

# Alfreton Park Community Special School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113040
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338075
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Muir HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	66
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	20
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Francine Franklin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rosemary Mackenzie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Alfreton Park Wingfield Road Alfreton
<b>Telephone number</b>	01773 832019
<b>Fax number</b>	01773 833227
<b>Email address</b>	info@alfretonpark.derbyshire.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	2–19
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 July 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	338075

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Twelve lessons and other teaching sessions were observed and eight teachers were seen. Meetings were held with parents, two groups of pupils, three governors and several staff, including the senior leadership team, subject leaders and teaching assistants. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school's data analysis, evaluation documents, improvement plans, governing body meeting minutes, behaviour plans and individual education plans. Thirty-six parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

- the accuracy of the school's monitoring of pupil progress in all areas of the school and how judgments are made as a result
- how the school's management ensures that expectations are consistent across all areas of the school and that standards are raised as a result of any interventions put in place
- whether the curriculum continues to meet the needs of all pupils, across all key stages, so that they are ready to transfer to the next stage of their lives, especially with regard to their special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the robustness of the records of the monitoring of teaching across the school and how these contribute to the raising of standards
- how well the care, guidance and support contribute to improving outcomes for pupils.

## Information about the school

Alfreton Park caters for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These include pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD), SLD and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), SLD and physical disabilities and pupils who have profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and those with both PMLD and ASD. Recently, pupils have been entering the school with increasingly complex needs and challenging behaviours. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. More than one third of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. The sixth form provision has recently been renamed ALFE (Alfreton Park Further Education). The school has gained a range of awards, including Healthy School status, Career Mark, Sportsmark and Activemark. It is also involved in the British Council's Comenius project.

**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

Alfreton Park Community Special School is a good, and improving, school which meets the diverse needs of its pupils well. In many areas of its work, including the Every Child Matters outcomes, it is outstanding. It is also exemplary in its use of assessment to support pupils' special educational needs and their learning and in several areas of leadership and management, including its promotion of community cohesion and equal opportunity. The school has an outstanding array of partnerships to support learning and personal development. This includes impressive links with special schools in other European countries through the Comenius Project.

The school's ethos is centred on the individual pupils. The experiences that they bring to the school are greatly valued and used well to promote their learning and well-being. Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development from rigorous analysis of data. The governing body has identified that more needs to be done to include all parents and carers in the work of the school. Staff and pupils share a strong sense of pride in their school. They have a common sense of direction and purpose in their contributions to the school community. Staff contribute effectively to school improvement and evaluation processes. There have been some recent changes to the curriculum leading to a more thematic and cross-curricular approach. However this is in its early days and leaders are aware this needs to be closely monitored to ensure that it maintains the current high standards and meets the changing needs of pupils.

Behaviour is managed well and is good overall. During their time in the school pupils learn to manage their own behaviour with increasing effectiveness. A large majority of parents and carers value this. Pupils feel safe in school and say they know who they can talk to if they have any problems. Attendance is above average and absences are often the result of the medical needs of the pupils. The success of personal outcomes is a direct result of the outstanding care, guidance and support which meet pupils' needs extremely well. Pupils' views impact on developments and they play a valuable part in making the school the success that it is.

All pupils make at least good progress and some make outstanding progress. There is no difference in the progress of different groups of pupils. This concurs with the quality of teaching seen during the inspection. Much of it was good with significant elements of outstanding practice. Staff know the pupils well and match the work in the lessons to suit the individual needs, abilities and levels in the class. Leaders track the progress of pupils accurately and the judgements made are reliable indicators of progress. Challenging targets are set and pupils are aware of these. Pupils have varying levels of involvement in setting and evaluating their targets according to their needs. Students in

**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

ALFE regularly discuss them during their lessons. Other pupils will give and receive instant feedback on the progress they are making throughout their lessons. Recent changes in sixth form and the Early Years Foundation Stage departments are in their early stages, but already show impact in the good progress being made in lessons. However, the state of school building was identified as area for improvement in previous inspections and remains unsuitable for its current use.

The accuracy of leaders' views of the school's work and the improvements made since the last inspection demonstrate that the school has good capacity to make sustained improvement.

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

- Improve consistency in the quality of teaching so that more lessons in the school are outstanding by:
  - ensuring that all lessons have tasks and activities matched to the changing needs of pupils.
- Effectively monitor and evaluate the changes in the curriculum to ensure that it continues to meet the changing needs of the pupils in the school.
- Work with the local authority and partners to ensure that the accommodation effectively meets the needs of all pupils.

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

**2**

Due to the severity and complexity of their special educational needs and/or disabilities, it is inappropriate to judge pupils' attainment. Pupils make good and often outstanding progress over time which matches the progress that they make in lessons. Progress in lessons is good, and often outstanding due to the knowledge that teachers and support staff have of the pupils and their needs. This allows activities to be well matched to pupils' needs ensuring that they are effectively challenged in their lessons.

The work of the pupils in the community is outstanding. There are strong links with local schools and examples were seen of students from other schools supporting in a variety of activities and lessons. These links are greatly valued and enjoyed by the pupils. The involvement of all pupils in activities is monitored closely. The school has made particular efforts to include pupils who have more challenging needs and have more potential barriers to inclusion. An outstanding example of partnerships is the Comenius Project. Through this, the school has linked with seven partner schools in Europe. This has resulted, so far, in pupils visiting Turkey and Latvia among others with several more visits, including Poland, Finland and Spain, planned in the coming year. Pupils engage in a range of mini-enterprise activities to raise money for a wide range of charities and school events. These activities produce benefit for pupils by developing their problem-solving and thinking skills as well as by learning to understand about finance. The school works hard to establish opportunities for pupils to meet people from other cultures and backgrounds through visits out and visitors in to the school. Pupils know right from wrong and this contributes to the harmonious atmosphere in the school.

**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

During their time in school, pupils are able to develop their spirituality by being given copious opportunities to reflect on themselves and others' experiences. They are also encouraged to think about their place in the community and to aspire to the next stages of their lives.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	*
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>2</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>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good overall and much was outstanding. This agrees with the school's judgement and confirms the good progress made by pupils. In lessons, relationships are strong and support is well targeted to meet the needs of pupils. Planning makes good links to prior learning, which supports pupils in making progress. The knowledge that staff have of pupils' needs and abilities, alongside the respect that they show to each other contribute significantly to the overall learning in the school. Staff also use this knowledge to provide a range of teaching and

<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.

\* 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

communication methods which meets pupils special educational needs very effectively. The recent changes to the curriculum have made learning more enjoyable and relevant. Pupils have opportunities to develop their independence by being given more opportunities to practise skills in a range of settings. The changes have encouraged a more experiential approach to learning, while also maintaining a good range and balance of subjects. There is scope for focused events such as the Hinduism week. The curriculum has been enhanced by the opportunities provided by links with Creative Partnerships and by the Comenius project, among other initiatives.

The outside areas of the school are used effectively as a regular part of lessons to give pupils alternative learning experiences. The development of social skills is supported by visitors and inward inclusion from other schools. Pupils have opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities and clubs which operate on a rolling programme. There is a good array of work-related learning opportunities available, both in and out of school to match the needs of all pupils. Due to outstanding information, advice and guidance provided to help pupils make decisions about their future, all pupils go on to further education when they leave school. They are made aware of the pathways available to them through well established partnerships with local colleges. A range of other partnerships also support pupils learning and personal development extremely well. These include very effective links with speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and the child and adolescent mental health services.

*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	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leadership and management are seen as the responsibility of all staff in the school. The school has a strong sense of purpose and high expectations of all; staff, pupils, parents, carers, partners and governors alike. Staff are given responsibilities and are held accountable through the school improvement cycle and monitoring by senior leaders. They are innovative and keen to trial new ideas. The ethos of the school as a learning community is promoted at all levels, with staff involved in ongoing discussions about how to improve the school further. High expectations and the promotion of independence are shared by all staff so that pupils are able to take risks in a safe environment.

The senior leadership team monitors the school's work rigorously and uses the information gathered to identify and address areas for development. The governing

**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

body is well informed about the work of the school and has high levels of participation in activities in and out of the school, including being involved in the annual sailing trip to the south coast. The governing body challenges the school effectively while developing positive professional relationships with other members of the school community. This promotes a culture of trust and respect in the school.

The school's work on community cohesion is outstanding. This is due to the accurate analysis of the school's community and context, the establishment of effective action plans to promote its work within the community locally, regionally and internationally, and effective evaluation of the impact that this has had on the work of the school. The impressive wealth of partnerships available is outstanding as they add significantly to the school's work in educating pupils and promoting their personal development. The school's safeguarding procedures and policies, including child protection are good in all aspects and show that all adults working with pupils are appropriately recruited and vetted.

*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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Standards are low on entry due to the children's special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children in this stage enjoy their lessons because the activities are well planned and the teaching is good. Staff are very skilled in assessing the learning taking place for all children and pupils are encouraged to self-assess from an early age. This is facilitated by the use of happy and sad symbols and mirrors, so that pupils can see their own reactions. Progress in lessons is at least good. This matches the progress evident through the school's data and tracking.



**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

Planning and assessment are good and meet the needs of all children. The quality of the curriculum is good, being carefully matched to meet the needs of all children. The outdoor space is used effectively to foster a learning environment with a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Very good relationships and sensitive support, which is well planned, means that opportunities for learning and developing social skills are good. The effective liaison with local nurseries ensures a smooth transition to school. Provision is further enhanced by partnerships with other professionals including speech and language and art therapists.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leadership team has undergone some recent changes which have strengthened its effectiveness. Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths of the setting and how it can improve to meet the increasingly wide range of children's needs. Relationships throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage are very positive and the children benefit from encountering such positive interaction in their learning.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Sixth form**

ALFE is good and improving in all areas of its work. The recent relocation to a separate building in the school grounds has helped to promote a new ethos in the department. There is a clear feeling of difference between the main body of the school and ALFE. This has helped to raise aspirations and prepare students for the next stage of learning.

ALFE is a well planned and executed provision, providing an increasing range of qualifications. These include ASDAN Awards and AQA unit awards. The experiences provided through these qualifications include horticulture, DIY and the environment, alongside the wider curriculum, offer qualifications and opportunities which enhance students' prospects of positive progression routes when they leave school. Learning opportunities are planned over the full three years of ALFE and cover a range of experiences in practical, creative and other general areas. These contribute to the significant progress which pupils make. Students are also encouraged to develop skills so that they can discuss their progress and evaluate their own work in lessons. They also use these skills to contribute to planning their next stage of learning with teachers.

Students develop independence skills and are given increasing opportunities to support and guide younger pupils in the school. Work-related learning opportunities are strong and good relationships have been established with several local employers to facilitate

**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

this. The school has a strong tradition of all of its students moving on to the next stage of full-time education, employment or training.

*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

## Views of parents and carers

Over half of the parents and carers responded to the questionnaire and the large majority of responses were positive in all areas. The responses and comments generally reflected the inspectors' and school's judgements. Although a very small number of parents and carers graded a couple of areas less positively; for example, in the progress their child is making and in the way the school meets their child's particular needs, the inspection did not find any evidence to support these concerns. Indeed, the findings of the inspection support the overwhelmingly positive view of most parents and carers. A comment from one parent which represents the views of many was; 'My child has come on leaps and bounds since he has come to this school. It is nice to see his face in the morning, smiling and looking forward to going to school'.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Alfreton Park Community Special 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 66 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	61	12	33	2	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	72	10	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	64	12	33	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	58	11	31	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	67	10	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	58	10	28	1	3	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	56	13	36	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)	19	53	10	28	2	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	53	13	36	2	6	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	56	11	31	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	50	13	36	1	3	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	21	58	11	31	0	0	2	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	67	9	25	2	6	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.**



9 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Alfreton Park Community Special School, Alfreton, DE55 7AL

I am writing to you on behalf of the two inspectors who visited your school recently to say thank you very much for making our visit so memorable, interesting and enjoyable.

We found that Alfreton Park is a good school with some areas which are outstanding.

The headteacher, staff and governors all work very hard to make your time in school very happy and successful. You enjoy school and you make good progress while you are there. Your parents and carers are very happy with how the school educates and looks after you all. Your personal development is a very positive strength of the school and we were particularly impressed by our meetings with you and the times that we spent talking with you and hearing what you had to say. You work very hard to improve your personal and academic skills and you clearly enjoy your lessons. You have good attitudes to learning and you should all be very proud of yourselves.

I have asked the school to improve three things to make the school better than it is now:

- improve the overall quality of teaching, so that more of the good lessons improve to become outstanding
- make sure the changes in the curriculum are closely monitored so that it continues to meet all your needs and the needs of pupils who will be joining you
- the building is improved to meets the needs of all of you and provide the best learning environment that it can.

You can all help with this, by using the school council to tell the teachers what is good and what makes you more interested in learning than you are already.

Yours sincerely

David Muir

Her Majesty's Inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**