

# Blanche Nevile School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102175
<b>Local Authority</b>	Haringey
<b>Inspection number</b>	335852
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stuart Charlton

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>	3–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	69
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	2
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Judy Downey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Veronica Held and Sarah McLay (joint acting headteachers)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 March 2010
<b>School address</b>	Admin and Secondary Department London N10 1NJ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Just over half of the inspection time was spent looking at learning and all teachers were observed. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with the chair and vice chair of the governing body, the School Improvement Partner, staff and pupils. The work of the school was observed and the inspectors scrutinised the improvement plan, the minutes of the leadership team and governing body meetings, a range of other documentation and 30 questionnaires from parents and carers. The questionnaires of fifty pupils were considered.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of leaders and managers, particularly the governing body and the deputy headteachers, in the light of the split site situation
- the impact of the systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning
- the extent to which the curriculum provides a balance between meeting pupils' specific needs and their entitlement to an appropriate mix of academic, vocational and work-related provision, particularly for those in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form
- the systems to set and track targets for all pupils to determine if these are sufficiently focused and challenging to ensure that all make the progress of which they are capable.

## Information about the school

Blanche Nevile provides education for deaf pupils, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs or are in the process of being assessed for one. All have associated delay in language and communication development and are at the early stages of English language acquisition. Pupils come from Haringey and local authorities in and around London. The vast majority of pupils live at a distance from the school and travel by local authority managed transport until they become independent travellers. Pupils are from a range of ethnic backgrounds, the main groups represented being White, Asian and Black-African. Over half the pupils are from families who do not speak English at home. The primary department works in partnership with Highgate Primary School and is based on that site. The secondary department is based on the same site as, and works in partnership with, Fortismere Secondary School. Each site is run on a day-to-day basis by a deputy headteacher. At the time of the inspection, the deputy headteachers for each site were joint acting headteachers. The school holds the Healthy Schools award and the Sports and Active mark. There were four children in the Early Years Foundation Stage taught in the joint Nursery/Reception class. Two sixth-form students were dual-rolled with Fortismere School and receiving all their teaching in that school with support from Blanche Nevile staff.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

Blanche Nevile school provides good education for its pupils. The care, guidance and support which all staff provide are excellent, ensuring that pupils gain the personal, social and learning skills which prepare them extremely well for their future lives. All pupils make good progress in their academic learning regardless of ethnicity, gender, special educational needs or communication needs. This is based on good quality teaching and learning. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection so that a significant proportion is now outstanding. In many lessons, particularly those in the primary department, teachers give discerning feedback to pupils about how to improve their work. In an excellent art lesson with Year 11, pupils were given clear advice about how to improve their coursework task. This practice, however, is not sufficiently consistent in every lesson, particularly those in the secondary department, to ensure that all achieve as well as they can. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding, and pupils say that they feel safe and secure in Blanche Nevile.

Relationships are excellent and are a crucial factor in the school's success. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and say that lessons are fun. Attendance is excellent, even though a substantial proportion of pupils have medical needs which require regular treatment. Behaviour is exemplary and parents speak highly about the school and the positive effect it has on their children. The curriculum is very carefully tailored to match pupils' needs, and the work experience opportunities for all pupils in Year 10 ensure that by the time they leave they are extremely well prepared for the world of work.

Parents and carers are actively involved in their children's learning. Pupils' academic targets and their individual action plans are made available to parents and carers on a regular basis so that they can be partners in their children's learning at home. The school's work with parents and carers to help them to understand and meet their children's needs is of very high quality and they are very positive about its effectiveness.

The acting headteachers provide the commitment and determination to lead the school forward. They have the support of staff and together all share a vision across the primary and secondary departments. Effective teamwork between teachers and support staff, which is the cornerstone of pupils' high quality personal development, places the school in a strong position to move forward. Staff development is given high priority and the involvement of staff is highly valued and acted upon so that all strive to improve the school even further. Partnerships with other professionals are used extremely well to promote the learning and well-being of pupils. Governors provide good challenge to the school and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Recent changes in personnel and in the sub-committee structures are enabling governors to take a more active role in monitoring outcomes for pupils. However, these changes are relatively recent and have

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yet to attain their full impact. With the commitment of staff and governors to wanting the best for pupils, the school is well placed to improve in future.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that in all lessons, particularly those in the secondary department, teachers give clear guidance to pupils about what they need to do to improve their work and gain the next level or grade.
- Use the changes in the governing body personnel and sub-committee structure to full effect in monitoring the provision so as to be certain that all pupils are doing as well as they can.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils of different abilities make good progress. The use of spoken English and British Sign Language as the medium for teaching ensures that all pupils, regardless of their communication needs, make similarly good progress. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average. This represents excellent progress by pupils from their well below average starting points on entry, brought about by consistent high quality teaching and learning in the primary department. Excellent learning was seen in a mixed Year 1 and Year 2 lesson which included mainstream pupil peers from Highgate Primary, where the consistent use of a wide range of communication techniques enabled all pupils to make rapid progress in developing their communication skills. The GCSE results over the last three years show that the attainment of pupils when they leave school is broadly average. The progress of pupils in the secondary department is good overall. Although there is excellent practice, as seen in an excellent Year 9 English lesson, this is not sufficiently consistent across the secondary department. Pupils of all ages with additional learning difficulties to their hearing impairment receive excellent support so that their progress matches those of their peers.

All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are excellent. Through the school council, pupils are closely involved in helping to contribute towards the school community; a good example of this is the way in which older pupils 'buddy' younger ones. Pupils gain a clear appreciation of the wider world and all are very willing to express their views on a range of issues. In discussion, they showed an excellent understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle, emphasising the importance of the very wide opportunities for physical development and the high take-up of the healthy lunches. This is reflected in the award of Healthy Schools status. The links with the partner primary and secondary schools are very successful in helping pupils manage their deafness in large group situations.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

The school has particular strengths in teaching communication skills. Excellent teaching of communication was seen across the school, where staff used a wide range of specialist techniques, including signing, pictorial systems and oral language, depending on pupils' needs. Teachers and all support staff work together extremely well as a team and have a seamless approach to behaviour management. Planning is effective and this was clearly shown in an outstanding mixed Year 5 and Year 6 lesson about the Second World War, with a very realistic air raid warning. Feedback to pupils, although generally good, is not always of sufficiently high standard to drive up pupils' achievements, particularly in the secondary department.

The curriculum is a strength of the school. It provides an excellent balance between academic, vocational and work-related opportunities for older pupils. A wide range of therapies, particularly speech and language, enhance the provision and ensure that the range and complexity of pupils' needs are met. Enrichment activities, such as the sports clubs, particularly football for boys and girls, visits to the theatre, museums, a local sports centre and a farm, add to pupils' enjoyment of school and link their learning to real-life experiences. This is further supported by the skills pupils develop to enable them to become independent travellers.

Staff make sure that all pupils, including those who arrive at different times, settle quickly and happily into school life. Since the last inspection, comprehensive systems to track pupils' academic progress have been implemented, which ensure that pupils are set challenging and focused targets. Parents are partners in their children's education and the school works exceptionally well with them, and with a wide range of outside

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agencies, to support pupils’ development.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership is good. The acting headteachers lead by example and give a clear sense of direction across the split-site provision. The governing body is highly active in promoting the school and its aims. It has worked tirelessly to ensure that the quality of provision is such that the school is recognised as a leader in the local, regional and national deaf community. Through its work, the school fully meets its commitments to the promotion of equality of opportunity for deaf people and tirelessly campaigns to eliminate discrimination. The school’s self-evaluation is accurate and everyone is clear about what needs to be done for the school to improve further. Staff approach key developments very enthusiastically. Safeguarding and child protection are high on everyone’s agenda and fully meet national requirements and guidelines. There are excellent links at local and national level through which the school promotes community cohesion. The school has clear plans in place for developments at the international level to provide pupils with opportunities to learn more about life for those who live in other countries.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>

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<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>
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## Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Very high quality teaching ensures that children make an extremely good start to their school life. The wide range of purposeful activities, close attention to detail and imaginative way in which staff organise children’s learning ensures that they are exceptionally well motivated. By the time the children start in Year 1, all attain the challenging targets that have been set for them and the majority exceed these in most areas of learning, notably in their personal development. Leadership is highly effective and the introduction of a more focused programme for teaching letters and sounds is helping to make sure that teaching fully challenges children of all abilities. The bilingual nature of the provision where all children use signing has an extremely positive impact on learning. It is much appreciated by parents.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Sixth form

The school’s provision is entirely needs-driven through clear leadership. Students are fully integrated into Fortismere School Sixth Form with excellent support from Blanche Nevile staff. The curriculum is fully flexible and able to meet the widely differing needs of hearing and deaf students. In public examinations in June 2009, Blanche Nevile students attained grades in line with those expected and fully met the targets they had been set. This represents good progress and achievement. This inspection is not able to make comment on the quality of provision at Fortismere School but Blanche Nevile School students were generally positive about their education.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2



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## **Views of parents and carers**

Nearly half of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire and they are overwhelmingly positive about the school. As one parent said 'As a hearing parent this school gives my children opportunities and experiences that I cannot, and has helped me to come to appreciate the challenges they face'. The very small minority of negative responses were not substantiated by inspection.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Blanche Nevile School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 69 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	67	8	27	2	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	60	11	37	0	0	1	3
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	50	14	47	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	53	12	40	2	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	57	12	40	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	57	11	37	0	0	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	40	16	53	1	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	14	47	13	43	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	37	16	53	3	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	47	13	43	3	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	40	13	43	4	13	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	40	16	53	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	57	10	33	2	7	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



24 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Blanche Nevile School, London N10 1 NJ

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited Blanche Nevile School. Once you had overcome your initial nervousness, we particularly enjoyed our discussions with you. You told us very clearly that Blanche Nevile is a good school and that it really helps you to develop your deaf identity and, as one of you said, 'get on with life outside'. You emphasised that staff are always ready to help you and that they make learning fun. You told us that the small group sizes are a real help and that you feel safe and secure in Blanche Nevile.

We agree with your very positive comments and consider that you get first-rate care and attention. Blanche Nevile School provides you with a good education. All the staff work very hard to ensure that you are able to complete your education despite the disruptions caused by your medical needs.

Many of you said to us that you were anxious about leaving school because other pupils saw you as 'different' and this made it 'scary', but that Blanche Nevile was always there to help. To make the school even better, we want staff to give you feedback in every lesson about what you need to do to improve your work and get the next level or grade. We have also asked the governors to use the changes they have made to the way they work to check you are all achieving as well as you can.

I know that you will try your very best at all times to help the staff to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Charlton

Lead inspector

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