

Oscott Manor School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103628
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336118
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Michael Farrell

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Simon Cardinali
Headteacher	Miss Joy Hardwick
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2007
School address	Old Oscott Hill Kingstanding B44 9SP
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Over half of the time was spent looking at learning; ten lessons and ten teachers were observed; meetings were held with parents, staff, pupils, partners and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at lesson planning, policies, data on pupils' progress, the school's development plan and other documents, and scrutinised 23 parents' and carers' questionnaires.

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

- the impact of provision for developing information and communications technology (ICT) skills
- the range and suitability of examination courses for older pupils and external accreditation and its impact on outcomes
- the effectiveness of the use of data to improve provision and outcomes.

Information about the school

Oscott Manor School educates pupils with severe learning difficulties and profound learning difficulties. Some pupils have additional disabilities and disorders including autistic spectrum disorder, and challenging behaviour. The number of pupils, with challenging behaviour and its severity, has increased since the previous inspection. All pupils have statements of special educational needs. The UNICEF Rights Respecting Award, Investors in People, and a Quality Mark are among awards the school has recently achieved.

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

Oscott Manor School offers good provision. The school prioritises good pupils' behaviour and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and as a result, these are outstanding. The school engages parents extremely well. They typically say, 'I trust the staff' and, 'the school puts the child first'. Leaders and managers are outstanding in embedding ambition in staff to do better and in forging excellent partnerships with others. With good support and challenge from governors, the school has effective systems for safeguarding children. Equal opportunities are central and the school tackles any discrimination vigorously while placing pupils at the centre of provision for example, through individual learning pathways. Community cohesion is well developed with strong outcomes, but not yet comprehensively monitored and evaluated. The school uses information on pupils' progress well to improve provision and outcomes, but interprets it using only one model and is rightly planning to develop other methods.

Teaching, including assessment, draws on good questioning to stimulate pupils' communication. There is close staff teamwork, and excellent management of behaviour, including challenging behaviour. In lessons, ICT is effectively used and pupils' skills are well developed because the school has invested in equipment and staff training. Learning objectives are not always precise enough and in lessons where this is the case, it blunts the precision of assessment and subsequent planning and slows pupils' progress. The curriculum meets individual needs well, providing a fund of practical and relevant activities supplemented by popular lunchtime clubs. The range of externally accredited examination courses for pupils aged 14 to 16 years is not as wide as it should be, thus reducing opportunities for pupils to demonstrate what they can do. Good care, guidance and support include careful tracking of progress and the taking of timely steps to intervene. This leads to good outcomes for pupils' development and well-being. Pupils make good progress and learn well, especially in social skills, behaviour and communication. They feel safe, eat healthily and take exercise, and contribute well to the school and the wider community. Attendance is average, but economic well being is good because of the strong contribution of good progress in basic skills. In the sixth form students learn well and make good progress. The well led staff team provide good teaching, and the well planned and effective curriculum and good care, guidance and support aids students' good personal and social development. The school evaluates itself carefully although its grading is sometimes generous. Effective school development planning reflects areas requiring improvement. The school has maintained standards while demands of challenging behaviour have increased. This coupled with very strong ambition to do better give the school good capacity to improve.

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

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress at Key Stage 4 by embedding and extending the range of externally accredited courses
- Improve teaching and assessment further by ensuring learning objectives in lesson plans are always specific and explicit so these more clearly inform subsequent lessons

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' progress is good and they achieve well. Pupils aged 11 to 14 and students aged over 16 years make good progress. The smaller number of pupils aged 14 to 16 make satisfactory progress because recently introduced externally accredited courses have not yet had their full impact and the range is not wide enough. Pupils acquire a good range of knowledge and understanding and develop skills well. They try hard in lessons and enjoy learning. Some individual pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils make strong progress in developing communication and social skills. Different groups such as boys and girls, pupils with challenging behaviour, pupils with autism and children in local authority care all make good progress and achieve well. In a good geography lesson for younger pupils, a rich variety of activities were effectively used to convey the effects of an earthquake including making plastic buildings and seeing them topple, and watching a video. The teacher, well supported by teaching assistants, successfully encouraged pupils to talk and sign about earthquakes leading to good progress. In a good mathematics lesson for pupils aged 14 to 16 years, the teacher organised resources very skilfully so pupils enjoyed hands on experience of making repeating patterns; this helped them concentrate and learn well.

Pupils feel safe and secure in school and some recognise safe and unsafe situations. Parents are confident their child is safe, behaviour is excellent and pupils care for and help one another where they can. School procedures for managing behaviour are excellent. Challenging behaviour is managed very effectively by well-trained and committed staff. Pupils make healthy eating choices and enjoy activities such as lunchtime dance classes. They contribute to the school community well through the school council, and through events such as fund raising coffee mornings. Attendance is average and nearly all absences are for medical reasons, and economic well being is good. Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong. Spiritual development is excellently supported through a wide range of provision including well organised multi-faith assemblies and very active links with the local Catholic church.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	*
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching including assessment in all phases helps pupils make good progress. Lessons observed by inspectors were mainly good and ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. Common strengths of strong teaching are good questioning of pupils to encourage their participation and progress; excellent behaviour management interesting resources and life relevant activities; the good contribution of teaching assistants; and a calm and purposeful ethos. Lesson plans are clearly structured and great care goes into them, but learning outcomes are not always specific enough or explicit enough.

The curriculum is firmly embedded, providing a variety of activities that are practical, hands on and relevant. These activities contribute to pupils' learning, development and well-being. Considerable and successful efforts including individual learning pathways are made to tailor the curriculum to individual needs and therapeutic aspects are well integrated with other elements. Recently introduced externally accredited courses for pupils aged 14 to 16 years are not yet fully embedded. The planning for and use of ICT has improved since the previous inspection and ICT is now well used.

Arrangements for the care, guidance and support of pupils are well organised. This supports good development and well-being. Groups of pupils and individuals are targeted if they begin to fall behind expected levels of progress. There are very good

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

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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examples of the school's support, for vulnerable pupils, including very close working with other agencies such as health and social services. Good quality and consistent advice and guidance help pupils make suitable choices for example about their leisure activities. Communication is encouraged very well and pupils' views are taken seriously. While transition arrangements from school to college are very strong, those for transition into school at age 11 years and from Key Stage 3 to 4 are less well developed.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management of teaching are good. This promotes good teaching and assessment. Ambition is embedded deeply and senior managers provide very strong support for staff including excellent training opportunities so morale and aspiration are very high. One staff member typically says, 'Our management team makes so much time for us.' The governing body support and challenge the school well including monitoring safeguarding effectively, for example, by visiting the school and checking records. The school engages parents excellently, striving constantly to provide helpful information and support; this helps ensure pupils attend regularly unless there are exceptional reasons such as medical ones. The open door policy really means what it says. Partnership with other schools and agencies such as the health service is also excellent, the wide range of exceptionally committed partners to the school is highly valued. The school pursues equal opportunities well, focusing on individual needs. Community cohesion is well developed, leading to pupils contributing effectively to the community. The school's work towards its UNICEF Rights Respecting Award achieved in 2008 contributes to this area. The school provides good value for money and deploys its resources including staff well.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

In the good sixth form provision, the management team work well together and are conscientious and caring towards students. Safety and links with parents are excellent. Teaching is effective, relationships between students and staff are strong and trusting, and students make good progress and learn well. Clear emphasis is placed on individualised learning and activities are well matched to students' requirements. However, the analysis of data is not always as rigorous as it could be. The good curriculum is supplemented well by a range of exciting extra activities such as rock climbing. Students participate in all activities with enjoyment, responding particularly well to the schools' successful efforts to encourage opportunities for making choices and showing independence. Behaviour including challenging behaviour is very well managed indeed so conduct is excellent.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
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

Views of parents and carers

The response from parents' and carers' questionnaires is rather low but those who responded indicate very positive views. All agree their children enjoy school, are safe; and that the school keeps them well informed. In other areas, relatively small percentages disagree and the four where there is most disagreement (all 3%) concern pupils' progress; helping parents and carers support their children's learning; preparing children for the future; and taking account of parents' and carers' concerns. Inspectors found no evidence to support the small number of negative views. Parents who met inspectors were extremely appreciative of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oscott Manor 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 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 61 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	57	8	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	78	5	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	61	9	39	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	39	11	48	3	13	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	48	9	39	2	9	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	39	10	43	3	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	48	10	43	1	4	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)	8	35	10	43	3	13	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	52	7	30	2	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	43	9	39	2	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	48	9	39	2	9	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	14	61	7	30	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	48	11	48	2	9	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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



17 March 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Oscott Manor School, Birmingham, B44 9SP

Thank you for talking to my colleague and me when we inspected your school recently. You told us about the things you liked about the school including the extra activities and lunchtime clubs.

We found many good things. Your school is well led and managed and staff work very hard. You are well taught and the activities and lessons help you make good progress in your learning. The school cares for you well so you develop fully and enjoy school. Your behaviour is excellent including those of you that find this very difficult and need a lot of help.

There are two things the school could do even better.

Improve progress for pupils aged 15 and 16 years by providing more courses that are examined by people outside the school.

Improve teaching by making sure lesson plans say very clearly what you are expected to learn to help the teacher be clearer about what you will do in later lessons.

I am sure that you will continue to work hard in lessons and when there are more courses for older pupils, you will do your best in these too.

With every good wish for your future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Farrell

Lead inspector

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