

Cicely Haughton School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124499
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	340582
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Godfrey Bancroft

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.
The inspection of social care was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	42
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Colin Broome
Headteacher	Mr Nigel Phillips
Date of previous school inspection	7 September 2006
School address	Westwood Manor Mill Lane, Wetley Rocks Stoke-on-Trent
Telephone number	01782 550202
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Boarding provision	Cicely Haughton School
Social care Unique Reference Number	SC038731
Social care inspector	Jackie Callaghan

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors and one social care inspector. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with senior staff, teachers, groups of pupils and school governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, details of professional development for staff, lesson plans, assessment and tracking information and 28 parental questionnaires.

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

- The impact of the measures taken to improve pupils' literacy skills.
- How successful the school is in preparing pupils for the next stages of their education and for their transition into mainstream schools.
- How well the curriculum meets the varying learning needs of all pupils.

Information about the school

The school provides day and residential placements for pupils from all over Staffordshire. It also offers places to pupils from the unitary authority of Stoke-on-Trent and from Derbyshire and Cheshire. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is broadly average. The percentage from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, with none who speak English as an additional language. Whilst some pupils have specific learning difficulties and some are on the autistic spectrum of need, all have significant behavioural, emotional and social needs. Pupils attend the school for varying time spans; consequently the number either starting or leaving within any one year tends to be relatively high. The school has Key Learning Centre status.

The school is able to cater for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage age range. At the present time there are no pupils attending from this age range, a situation which has applied for several years.

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

Gcely Haughton is an outstanding school in which all pupils thrive, making exceptional progress in both their social and their academic development. The school does absolutely all it can to give pupils confidence and raise their self-esteem. The success of the school's nurture groups provide a fine example of how these aspects of pupils' development are supported. The school also provides a curriculum which meets the varying learning needs of pupils exceptional well. It is enhanced by an excellent range of educational visits and additional activities. In every respect the school is remarkably successful, laying the foundation for pupils' excellent achievement and for the standards they attain. Pupils are unequivocal in their praise for their teachers and the support they receive. They readily point out that they get all the help they need. As one pupil pointed out, 'We all learn lots in every lesson'. Parents hold similar positive views. Every parent who responded to the inspection questionnaire strongly agreed that they are happy with their child's experience at the school. Typical of many parents' comments was one which said, 'Sending my child to Gcely Haughton is the best decision I have ever made.' The excellent relationships which pupils have with adults are at the heart of the school's work.

For several years, whilst remaining below average, standards have risen steadily. The current Year 6 pupils are on course to attain broadly average standards in English and mathematics. Assessment information and the work in pupils' books show that some more able pupils are on likely to attain above average standards in these subjects. This represents outstanding progress from their starting points. During the inspection standards exceeding expected levels were also observed in design and technology, information and communication technology, music and physical education. Pupils do particularly well in mathematics because of the measures taken by teachers to promote and embed pupils' basic skills. A similarly picture is evident in English, where the school's concerted focus has resulted in rapid progress and rising standards. This has led to pupils' becoming increasingly confident speakers who also enjoy a stimulating, wide range of opportunities to write. The credit for this success is attributable to the excellent teamwork amongst staff at all levels. For example, care staff have been trained, by attending literacy lessons, to support pupils in completing their homework projects.

Senior managers and governors are in no way complacent so that the capacity for sustained improvement in the future is outstanding. This is based on the excellent work of the senior management team in evaluating the school's performance and is exemplified by the ever rising standards. The most remarkable indicator of the school's success is the increase in the number of pupils who successfully make the transition

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back into mainstream schools. In 1999/2000 this represented about 10% of those who left the school. In recent years the proportion has exceeded 50% and is predicted to be close to 60% for the current academic year. That said, whilst governors fulfil their duties well, their work in evaluating the quality of provision is not yet focused closely enough on measuring the success of the priorities for development that are identified in the school improvement plan.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Focus the work of governors in evaluating the quality of provision more closely on the key initiatives for development identified in the school improvement plan.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Whilst pupils of all backgrounds and abilities make excellent progress the school has worked very effectively to support those who have additional special needs, such as dyslexia. These pupils also make outstanding progress. Endeavour in lessons across the board is evident. This ranges from a display of hockey skills far exceeding those expected for Year 6 pupils, to the thoughtful and imaginative response of Year 4 and 5 pupils to a drama activity based on a traditional Russian fable.

Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and respond with great enthusiasm to the many incentives and rewards which encourage them to do well. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Many are avid learners and invariably try to do their best. They apply themselves well, sustain their interest and are always eager to answer questions. At times when concentration wavers teachers skilfully bring pupils back on track. The meticulous tracking of pupils' behaviour shows that incidents of unacceptable behaviour have fallen significantly, to the extent that there are remarkably few.

All the pupils who responded to the inspection questionnaire said they feel safe in school. They all have someone they can go to discuss their problems and talk about their work. Pupils also have many opportunities to participate in sport and take vigorous exercise, which they love to do. They are able to take part in activities, such as swimming and karate. The school has its own fleet of mountain bikes which pupils can use on the extensive site. Eating healthily is a priority for all and the excellent school meals make a superb contribution in this respect. Pupils also make an outstanding contribution to their own and to the wider community. They are delighted to take responsibility and relish the opportunity to be involved in school and community events, especially sport in which they have achieved considerable success. Pupils are proud to give to charities. For example, just like the professionals, they donate their 'player of the match' awards from a variety of sports to the charities of their choice.

Pupils' excellent spiritual development is exemplified in assemblies and music where they take great pleasure playing and singing. They also respond superbly to opportunities to reflect on issues that concern them and on the plight of those less fortunate than themselves.

Pupils develop a range of skills that will stand them in good stead in the future. The

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basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are all embedded well and provide an effective platform for progress. Supported by their good social skills and the school's success in transferring pupils back into main stream school, pupils are prepared well for their futures in the world of work.

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	3
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. Teachers plan activities that reflect the depth of knowledge they have about each pupils' needs and the stage they have reached. Lessons are invariably exciting, vibrant and capture pupils' enthusiasm and interest. Every opportunity is taken to challenge pupils' thinking and to make sure they are fully engaged. Every small step in learning is celebrated and the gives pupils the confidence to do their best. This is especially noticeable with regard to pupils' speaking and listening skills and their confidence to speak publicly. Learning is often split into bite sized chunks, which allows pupils to maintain their concentration. The work of teaching assistants is exemplary and the contribution they make to pupils learning is outstanding.

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

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Assessment procedures work very effectively. Teachers are meticulous and precise in the frequent assessment of pupils' academic and personal progress. The response to any pupil who shows the slightest sign of falling behind is swift and effective. The tracking of pupils' progress and the monitoring of their development over time is equally effective. The involvement of pupils in knowing how well they are getting on and about how to improve their work is exemplary. Pupils are very knowledgeable about their targets for improvement and delighted when they achieve them.

The curriculum is ideally suited to pupils' diverse learning needs. It provides pupils with excellent learning opportunities in the full range of subjects. The thoughtful use of specialist expertise in subjects such as design and technology, music and physical education means that pupils do very well in these subjects, raising their self-confidence. The quality of care, guidance and support is exceptional. All staff are vigilant in their support of pupils, especially those who are potentially vulnerable. This support is effective to the extent that it is fully justified to say that no child is left behind. Pupils' attendance is supported to the extent that it is well above the average when compared with similar schools.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior managers set the tone for everything that happens and for the plans designed to help the school maintain its high quality of provision. They are supported admirably by an excellent team of teachers, administrative and support staff, all of whom are dedicated and have the best interests of the pupils at heart. There is a strong focus on academic as well as personal development. Senior managers make excellent use of assessment data to identify and respond to any relative shortfalls in provision, to measure the success of initiatives and to set suitably challenging targets. Based on robust monitoring procedures senior managers are rightly proud of the qualities shown by the staff. No one rests on their laurels and excellent opportunities for continued professional development ensure staff are not only up to date, but often ahead of the game. Liaison with parents is outstanding and the quality of information concerning their children's progress is exemplary. The school's partnership with other providers, such as social services and the many schools to which pupils transfer is also exemplary. The outreach work to train teaching assistants from other schools in behaviour management is highly regarded far beyond the school. Similarly, the school's

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arrangements to support the transfer of pupils to other schools provide an example for all in terms of what excellent provision looks like.

Governors are knowledgeable about the work of the school. They are also very proud of its achievements. Governors fulfil their duties exceptionally well in terms of supporting community cohesion, promoting equality of opportunity and by ensuring that everything is in place for pupils to be safe. Effective links with subject leaders mean governors are well informed about many developments. However, arrangements for governors to evaluate the quality of provision are not linked closely enough to the key areas for development listed in the school improvement plan.

Given pupils' exceptional progress, the wise use of the available resources and school's success in placing pupils back into mainstream schools, it provides 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
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

Boarding provision

The quality of the boarding provision is outstanding. The national minimum standards are met, with the overwhelming majority being exceeded. The one recommendation from the school's last welfare inspection is met.

The residential establishment is a remarkably well managed provision which successfully contributes to the positive impact on the education, care and support pupils receive. The head of care provides accomplished day-to-day support to individual shifts.

Consequently, staff are well-informed about daily routines, events and the progress of each pupil.

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The provision for equality and diversity is outstanding. The school promotes a positive ethos that fully embraces diversity and difference. As a result, pupils begin to truly appreciate the significance of differing values and are actively learning to have respect for each other.

Pupils fruitfully benefit from an excellent service that is focused on their emotional wellbeing and health needs. Effective assessment, care planning and management arrangements result in the provision making a significant contribution to the welfare of pupils. Pupils are robustly protected by the systems in place for the safe administration, storage and disposal of medications. All food is freshly prepared and cooked on site. Menus are planned in advance and are readily displayed, so helping to promote nutritional variety for each pupil throughout each day.

Overall, the school has an excellent focus on safeguarding and protection issues. Recruitment and selection processes are robust. Pupils benefit from provision that has a substantial range of operational policies and procedures that are used effectively to promote the safety and welfare for all.

The residential provision successfully provides a child centred approach to all aspects of their service delivery. Care plans and risk assessments incorporate individual expression of pupil's aspirations and are comprehensively gathered in conjunction with the pupil, their parents and other agencies.

Pupils are cared for by highly motivated, knowledgeable staff who know them very well. They adapt daily routines and activities with great success to individualise care for differing groups and needs. As a result, pupils feel secure and are confident. One pupil commented that, 'I love sleeping at school because I feel safe'.

Pupils' privacy and confidentiality are deeply respected by all staff. One parent comments that the school is, 'fantastic on every statement. My son could not be placed in a more appropriate, safe, learning environment'. Outcomes for pupils are outstanding because the school has a cohesive monitoring process that identifies and addresses any shortfalls in practice quickly.

Within the residential unit, prominence is given to promoting education in the broadest sense and all pupils are imaginatively engaged in a variety of activities that truly develops their learning. Staff celebrate pupils' educational and social achievements in whole school assemblies. These assemblies develop pupils' confidence which enhances their self-awareness and improves their self-esteem massively. This was a view shared by a parent, who comments that 'Gcely Haughton School has enabled our child to develop both socially and academically'.

Pupils reside and learn in a fully inclusive environment which truly inspires them to respect and value their own needs and the differing needs of others. They enjoy homely accommodation which is decorated, furnished and maintained to an appropriate standard, providing good facilities for their use.

Staff rewardingly work in partnership with pupils to ensure that their views, wishes and feelings are taken into account throughout the care planning process. This means that pupils are continually at the centre of their care plan. Pupils are robustly supported in

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their transition when leaving the school and moving onto other school settings. This demonstrates that pupils' welfare is a top priority.

The commitment from all staff at all levels is a resounding strength of the school. The number of staff on duty is always enough to meet the needs of pupils. This supports their welfare and protection. The school has a comprehensive induction and core training programme that provides staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to support and care for pupils. The vast majority of staff are qualified to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People.

Staffing arrangements within the boarding provision are extremely effective and ensures that the needs of all pupils are consistently met at all times. The supervision of pupils successfully promotes individual self-responsibility. Pupils confirm this view with one saying 'this school has made me calm'.

National Minimum Standards (NMS) to be met to improve social care

- All national minimum standards are met.

This is the grade for the boarding provision

The effectiveness of the boarding provision	1
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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive. Not a single questionnaire received expressed even the slightest negative view. Many of the questionnaires contained additional positive comments praising the school the quality of its work and the support it provides for the pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gcely Haughton 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 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 42 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	68	9	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	89	2	7	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	86	4	14	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	93	2	7	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	82	4	14	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	68	9	32	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)	19	68	7	25	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	96	1	4	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	93	2	7	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	93	2	7	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	100	0	0	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 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 pupils' 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.



12 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gcely Haughton School, Staffordshire ST9 0BX

I would like to thank you all for being so kind and helpful when I visited to inspect your school recently. I know from chatting with you and from the questionnaires you completed that you and your parents and carers think your school is excellent. After looking at all aspects of your school's work I agree that Gcely Haughton is an outstanding school.

I was very impressed by the progress you make in your work and in your personal development. Your willingness to work hard, to help each other and to take responsibility for tasks around the school is very much to your credit. That said, it is the skill of your teachers and the help you receive from all the staff, that makes these outstanding things possible. It is the staff who keep you safe and give you the confidence to do well. They also provide you with lots of exciting and interesting learning opportunities. A great deal of credit goes to you for responding so well and working as hard as you do.

Mrs Phillips and the governors work very hard to make sure that everything for you is as good as it can be. Even so, they are always looking for ways to make Gcely Haughton even better. With this in mind and to help your school maintain its excellence, I have asked the governing body to look even more closely at the way they measure the success of their plans and ideas to maintain your school at its present high level.

I am confident that, if you keep on working as hard as you do now, you will all be very well placed to be successful in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Godfrey Bancroft

Lead Inspector

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