authority's targets. The carefully managed individualised programme of annual reviews across the school supports pupils' transitions to the next stage of their education very well. Nevertheless, the school could be even more effective in its tracking of pupils' progress towards their individual targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Senior leaders and those with other posts of responsibility share and promote the headteacher's vision for continuing improvement. This ensures all pupils achieve their best, improve their communication skills and develop their independence and personal skills. Staff too are supported very effectively through the provision of opportunities for continuing professional development. The school contributes significantly to promoting community cohesion both within the school and beyond. Planning for this is embedded very well throughout the curriculum, including assemblies, and whole-school development planning. The governing body is effective in its role as a supportive and critical friend of the school, particularly in relation to resources and improvements of provision in this respect.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	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
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
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	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 learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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
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	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

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

03 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hatton School and Special Needs Centre, Woodford Green, IG8 8EU

Shortly before the start of your summer holidays, I spent two days at the school to find out how well you were doing. I know this is a long time ago but I hope some of you may remember me. This letter is to tell you about what I found. I was very pleased with how happy you all seemed to be and how well you behaved. In a meeting with me, a small group of you told me that the school was a good place to be. I agree, but I think your school is even better than that. It is an excellent place to be!

This is because:

- you all make excellent progress
- your parents are very happy with the school
- the headteacher and all the staff look after you really well
- teachers make sure your lessons are interesting and fun
- teachers make sure you improve your skills
- the school makes sure you have lots of exciting things to do
- you are safe and well cared for.

I think the school could be even better if:

- the teachers made even better use of the information they have on how well you do.

Thank you all very much. I had a really good time at the school during my two-day visit. I wish you all good luck for your future.

Yours faithfully

James Bowden

Lead Inspector