

# The Michael Tippett School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133442
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	341389
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stuart Charlton

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 special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<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	26
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Helen Bembridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jan Stogdon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Heron Road Herne Hill London SE24 0HZ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Over half of the inspection time was spent looking at learning and all nine teachers were observed. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority (the School's Improvement Partner), staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the improvement plan, the minutes of the senior management and the governing body meetings, a range of other documentation and 15 parent questionnaires.

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

- the effectiveness of the school in judging its performance to show that it is doing as well as it can
- the extent to which the school's systems to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress ensure continuing improvement
- how effectively the monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching help to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable
- the effectiveness of pupils' targets in ensuring that all achieve as well as they can.

## Information about the school

Michael Tippett is a secondary special school for pupils with severe and profound multiple learning difficulties. All have a statement of special educational needs and many have additional difficulties related to autism. There are nearly twice as many boys as girls, with roughly equal numbers of White British pupils and those from Black British and Black African backgrounds. A very small minority are of Chinese heritage. Nearly all pupils are at an early stage of learning English because of their difficulties, but only a small number speak English as an additional language. The school holds Advanced Healthy School status. The school moved to a new building in March 2008 having previously operated on two sites with different systems, management and ethos and with pupils of different ability and age range. Since the last inspection there have been considerable changes in staffing, in the senior leadership team and in the governing body. A new chair of governors took up her role in September 2009.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. There is good support for pupils' personal development, helping pupils to gain the personal and social skills which prepare them well for their future. Safeguarding procedures meet national requirements and ensure the school is a safe and secure environment. Relationships are good and pupils who responded to the student survey indicated that they enjoy coming to school and that lessons are fun. Attendance is satisfactory, even though a significant minority have acute medical needs which require periods of absence. Behaviour is good and parents are very pleased with the school and the positive effect it has on their children. Staff establish very good relationships with their pupils, but many lack experience in dealing with the wide range of needs in each class group. Often teachers' planning is not sufficiently focused on how the needs of each individual will be met during the lesson and consequently progress slows. The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress against 'small step' learning targets have improved considerably since the last inspection and now provide good quality information and contribute to pupils' satisfactory achievement. The school recognises that the data on pupils' progress is not used with sufficient precision to set targets which clearly demonstrate how well each individual is doing. In contrast, in an excellent personal, social and health education lesson with a group of Post 16 pupils, each was given a personal development target and also clear targets for social skills, which were used to show the effectiveness of pupils' learning.

The headteacher has a clear view about how the school should develop and has successfully guided it through the move to the new building. She is ably supported by the newly appointed assistant headteacher and school manager and they have secured a stable staffing base. Her vision is not sufficiently well communicated to staff to ensure that everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities in moving the school forward. Good systems for monitoring and evaluating separate aspects of the provision have been introduced since the last inspection. These systems have replaced those previously used at the two sites and do not enable links to be made between different aspects of pupils' performance to help them improve. For example, clear links between behaviour and social interaction cannot yet be made. The changes in personnel and the committee structures of the governing body have meant that it has not acted with full effect to hold the school to account, particularly in raising achievement. The new chair has clear ideas about how the governing body should operate and is actively pursuing the necessary training to achieve this. The way in which the school promotes community cohesion is satisfactory. It recognises that the outcomes of its recent audit have not been implemented and better links need to be established at national and international level

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to give pupils a wider appreciation about the lives of others. Leaders and managers have acted effectively to merge the ethos and personnel from two separate sites into the new building, to improve teaching and learning and to undertake a wide-ranging curriculum review. This shows that the capacity for further sustained improvement is satisfactory.

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

- Improve pupils' achievement by:
  - using its 'small steps' data about the learning of each pupil more effectively to show more clearly their progress
  - ensuring that teachers' planning clearly identifies individual pupils' needs and how these will be met.
- Establish more effective links between the systems for monitoring and evaluating separate aspects of the provision so that a clear picture of each individual's performance, as well as that of the school as a whole, can be demonstrated.
- Ensure that all leaders and managers are clear about their roles and responsibilities in moving the school forward.
- Ensure that the school promotes community cohesion more effectively so that pupils have a better understanding about the lives of others by:
  - finalising its audit of provision
  - developing the national and international aspects of its work.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Academic progress is satisfactory. All pupils regardless of age, gender, disability or language need make good progress in developing their personal and social skills from a very low base. In a good Year 11 English lesson, staff knew the pupils' personal and social needs well and consequently the pupils made good progress. The identification of their communication needs was not as clear and pupils' progress in developing these skills was less good.

The pupil survey indicates the pupils have good understanding of the requirements of a healthy lifestyle and this is supported by the school's Advanced Healthy School status. Pupils learn about healthy cooking, particularly those post-16, and they make healthy choices regarding diet and are keen to explain why. They very enthusiastically participate in physical activities. A good example was a Year 12 dance and drama lesson in which all engaged in vigorous 'stomping' and thoroughly enjoyed the session. The school has good first-day absence procedures in place which are effective in promoting attendance and encouraging punctuality. Any disruptive behaviour is generally managed well so that it does not affect the learning of others. Through the prefect system, older pupils play an active role in school life, taking registers and helping others. All act very effectively as ambassadors with the local community, for example when they are on trips. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and all gain the basic skills which prepare the pupils well for life after school.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<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?

The quality of teaching and learning has improved and is satisfactory. There is now no inadequate teaching, with much that is good and better. The merger of the two schools has required staff to work across a much wider range of age and ability than previously. Although training has been given, many still do not have the confidence to apply their new skills in all lessons. This results in some missed opportunities to fully develop pupils' skills, particularly literacy and numeracy, in all activities.

Teachers plan and teach an interesting range of activities which make good use of the exciting school environment and resources. These have been developed through a major curriculum revision since the merger. The curriculum is now well matched to pupils' needs and has a clear focus on personal development and basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. A good range of activities are

<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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planned on a weekly basis, but subject leaders are still working to develop detailed daily lesson plans for use with different age and ability groups. Very good partnerships with groups such as the Young Vic and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as visits to the Tate Modern and other venues, make an important contribution to developing pupils' personal and social, as well as their academic skills.

Care, guidance and support are very good and are the cornerstone for pupils' good personal development. The efforts of the teaching staff in this aspect of school life are effectively supported by the teaching assistants. However, in some lessons staff miss opportunities to develop pupils' academic skills fully. All staff give good guidance about opportunities available to pupils when they leave school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<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?**

Changes in staffing and in the senior management and governing body have meant that it has taken longer than anticipated to establish a common ethos in the new building as a basis for driving improvement with all staff. Comprehensive systems to monitor and evaluate the separate aspects of provision have been developed and implemented. However, the review of the impact, for example, of teaching quality on pupils' achievement has been an insufficiently critical. The new chair has brought a much sharper focus to this aspect of the school's performance and has already made inroads into more effectively holding the school to account. An audit of the school's promotion of community cohesion has been completed and early analysis indicates good links at a local level.

The personal development needs of individuals are carefully identified so that all have equal opportunities for success in school and discrimination is tackled successfully. Safeguarding procedures meet national requirements, but documentation does not always indicate when training has to be updated. Good links with social services and a wide range of therapeutic provision and care agencies play an important role in promoting pupils' well-being. The school works well with parents and carers involving them effectively in their children's education.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</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>3</b>

## Sixth form

Students in the sixth form have a very similar range of difficulties and abilities to those of the pupils in the main school. Prior to the recent move the sixth form was situated on a separate site. Developing and implementing new systems covering all aspects of provision have presented similar challenges to those seen in the new school. Staff are adapting well to the challenge of teaching across a wider age and ability range, but issues around tracking of students' progress and teachers planning parallel those in the main school. Consequently, teaching, learning progress and achievement are all satisfactory. The curriculum offers a wide range of opportunities for students to develop the personal, social and academic skills which will help them in their future. At present, the headteacher takes responsibility for the leadership and management of the provision so that this is satisfactory. Changes to this arrangement are planned when a clearer ethos has been established.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

## Views of parents and carers



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Only a very small number of parents returned the questionnaire and the views expressed in these have been supplemented by using information derived from the school's own parental questionnaires. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive in their view that Michael Tippett is a good school. As one said: 'My daughter's time at school is a beacon in her day.' Another stated: 'Classroom teachers and support assistants are fantastic, dedicated to helping pupils to flourish in spite of their difficulties in doing so.' The inspection shows that such comments are well founded. The tiny minority of negative comments in the questionnaires explained that the pupils had only been in the school for a very short period of time and the parents had not had time to form a clear view.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Michael Tippett 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 15 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	9	60	9	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	9	60	6	40	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	60	5	33	1	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	53	5	33	1	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	9	60	6	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	60	5	33	1	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	67	4	27	1	7	0	07
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)	7	47	8	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	53	6	40	1	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	53	7	47	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	67	5	33	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	47	6	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	67	5	33	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"> <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.**



11 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Michael Tippett School, Herne Hill SE24 OHZ

We really enjoyed coming to visit you in your exciting new school. You helped us enormously by showing us your work and talking to us. We were particularly pleased to chat with the prefects. Thank you for filling in the survey your teachers gave to you.

We found Michael Tippett gives you a satisfactory education.

You were keen to tell us that you are happy at school and look forward to coming every day. You told us you feel safe and that there is always someone to help and look after you.

You wanted us to know that dancing, drama, football and tennis were great. You told us that 'We all have healthy snacks' and 'eat apples'. Most of you behave well at school, although someone said, 'Sometimes I don't listen!'

To make things even better we want staff to make sure you all do as well as you can by:

- using the information they record about you in every lesson to plan carefully how to help you to do your very best
- bring together all the information about what happens to you during the day to improve your learning.

We have also asked the headteacher and her assistant headteacher to make sure that everyone knows how to make the school better. It would be really good if visits from the Young Vic and the orchestra could be extended to include people from other parts of the country and even from abroad. This will help you to understand more about how other people live.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Charlton

Lead inspector

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