

Heritage Park Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126705
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	341001
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Eaton

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	7–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	95
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Arline Kersey
Headteacher	Mr John Hill
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited ten lessons, each taught by a different teacher, and held meetings with groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including assessment data, records of incidents, planning for individual pupils, safeguarding and other policies, and samples of the information provided to parents. The 24 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed, as were others completed by pupils.

- the actions taken by the school to improve attendance
- the effectiveness of teachers' use of assessment information, for example to inform pupils about how they can improve
- the impact of the school's specialist status on pupils' outcomes and its engagement with the community
- the rigour with which the school's performance is monitored and the accuracy of self-evaluation.

Information about the school

The school caters for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All of those on roll have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The large majority of pupils are White British. A small minority are of mixed heritage. Currently, 11 pupils are looked after by the local authority. There are nearly eight times as many boys as there are girls. Most pupils join the school at times other than the usual, often during Key Stage 4. All have been permanently excluded from previous schools and have typically attended between five and 10 other schools before they join Heritage Park. Last year, an additional 12, mainly older, pupils, most of who had been out of school for some time, were placed at the school. They and a small number of other pupils spend part of their time at one of two facilities beyond the school site. In 2008, the school was awarded specialist school status in the area of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, with a focus on literacy and creativity. The school has gained awards including the Healthy Schools Standard, Sportsmark, Activemark and Artsmark.

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

The school's insistence that learning is the key to improving pupils' behaviour underpins every facet of its work. Excellent care, guidance and support for all aspects of pupils' development enables them to make the most of the remarkable opportunities offered by exceptional teaching and a curriculum customised to meet the needs of groups and individuals. The school's success is clear to see in the confident and enthusiastic approach to moving to the next stage of their education demonstrated by many Year 11 pupils. They are armed with the ability to 'control our tempers and look at what makes us angry', as well as a very healthy clutch of awards and examination certificates, mostly including GCSE and equivalent accreditation. Although attainment is low, it represents outstanding progress from pupils' starting points, often in just a few years. Typically, they join the school working at levels far below the expectations for their age. The vast gaps in academic knowledge, skills and understanding are compounded by pupils' lack of many of the features of successful learning. Taking turns, listening to others and concentrating on tasks have all to be developed before these pupils can start to catch up with those in mainstream schools. The rate at which they progress and the obstacles they have to overcome on the way mean that achievement is good, despite pupils' low attainment.

Because they behave remarkably well, pupils are able to take on significant responsibilities, such as mentoring younger pupils. As a result, they make an outstanding contribution to the community. Safeguarding procedures are exemplary and pupils are made fully aware of how to stay safe and keep healthy. The pupils respect the views and beliefs of others and readily take on new challenges and experiences. Pupils' responses to art and music are often profound. 'You should see Gaudi's cathedral in Barcelona!' enthused one boy, following a school residential visit. The school's specialist status enables it to enhance the curriculum, for example through superb facilities for drama and digital media. Partnerships with other schools have grown, supporting the outstanding promotion of community cohesion and equal opportunities.

Senior leaders and managers spearhead ambitious leadership. The leadership is analytical, reflective and shared by staff representing all groups within the school, together with the governing body. Self-evaluation is rigorous, highly accurate and includes comparisons with other schools and a range of external verification. This has revealed, for example, that pupils' spoken language is often under-developed. Since the previous inspection, the school has moved forward comprehensively on all fronts because leaders and managers ensure that all staff share the same drive and are equipped with the skills and expertise to meet the school's extremely high expectations. All this is testament to the school's outstanding capacity to continue to develop.

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

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards by increasing planned opportunities for pupils to talk together during lessons, in order to improve their spoken language.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Lessons are characterised by pupils' readiness to get involved, for instance by volunteering answers to questions. They pay attention to instructions and try very hard to do what is required, including following rules for safe working practices. Pupils do their best to be independent but ask for help when necessary. Their ability to control their behaviour gives other pupils the confidence to read aloud or demonstrate a skill to the class. For example, pupils listen patiently when others are speaking and avoid making critical comments unless asked to evaluate another's performance. Consistently, pupils use literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) very effectively during other lessons. Although some are fluent speakers, many pupils struggle to express their thoughts coherently and in sentences. This means that it is harder for them to clarify their ideas and explain their decisions.

By the end of Year 11, all pupils, including those particularly in need of additional support, gain at least some form of external accreditation. This year, of the 18 pupils in Year 11, five are on track to gain at least five GCSE passes in subjects that include mathematics and English. This represents exceptional progress. The school's assessments show that progress is equally outstanding at each key stage. Most of the school's specialist targets are met. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who are looked after by the local authority progress at rates equivalent to their class mates. Girls are as successful as boys. Attendance is average overall but low for some of the pupils who have previously not been educated in schools. Their progress is slower than that of other pupils but they nevertheless gain accreditation, often up to GCSE level. The attendance of all pupils improves during their time at the school, typically by 45% during their first year. Frequently, improvement rates are remarkable and, for example, enable pupils to travel independently to school, complete examination courses, and sustain work experience placements.

Pupils report that they are aware of bullying behaviour but that this usually occurs outside school time. They have full confidence in the school's response to any reported incidents. Many pupils enjoy physical exercise, joining clubs that enable them to pursue interests such as basketball or using the trim-trail independently. Junior sports leaders and those with first-aid qualifications promote the health of others. Key Stage 3 pupils form a community service group and perform valuable tasks such as keeping the grounds tidy or cleaning windows. The school works closely with a wildlife trust to improve the local environment, for example by creating a duck-pond.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Many teachers are specialists in their subjects and use their knowledge and expertise to extend pupils' learning extremely well. Activities are chosen very carefully so as to be highly motivating, challenging and appropriate to pupils' age and needs. Whole-class discussions are conducted frequently and teachers use questions extremely effectively to encourage pupils to think hard and express themselves. Other opportunities to promote speaking are sometimes missed. For example, pupils are seldom required to talk together in pairs or small groups in order to crystallise their ideas before they share them with the class or write them down. Adults monitor constantly how well pupils are coping and step in swiftly to modify tasks or provide additional guidance as required. Teachers make sure pupils know how they are getting on and how to improve. Pupils are often asked to evaluate their work or that of others. Mutually respectful working relationships between adults and pupils contribute significantly to the exemplary behaviour in many lessons.

The curriculum is flexible to meet the changing needs of the school's population. For example, as pupils work at higher levels in particular subjects, accreditation that fully recognises their achievements is offered. The small number of girls have a weekly physical education session together, which successfully encourages them to participate fully in other lessons that they share with boys. All classes begin the day with an exciting and extremely well-planned lesson designed to promote reading. Together with

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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a wide range of programmes targeted at particular pupils or small groups, the reading lessons are extremely successful in accelerating progress in literacy. The use of literacy, numeracy and ICT is thoroughly embedded within other subjects. Enrichment is exceptional and often geared to individual pupils' interests or talents. As one pupil observed, 'If they see you can do something well, they encourage you.'

Although an 'engagement team' leads the pastoral care, pupils are known extremely well by all staff. Prior to pupils joining the school, carefully planned arrangements enable them to make the move as smoothly as possible. From then on, outstanding individual support deals with each aspect of pupils' development and needs. This is coordinated expertly, making full use of the school's professional expertise and that of a host of external agencies, some of which are based at the school. Good attendance is promoted comprehensively, frequently leading to dramatic improvements. Each class devises its own rewards for regular attendance and members of the 'engagement team' visit pupils' homes to encourage parents and carers to support the school's efforts. The school provides clubs and activities during school holidays and supports pupils who have left but who may be finding it hard to adapt to life beyond school.

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?

Leadership and management roles are clearly delineated, with leaders at all levels involved in helping to monitor and evaluate the school's work. Plans for further improvement are detailed and highly effective. Governors are entirely supportive of the school's successful strategy of developing its future leaders through creating career pathways and providing opportunities for high quality training. Parents and carers are kept very well informed and are encouraged to support the school's work and improve the outcomes for their children, for instance by taking part in training events. A host of agencies works with the school. Notably, a long-standing partnership with a national agency provides the 'engagement team' with a dedicated social worker. This is one factor in the school's ability to be a leader of high-quality practice in safeguarding. A health professional takes the lead in all matters pertaining to safeguarding and ensures that all avenues to protect pupils are explored. Pupils can use a mobile phone number to report bullying if they prefer not to speak directly to an adult and their personal internet social networking accounts are monitored, with the pupils' knowledge. Steps to promote equal opportunities include arranging for pupils of Black heritage to take part in

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community projects to raise their awareness of their cultural identity. The school reaches out extensively into the local and wider community. For example, pupils cook and serve lunches to elderly residents. Through the specialist school role, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities from a partner secondary school join classes in, for example in music.

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	1
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

Views of parents and carers

About a quarter of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. These parents and carers have largely positive views of the school. The inspection judged the school against national criteria and found that Heritage Park is outstanding in almost all respects. A very small number of parents and carers noted issues that were particular to their own experience of the school. The inspectors looked into these as far as possible during the inspection but did not find any evidence to endorse these concerns. The school provides ample opportunities for parents and carers to discuss any matters related to their children, including through home visits when necessary, and it takes any comments extremely seriously.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heritage Park Community 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 24 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 95 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	42	11	46	1	4	2	8
The school keeps my child safe	14	58	8	33	1	4	1	4
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	54	8	33	3	13	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	42	10	42	2	8	2	8
The teaching is good at this school	15	63	8	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	46	10	42	2	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	38	14	58	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)	10	42	10	42	2	8	1	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	42	9	38	2	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	46	9	38	1	4	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	50	8	33	1	4	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	13	54	8	33	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	46	9	38	2	8	1	4

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). 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"> ■ 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.



11 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heritage Park Community School, Sheffield, S2 2RU

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you very much. Special thanks go to the groups of pupils who attended meetings to talk about the school. These were very useful and the pupils concerned were excellent ambassadors for the school. We have judged that yours is an outstanding school. Here are some of the things that it does particularly well:

¿ you make outstanding progress and leave school with a wide range of examination successes

- your behaviour improves greatly so the school is a calm and happy place in which to learn
- you do a great deal to help other people, in school and in the community
- you have an excellent knowledge of how to stay healthy and safe
- you learn extremely well because teaching is outstanding at your school
- your school provides you with an exciting curriculum which is often tailored to suit particular pupils or groups
- you are looked after extremely well so you are able to concentrate on your work
- your school's leaders and governors do a superb job, always trying to improve the school so you have the best possible education.

We have asked the school to do one extra thing. We noticed that some of you find it quite hard to explain your ideas and to describe the work you have done and why you made certain choices. We want the teachers to give you more opportunities to talk together in class, so that your skills at speaking improve. This is to help your work in all subjects. You can help by being sensible when asked to talk together. It will also help to prepare you for the future if you attend school as often as possible. We send each one of you our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Rosemary Eaton

Lead Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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