

Epina y Business and Enterprise School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108741
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	337137
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Ann Muxworthy

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	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Dawn Miller
Headteacher	Mrs Hilary Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of students, parents and carers and visiting professionals. They observed the school's work, and looked at school policies, curricular guidance, the school improvement plan, governors' minutes, external reports, school policies and scrutinised students' progress. Inspectors took into account the findings from the 18 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and the findings from questionnaires completed by staff and students.

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

- how has the school arrived at its judgement on achievement and its accuracy
- how school promotes and supports good behaviour and attendance
- the extent to which provision secures successful outcomes for all groups
- how well the governing body monitors strengths and weaknesses for improvement.

Information about the school

Epinay Business and Enterprise School caters for young people, aged five to 16, with moderate learning difficulties and complex needs. They have a broad range of additional needs, such as social, emotional and behavioural needs, autistic spectrum disorders and specific learning difficulties. Currently, all but one student has a statement of special educational needs. Students attend from across the borough of South Tyneside and some have experienced significant disruption in their education prior to joining the school. Most students are White British and a high proportion of students are entitled to free school meals. Very few speak English as an additional language.

The school has attained business and enterprise status and became a High Performing Specialist School in 2009, with a second specialism of cognition and learning. It is a School of Creativity with several national awards which include Basic Skills, Artsmark Silver, Healthy Schools and Investors in People status.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Epinay Business and Enterprise is an outstanding school. The school lives up to its vision 'to create a centre of excellence providing a stimulating environment for learners to achieve challenging targets and develop as creative and enterprising young citizens.' The great majority of parents and carers are highly appreciative of the school's challenging, interesting and caring ethos, with comments such as, 'Everybody from the headteacher to the secretary and cleaners make a difference as they care for all the children.' The inspection findings wholly agree with these sentiments.

The school is very well led by the headteacher and leadership team who communicate their enthusiasm and the school's caring ethos exceptionally well to parents and carers. The school benefits from a hard-working and knowledgeable governing body. Leaders are committed to raising achievement and continual improvement through an innovative, enterprising curriculum, flourishing international and community links and effective use of resources. Highly effective partnerships introduce exciting opportunities to give students unique and real experiences, leading to their increased confidence and willingness to participate in a variety of social settings. These factors give the school outstanding capacity for continued and sustained improvement.

Students' achievement is excellent. Almost all students achieve extremely well because teachers and other adults are very aware of their needs, and use assessment effectively to challenge them and to support their next steps in learning. The accelerated progress that most students make is the result of an extremely well-planned and creative curriculum and excellent care, guidance and support.

Students love coming to school and say they feel 'calm and safe'. Their outstanding personal development makes a huge impact on their learning. For example, students' excellent behaviour in school makes classrooms happy, engaging and secure places in which to learn. Students have a very good understanding of caring for themselves and others. Their interests and attitudes prepare them extremely well for the next stage of their education and the world of work. Many exciting opportunities allow students to explore their understanding of different cultures and communities; however, there are fewer opportunities to develop their spiritual awareness and understanding of the world.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend students' spiritual development, by increasing opportunities for them to reflect on their own feelings and values.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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

Students are confident learners and their response in lessons is outstanding. They make good, and sometimes rapid, progress in lessons when measured against their individual starting points. Progress is nearly always better than might be expected, given students' learning difficulties or in comparison to similar students with similar needs. All students show excellent concentration and enthusiasm, are prepared to be challenged and are highly motivated to succeed. In one outstanding science lesson, for example, older more-able students worked enthusiastically to experiment with lime, enquiring and completing their findings with confidence and skill. By the time students leave school, all gain external qualifications. In the most recent Year 11 national tests an exceptionally high number of students achieved one or more GCSEs with some gaining five or more. This was matched with the high percentage of students gaining three or more entry level qualifications. These excellent results and the outstanding progress students made between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 exemplifies the outstanding provision they received.

Students are happy, extremely sensible, courteous and friendly to one another, staff and visitors. They are very capable of explaining the healthy choices available in their enterprising café. The active Young Chamber group is involved in fundraising for the school and for charities. Students' good attendance and their well-developed communication and social skills prepare them extremely well for the future. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, though greater opportunities to explore spiritual understanding would allow further insights to the world and its communities. Students are caring and have a very well-developed moral sense. Cultural development is exceptional because of students' highly positive responses to the excellent opportunities provided by the school, including the partnership with Ghana, strong links with local schools, enterprising projects and work with artists and performers.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1

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.

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is consistently good and much is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants' expectations of students are ambitious. They use accurate and in-depth knowledge of students' individual needs effectively to ensure that students remain well motivated and engaged. In the very best lessons teachers use their impressive specialist knowledge to motivate, inspire and challenge students to strive and accomplish their best. Teachers routinely make excellent use of computers and interactive whiteboards to guide and enhance learning. Ongoing accurate assessment, keen observation and probing questions successfully promote high-quality learning in lessons.

The curriculum is excellent. Epinay's status as a School for Creativity is rightly deserved as it embraces creativity to provide memorable and valuable experiences that enrich students' lives and imagination. Through very effective partnerships, students share experiences about healthy living, musical events and dance and have an impressive understanding of their local environment through their project 'Coast and Sea of South Shields'. The school has created opportunities where students develop exceptional skills in enterprise through opportunities in catering, jewellery making and horticulture.

The school has created a secure yet aspirational atmosphere that supports students' learning and enjoyment extremely successfully. Staff and other agencies are highly effective in working together to secure the well-being of students whose circumstances make them vulnerable. These aspects of the school's work ensure that the vast majority of students make the best of the opportunities provided for them. This is evident in all aspects of the school's work, on site, with other schools and agencies and with students' families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1
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How effective are leadership and management?

All school leaders are relentless in their drive for sustained improvement of the school to secure excellence for students. Morale and commitment are exceptional and the school has sophisticated monitoring and self-evaluation systems. All teachers take a keen responsibility for promoting their subject. They are actively involved in monitoring its effectiveness and introducing initiatives to accelerate students' learning and to promote well-being. This helps to ensure that best practice is shared and that the quality of teaching is consistently high.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and are active in promoting the school in the wider community. Currently, they are seeking to apply more rigour to monitoring teaching and learning. They have insightful first-hand knowledge and understanding of the school's work, and conscientiously discharge their statutory responsibilities. Consequently, safeguarding is addressed with rigour and statutory requirements are fully met. School leaders consider the safety of staff and students at all times, and careful and effective risk assessments help keep accidents to a minimum. Engagement with parents and carers, and other partnerships with local schools, health service professionals and the wider community are all outstanding. They make a major contribution to students' learning and well-being, and enhance the school's successful status as a business and enterprise school. Staff act as an essential conduit for managing communications and coordinating the work of external agencies around the needs of students and their families.

A strong commitment to the individual 'rights of the child' lies at the heart of the school's endeavours to secure outstanding equality of opportunity. Outcomes are carefully monitored to ensure that they are equally positive for different groups of students. The school gives high priority to ensuring that all students have equal opportunities and provides excellent activities and inspirational role models to encourage participation and enjoyment. The school is a very cohesive community and is highly effective in increasing students' understanding of the wider community, both within South Tyneside and globally. Staff are well deployed in support of students' needs and the school offers excellent value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

A good proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Those who did were highly supportive of the school's provision and of the outcomes it achieves. There was strong agreement with almost every aspect of the questionnaire. The quality of teaching and the leadership and management of the school were all rated particularly highly, along with healthy lifestyles and the behaviour of students. One typical comment stated, 'The staff empower the children to be the best they can.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Epinay Business and Enterprise 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 18 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 108 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	76	4	19	1	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	76	4	19	0	0	1	5
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	76	4	19	1	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	76	2	10	1	5	1	5
The teaching is good at this school	18	86	3	14	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	76	3	14	2	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	67	5	24	1	5	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)	13	62	5	24	1	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	81	2	10	2	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	76	3	14	1	5	1	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	71	4	19	2	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	76	5	24	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	81	2	10	2	10	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.



19 March 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Epinay Business and Enterprise School, Jarrow, NE32 5UP

Thank you for being so friendly, polite and helpful when we inspected your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you and seeing your lessons and other activities. Your café is magnificent and the food is very tasty. You have been very successful in making your jewellery and in growing plants.

You told us how much you enjoy school and we can see why. We found that Epinay is an outstanding school. This is because your headteacher, governors and all the staff work extremely hard to make the school as good as it possibly can be for you. You make excellent progress and develop as confident young people; you are right to be proud of your school. We were very impressed by the many exciting activities you do in and out of school and the break dancing and art work are very impressive. We think you are understanding more and more about the world, its environment and its people. Because of this, we have asked your teachers to do one thing to help you to learn even more. This is to ask you to think more about your own feelings and to consider other people's views about what they believe and value in the world around them.

We also found that the school takes excellent care of you and helps everyone to get along very well together. We were particularly impressed with the way you are learning about different people, for example through your links with Ghana and South Africa. Your business and enterprise initiatives are helping older students to be well prepared for the time they leave school. We wish you continued success.

We know that you will continue to work very hard and to look after one another very well. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ms Ann Muxworthy

Lead inspector

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