

# St Giles School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122955
<b>Local Authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	340242
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth McFarlane

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
<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>	141
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	29
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Shona Neill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Kirk
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Babworth Road Retford Nottinghamshire
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Observations were made of 19 lessons or part lessons and 19 teachers seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, individual parents and a representative governor. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at minutes of meetings, reports, plans and other documentation, including a staff survey and 27 questionnaire responses submitted by parents and carers.

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

- how well the use of the school's recently developed assessment data system enables each individual to achieve as well as they can
- how well the school's location on a shared site and its partnerships with others to provide post-16 education, ensure that pupils suffer no discrimination and are provided with equality of opportunity
- how well the school's work to promote community cohesion has succeeded in assisting pupils to understand the wider world.

## Information about the school

This small school serves a large geographical area. In 2007 it was relocated to new buildings on a site shared with a mainstream secondary school. Most of the post-16 provision is on a separate site run jointly with other providers, a development since the last inspection and included in this inspection. Almost all the pupils are White British; very few are from minority ethnic groups and none speak English as an additional language. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A substantial group have autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). Some of these are taught in a separate unit within the main building. Others mostly have moderate or severe learning difficulties (MLD, SLD), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or physical difficulties. The very few Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught alongside Year 1 pupils. The school has won several awards for its provision including Sportsmark and has achieved National Healthy Schools Gold status. A breakfast club and after-school care are run daily by the governing body. Some post-16 courses are run by other providers and were not part of this inspection.

**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

St Giles' is a good school where partnerships are a key factor in supporting pupils' learning and their personal development. The school's situation in being co-located with a mainstream secondary school, and operating a sixth form on a separate site jointly with other providers, are strengths that promote equal opportunity and broaden pupils' experiences. These partnerships, and well-established collaboration with other local schools, help to ensure that pupils are fully included in a good range of stimulating and memorable experiences without discrimination.

From the Early Years Foundation Stage to the sixth form, pupils make good progress in their learning. Given pupils' significant difficulties, progress is often only in very small steps. Nevertheless this is very apparent in their success in achieving their targets within their individual education plans and in achieving national accreditation in their learning by the time they leave the school.

A dip to satisfactory progress at some stages and for some groups since the last inspection has gradually reversed because teaching and the curriculum have both improved through sharply focused analysis of strengths and weaknesses and sharing the best practice identified in other providers. As a result, pupils derive increased enjoyment from their learning and their personal skills are well developed.

Information systems that managers have now initiated give the school much better data about pupils' progress than previously. This information is not currently shared to best effect with teachers, so that they are not able to deal with any downward trend quickly. However, the robust checks on the quality of teaching and learning have given the school an accurate evaluation of its effectiveness. The governing body undertakes its responsibilities conscientiously and members are committed to supporting the school. Training is aiding governors to understand how to hold the school to account.

Information it receives from the school has not been detailed enough for them to perform this task thoroughly in the past and this contributed to the dip in progress. The success of the school's work to promote cohesion with the global community, and in particular Brazil and South Africa, is best described in the words of a pupil who said, 'I am in my class, but I am part of the whole world.' Pupils make a good contribution to many local community events. However, work to assess the impact of activity in this field, and to promote pupils' understanding of the national community, are less developed.

The school development plan does not look beyond the current year and costs and records of progress on the priorities are not clear. However, there are a number of features that show the school has good capacity to improve further. The flourishing

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pupils are testament to the successful drive for improvement that has led to the move to new premises and development of post-16 courses jointly with other providers. Subject coordinators and other middle managers are competent managers of their departments, including leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the sixth form. They have been instrumental in developing strong links with other providers, and in ensuring that pupils' progress is now good.

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

- Strengthen the quality of governance by:
  - providing more precise and comparative management information to enable the governing body to improve the way the school is held to account
  - improving school development planning so that it looks further ahead, includes more precise costings and logs regular checks on progress
  - developing the national aspects of community cohesion and making a more thorough assessment of the impact of all aspects of this work.
- Ensure the best possible progress for each individual pupil by:
  - sharing information about pupils' progress more regularly and promptly with teaching staff
  - ensuring teachers gain an overview of the rates of progress of individuals and groups of pupils across the school.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Since the last inspection pupils' progress dipped for pupils with PMLD and those in Key Stage 3 but the most recent data and inspection evidence show all groups, whatever their specific difficulties, are now making good progress in their learning and personal development. This is because staff are perceptive to pupils' needs and in helping them to derive great enjoyment from all their lessons. As a parent put it, 'When I collect my child from school, he always has a smile on his face.'

Pupils with PMLD buzzed with enjoyment when taking part in the Ceilidh dancing, despite some pupils' very limited ways of expressing their delight. In lessons pupils are usually keen to try whatever it is they are asked to do. For example, in an information and communication technology lesson for Key Stage 3 pupils, mostly with MLD or SLD, their research using the internet captured their interest as they made video clips about a country they would like to visit. From this they learned more about the world in which they live. From often very low and challenging beginnings, pupils clearly develop their skills and increase their levels of understanding to enable them to become more independent. Their enjoyment is clear, as every small step in their learning is praised and supported, enabling the school to demonstrate pupils' good progress, whatever their particular type of special educational needs.

Pupils explained to inspectors why they feel safe and they are secure in their knowledge

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that all the adults around them will help them. Pupils communicate their likes and dislikes through their school council and these views are contributing to the activities of the school day. This, and other opportunities pupils are given to express themselves, and learn about the society in which they live, helps cement their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Attendance is average and behaviour is good. Pupils' understanding of the benefits of being healthy is clearly being extended. The progress pupils make and the national accreditation they achieve in their work enable them to be well prepared for the next stage in their lives when they leave school.

*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>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Learning partnerships that the school has developed with other schools ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their lives and are provided with good support and as wide a range of experiences as possible. The breakfast club 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.

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after-school care facility support pupils' care and their personal development very well. Teaching and the curriculum provide interest and stimulation that meets the wide range of special needs of pupils within the school. Skilful planning and excellent classroom management enables the vast majority of pupils to make good progress in many aspects of their personal development and learning. The staff use the positive relationships they have with pupils to engage in stimulating activities. For instance, during the inspection, a group of pupils with PMLD thoroughly enjoyed their physical activities which included individual massage, being helped to enjoy different massage emollients by touch or aroma.

Teachers are very clear what they expect pupils to learn in each lesson, and in clear improvement since the last inspection, they share this information as far as possible with pupils. The approach taken to make learning interesting for the pupils is well supported by a wide range of activities both in school and on visits, which include residential trips in this country and in Europe. Therapists are interlinked with classroom activities to ensure equality of opportunity for all. The use of information and communication technology supports learning well. Older pupils have good opportunities to achieve external accreditation for their efforts.

Pupils are supported by good levels of care from all staff, including therapists, nursing staff, and teaching assistants, who are often well directed. Central to the support process are pupils' detailed care plans and individual education plans in each classroom. It is clear that pupils' needs are very well known by all staff in the room and teachers' understanding of their pupils' moment-by-moment needs is used to full effect to help pupils make progress.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	2
<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>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

A key strength of the school lies in the good curricular and support partnerships that have been developed by its leaders and in the supportive links evident with parents and carers. As one parent put it, echoed by others, 'I am very happy with every aspect of the school.'

The senior team successfully manages a provision based on two sites with an inevitable range of logistical issues to overcome. Robust monitoring enables the school to assess the effectiveness of many aspects of its work. This includes checks to ensure all are included in the opportunities provided without discrimination. Middle leaders and subject

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coordinators discuss ideas with each other to move learning forward and seek out best practice in the area. They readily undergo additional training to supplement their skills and are fully committed to helping pupils achieve their best. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are much improved since the last inspection but not yet fully used to promote maximum progress. The governing body supports the school and is taking steps to improve its effectiveness. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. Work in the local community is now being extended by global initiatives. All staff have a good awareness of safeguarding issues and the school's procedures are implemented well and regularly reviewed.

*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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's skills and abilities are exceptionally low when they join the school. They enjoy a good start to their learning and development. The needs of all children are being addressed through engaging activities, good resources and skilful staff. As a result, children make good progress in all aspects of their learning. The rigorous initial assessments lead to highly individualised programmes being established. These are followed consistently by staff who ensure that children are always safe and enjoy their learning. Leaders are well-informed and implement as much of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework as possible. Detailed and comprehensive profiles are created for each child's journey through the school and link seamlessly to the next stage of their learning.



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*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

Sixth form students make good progress in their learning and in their personal development, whatever their individual needs. This is because they benefit from good teaching, and a curriculum offering a range of interesting and useful courses providing opportunities for external accreditation. As a result, everyone achieves a useful qualification. Students thrive because everyone works together in a friendly and positive environment. Good support and guidance ensure that attention to developing students' personal skills and preparation for their future lives is given a high priority. As a result, when students leave they are well prepared for moving on. Work-related learning and experiences are included and this contributes to securing smooth transition into future placements. Currently, opportunities for students to integrate more regularly with the community are being given even more attention to ensure that the involvement of other providers improves further and curricular opportunities expand to give students more choice. Managers' good organisation and skills ensure that they contribute well to students' learning and progress.

*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

Almost a fifth of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. They were overwhelmingly positive about the school and the impact it has had on their children. Some questions registered just a single negative response, but inspectors could find no evidence to support this view.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Giles 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 141 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	63	9	33	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	59	10	37	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	78	5	19	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	63	10	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	70	8	30	0	0	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)	17	63	5	19	0	0	1	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	74	6	22	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	63	9	33	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	74	5	19	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	74	7	26	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	81	5	19	0	0	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.**



14 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Giles School, Retford, DN22 7NJ

Thank you so much for being so helpful when a colleague and I came to your school recently. We very much enjoyed our time in the school because you all made us very welcome. You were all extremely polite and well behaved.

You go to a good school. We can see you enjoy being in school and you told us that all the staff work very hard to help you. You do especially well in improving your ability to do things for yourself. Staff work well with your parents to support you. It is also really good that, from the start, you are at school right next to other pupils in secondary schools and that once you reach sixteen you can go to share the lovely new post-16 facilities.

Lots of the teachers who have positions of responsibility are doing a good job. This means that throughout the school there are lots of good things that happen. However, some of the information that is available to help you learn could be shared a bit more widely and we have asked governors and senior managers to make sure this happens. There is a development plan for your school and we have asked that this should look a bit further ahead and show very clearly exactly how each idea is going to be achieved and when. We have also asked that school leaders make sure that governors are provided with detailed information to help them in checking that your progress is as good as it can be.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and doing your best to help the school.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane

Lead inspector

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