

Chatsworth High

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106010
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	355871
Inspection dates	14–15 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Linda Clare

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	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Bower
Headteacher	Dr Martin Hanbury
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed nine teachers and a lesson led by two teaching assistants from the school's communication team. Meetings were held with groups of students, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documents including information on students' progress, teachers' planning, curricular documents, students' files and the school's self-evaluation. The inspection team analysed 34 questionnaires received from parents and carers, as well as those completed by the school's staff.

- The extent to which targets have sufficient challenge for students.
- The effectiveness of the school's procedures in raising the level of school attendance.
- How well the revised curriculum meets the needs of the school's changing population.
- How well the school monitors and evaluates its progress and assesses the impact of its specialist status.

Information about the school

Chatsworth High provides education for students who have severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple needs and for those with autistic spectrum conditions. The school serves Salford and the surrounding area. All students have a statement of special educational needs and boys outnumber girls. Most students are of White British origin; much smaller numbers are from other ethnic backgrounds. Four students speak English as their second language. There is a very small number of looked after students. The proportion of students known to be eligible to free school meals is higher than the national average.

The school was re-designated as a specialist school for Communication and Interaction in September 2010. It has achieved several awards including Artsmark Gold, Healthy School status, Healthy Futures (Sixth Form), and Inspiring IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) Gold Award.

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

Chatsworth High is a good school. It provides an outstanding level of care, guidance and support for its students. The procedures and strategies for ensuring the safeguarding and protection of the students are robust and show exemplary practice. The school is a welcoming place. Parents appreciate the extended levels of support they receive; one parent noting 'excellent out-of-hours activities that enable the pupils to have a social life that otherwise they could not access. The school supports families as well as the pupils.' Students say they love to come to school. Although academic standards are low, owing to the nature of their medical and learning difficulties and/or disabilities, students make generally good progress from their individual starting points. The school's specialist communication team helps students to make good and better progress in communication and social skills. A number of students make these gains despite significant and sometimes degenerative illness, demonstrating high levels of determination to succeed. Students show good levels of competence in using information and communication technology. They handle equipment safely in practical subjects and are proud of their excellent knowledge about keeping safe. Students make outstanding progress in their life-skills and work-related learning. Good teaching, thorough planning and new schemes of learning help students to achieve targets which challenge them. However, assessments are not consistently used to match work to students' ability, particularly for the more-able students. This results in activities which do not always build sufficiently on prior learning, and which slows progress. There is a seamless link between class teams and nursing and medical services, and students' personal care and therapy needs are met with sensitivity. The revised skills-based curriculum is good and strongly emphasises personal development. It is embedding well but is insufficiently linked to modular or accredited courses for older students.

Good provision is made in the sixth form, which is developing its own identity well.

There has been much development since the last inspection. School self-evaluation is accurate and key areas are correctly targeted on raising attainment. Development planning is focused, clear and based on a three-year cycle of review. Student target-setting is checked against levels of progression and assessed for rigour of challenge. An increase to the expected levels is added in many instances. The re-validation of specialist status has confirmed the impact of the school's work on the wider community. Outstanding partnerships promote sport, music, work-related learning, enterprise and medical initiatives exceptionally well. Senior managers have high expectations and provide good direction. The school has good capacity to improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all teachers use assessment data consistently to set work in lessons that builds directly on students' previous experiences and learning.
- Strengthen the challenge to the work provided for the more-able students in the school by:
 - extending the range of qualifications offered at Key Stage 4
 - developing the range of opportunities for students in Key Stage 5 to gain accreditation and qualifications both in school and through college links.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students are keen to do well. They listen to the best of their ability and are eager to contribute to lessons. Students take great pride in their work. They respond well to the secure and known classroom routines and make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 4, students acquire levels of functional literacy and numeracy that effectively support their vocational and work-related learning. Those with more complex needs learn to use symbols and objects of reference to communicate their thoughts and ideas. The more-able students undertake a limited range of external courses to accredit their learning. A small number work towards achieving entry level qualifications in collaboration with students from other schools. School data show that students achieve a little better in mathematics than in English at both key stages and that progress is better for pupils in the school's lower and middle bandings. In response to this, a focus this year has been on the introduction of a new reading scheme and a specialist teacher has been appointed to address reading at all levels. Students in the care of the local authority make gains in line with or better than their peers, and different groups of pupils including those with additional needs make generally good progress. Students needing support because English is not their first spoken language receive targeted additional help, and they, too, make good progress.

Students enjoy their learning, a view endorsed by parents and carers and shown in above average attendance. Students say they feel extremely safe in school, know who to turn to for help and are very confident that it will be speedily provided. Their knowledge of healthy lifestyles is good and they participate well in sports activities. Student behaviour is good. Students are polite, positive and supportive towards one another. They readily accept responsibilities as monitors and members of the school council. They contributed to changes to the school's outdoor provision to ensure ease of access and chose the counting snake to brighten the playground.

Students work successfully in real-life and simulated work experience environments to promote teamwork, acquire problem-solving skills and develop enterprise abilities. Through these they acquire excellent work-related understanding. They show good respect for the opinions and views of others and are able to tell right from wrong. 'Thought of the day' encourages reflection well and 'Super Learning' days promote cultural awareness. A good range of visits, church links and residential experiences

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enable students to engage with others from different backgrounds regularly.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	*
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching promotes students' progress well. Much teaching is good and several outstanding lessons were observed by inspectors. Teachers use praise and encouragement effectively and place much emphasis on practical activities which successfully clarify and consolidate learning. For example, in a lesson on 'The hungry caterpillar', practical resources enabled students to enjoy the tactile, furry feel of the caterpillar and excellent questioning enabled students to distinguish between object and symbol and to develop their motor skills. In a Brazilian samba lesson, students relished the responsibility to create and play drum sequences for others to follow. Searching questions about the lesson in a 'game show' format followed. As a result, students worked very well in pairs concentrating hard on the choices, debating answers and

¹ 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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selecting responses on an interactive screen. These well-planned activities promoted enjoyment and great motivation, which led to effective learning.

Classroom support is well-focused and efficient, and the excellent support provided for the students who speak English as an additional language ensures full access to activities. Good behaviour supports learning well and behaviour plans show where and what support is needed. Learning objectives are clearly displayed in lessons.

Expectations are generally high. Occasionally, work provided in class is insufficiently different and some students, particularly those of higher ability, may finish activities early or find them too easy.

Students are routinely involved in monitoring their own progress and assess their learning at the end of each lesson. This is facilitated very well by a range of ability systems, including thumbs up or traffic light colours to show students' understanding.

Themed projects effectively cover the National Curriculum through 10 core areas in a curriculum modified to students' ability. Good flexibility within the curriculum enables personalisation of learning plans. These meet students' needs and interests well but are not taken through to accredited coursework levels for older students. Through the specialism, students have effective links to local schools and colleges. A varied programme of residential opportunities and clubs extend the curriculum well.

Guidance and support are excellent, wide-ranging and comprehensive. An outstanding commitment by all staff to pastoral support ensures that each student's needs are met well, however complex they may be. This promotes students' self-confidence and supports the very good progress they make in gaining work-related skills. Transition arrangements are thorough. Attendance is very effectively supported by the learning mentor. Achievement assemblies and 'You've been spotted' awards boost students' confidence and motivation enormously.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's clear focus and dedication to driving improvement at Chatsworth High is shared by the school's senior managers and staff. Morale is high. Developments in assessment, tracking and the curriculum have positively transformed the school. The school knows itself well. Extensive staff training has been key to the improved teaching and learning. The school's specialist programme has raised the profile of communication skills and promoted integration well. The governing body provides satisfactory support

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and challenge to the school and governors visit regularly to monitor its progress. Parents and carers are very supportive, relationships are good and the school regularly seeks their views, most recently on safeguarding. Home–school books are in place, but their use is inconsistent. The school signposts services for parents very well and offers on-site medical, dietary and physical needs support. The school's partnerships significantly underpin its focus and strength in providing work-related and personal development programmes. Excellent relationships with a range of educational, medical, careers, business and community organisations enrich the activities that the school is able to offer and support students' personal development very effectively. Equal opportunities are actively promoted. Staff support different groups, and a separate system to evaluate the very small steps of progress made by students with the most complex needs illustrates this commitment. The school is also aware more courses are needed to ensure the more-able students are challenged further.

Safeguarding is outstanding and provision is monitored weekly by a staff team to discuss any concerns and share information. The promotion of community cohesion is good. Through its specialism, the school extends its effective plans to extend and evaluate engagement with a range of community groups beyond the school and to provide enhanced local, regional and national links. Multicultural events, economic well-being weeks and in-school learning prepare students well for life in a diverse community. Chatsworth High provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

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

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The majority of students elect to remain in school for their sixth form education. The head of the sixth form notes that 'students look forward to coming into FE' and students agree. The school makes a good effort to create a more adult community. Students feel that they are given greater responsibility, greet visitors and act as ambassadors for the school. There is no uniform and the exclusive common room and kitchen facilities encourage each student to, in the words of one sixth former, 'Behave like a grown up'. By the time they leave the sixth form, students have made good progress in their social and communication skills. Many are articulate and thoughtful in their views and opinions. Teaching is good, progress monitored well and the curriculum is matched to students' needs. Personal learning programmes develop life-skills, independence and work experience for life after school. Mock interviews and careers advice support vocational choice. College links provide accreditation through the Award Scheme Development Accreditation Network (ASDAN) awards and the school is looking to expand these on-site as the sixth form develops. Training in the use of public transport encourages greater independence. The on-site café, office and kitchen suite provide excellent opportunities to practise skills prior to work placements and link courses, where Chatsworth students are very well regarded. Much opportunity exists for work-based learning, both school-based and in a range of retail outlets for those with more advanced skills. The excellent care, guidance and support which feature in the main school are continued at sixth form level. Students make excellent progress in their personal development and contribute well to 'Person Centred Reviews' with Connexions staff. Joint residential visits with other schools contribute significantly to wider community awareness. The leadership of the sixth form is good and the many developments planned show a good potential for future improvement.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
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

Parents and carers are very positive about Chatsworth High School. Under half of the parents responded to the questionnaire. A small number of parents would like more rigorous use of the existing home–school books to help them better support their childrens learning. Appreciative comments which recognised and valued the high level of care, support and encouragement provided by the school accompanied other responses. The inspection evidence supports both views, as most of the students' outcomes were found to be good and the school's partnership work with parents and carers is good. Greater consistency in the use of contact books would enhance this further.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chatsworth High 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 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 99 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	74	7	21	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	71	10	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	56	12	35	1	3	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	50	13	38	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	56	13	38	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	44	13	38	2	6	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	50	15	44	1	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	18	53	12	35	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	65	9	26	2	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	53	14	41	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	47	13	38	2	6	2	6
The school is led and managed effectively	17	50	14	41	0	0	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	62	10	29	2	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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.



Dear Students

I am writing to thank you for making the inspectors feel so welcome when we visited your school last week. Your thoughts and comments were really useful in helping us to make our decisions.

We agree with your parents and carers that Chatsworth High is a good school and that all the adults there keep you very safe and look after you exceptionally well.

It was lovely to see how much you enjoy your lessons. Your school has a good range of subjects, and the 'super learning' days help you to learn about different countries. The teaching in your school is good. Teachers make lessons interesting and fun, and because of this you make good progress in your work. I was very impressed when I heard you discuss how not drinking enough water can give you headaches and how well you understand what it means to be healthy. I hope that your new Trim Trail will be used well as a result.

You are polite and considerate towards one another and like to help when you can. You told us that you feel very safe in school and we could see that you know how to work together very well. Your school is very good at helping you to meet people from other schools and colleges, and at arranging for you to go to work placements. You take part in lots of visits, some where you stay away from home overnight. All of these help you to develop good skills for life.

Your headteacher and his senior teachers are good leaders and are always trying to make the school better. I have asked them to plan your lessons like small steps, so that you build up your learning from step to step. I have also asked them to make sure that your work is not too easy for you. These things will help you to make even more progress. You could help your teachers by letting them know if you think something is too easy or too hard for you.

I am very pleased that you are happy in your school and are proud to be students there. I hope that you keep trying hard and looking after one another really well.

Yours sincerely

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