

Chellow Heights Special School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135228
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	364043
Inspection dates	24–25 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Saleem Hussain

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	101
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair	John Lambert
Headteacher	Sue Haithwaite
Date of previous school inspection	NA
School address	Thorn Lane Bingley Road Bradford West Yorkshire BD9 6AL
Telephone number	01274 484242
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed different aspects of the school's work including approximately 12 hours of teaching. In addition, they held discussions with governors, groups of pupils, parents and carers and staff and scrutinised a range of documentation including that relating to safeguarding practices, the school's self-evaluation and development planning. They also evaluated questionnaire responses from 19 parents and carers, 15 pupils and 50 staff.

Information about the school

Chellow Heights is a newly built special school which opened in April 2010 as part of the Bradford Special School reorganisation. It is located on a site which includes a children's services centre and four other schools. The school is in the west of the City of Bradford.

Most of the staff are drawn from different special schools and the remainder from other backgrounds.

The pupils on roll are drawn from several closed special schools, mainstream schools and other special provisions. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above that found nationally. Nearly half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. All pupils have statements of special educational needs or are undergoing assessment. Most pupils have speech, language and communication needs. Approximately half of the pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Around half have severe learning difficulties. A significant proportion of pupils have autism, medical conditions or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Around one fifth of the children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage of learning.

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	2
Achievement	2
Teaching	2
Leadership and management	1
Behaviour and safety	1
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

- This is a good school. It has several outstanding features. It has established itself very quickly, making rapid improvements in the best interests of pupils. Pupils enjoy school life and feel very well cared for and supported. A rich and imaginative curriculum meets pupils' needs very closely. These factors ensure that pupils mature into thoughtful and confident young people ready for the next stage in their education.
- Most pupils, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, make good progress because teachers know their learning difficulties well, have high expectations and use appropriate and interesting activities to develop their knowledge and understanding.
- Teaching is good but with a minority of satisfactory lessons. The teamwork between teachers and their assistants is a significant factor in the good progress made by pupils.
- The school is a happy and harmonious community. Relationships at all levels are very good. Pupils make friends with others easily and get on very well with their peers on collaborative tasks in the classroom.
- Behaviour improves extremely quickly over time and the school's practices supporting this are outstanding. Parents and carers say that bullying is extremely rare. Pupils feel that they are very safe in school. Attendance is above average except for a small group of pupils who have below-average attendance.
- The governors, headteacher and her team provide outstanding leadership and management that have resulted in good achievement and excellent improvements in the behaviour of pupils. Senior leaders have risen to the challenges of gelling together a new staff in a new school, admirably. Leaders provide a very clear direction for the school and strive relentlessly in pursuit of excellence. They have tackled the most important weaknesses regarding

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teaching, eliminated unsatisfactory teaching and increased the proportion of good and better teaching very quickly.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all pupils receive at least good teaching by ensuring that:
 - the pace of work is good
 - better use is made of assessment information to set individual learning targets in all lessons.
- Raise the attendance of pupils for whom it is below average by working more closely with their parents and carers.

Main report

Leaders and managers at all levels have worked tirelessly to establish this school so successfully in a relatively short period of time. They provide a very clear direction for the school and their vision of achieving excellence is shared by everyone. Very rigorous and accurate evaluation of teaching ensures that improvements are taking place at a good rate. There is a great emphasis on providing mentoring and training opportunities to ensure professional development. Every opportunity is taken to work with parents, carers and outside agencies to ensure that pupils achieve well and to assure their well-being. Leaders have successfully established a very orderly school with an ethos underpinned by hard work from staff whose morale is high. These factors have led to good achievement academically, good teaching, outstanding improvements in behaviour and strong provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is very effectively narrowing the gap with national averages for students whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school through their very positive attitudes and burning desire to behave as well as they can. Parents, carers and pupils confirm that there is hardly any bullying but when it occurs it is dealt with very effectively. Nearly all parents, carers and pupils say that behaviour is very good. Pupils are confident in turning to adults if they feel worried about the behaviour of peers. The majority of pupils behave outstandingly well in lessons and around school. Pupils value very highly the rewards, treats and special mentions they receive for displaying outstanding behaviour.

Nearly all groups of pupils make equally good progress in their lessons, regardless of their learning difficulties, ethnicity or main language spoken at home. The exception to this is a small number of pupils with severe learning difficulties and very challenging behaviour. These pupils achieve satisfactorily because of the additional support provided in the nurture class. Attainment is below average but achievement is good because of the good progress pupils make from low starting points. For

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instance, those with profound and multiple learning difficulties progress in very small steps but their achievements are just as good as those with autism or medical conditions. The school has a significant number of staff who speak different languages and this helps to support a number of pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Communication, language and independence skills development is always a strong focus in learning and so pupils make good progress in these areas. The spoken word is accompanied by signing, the use of symbols, pictures and aids where necessary to ensure that pupils can understand and be understood. Pupils' attainment in reading by the age of six and as they prepare to leave school, in the cases where this can be measured, is judged by inspectors as being below average but of a good standard in view of their special educational needs and/or disabilities.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress relative to their starting points through a curriculum which gives them appropriate and exciting opportunities to develop their sense of curiosity about the world around them. They make good progress in most areas of learning, including communication, personal and social development.

The school has successfully improved the quality of teaching since it opened. For instance, there was a small amount of inadequate teaching to start with. The school has eliminated this through training, mentoring and shrewd deployment. Teachers match work well to pupils' capabilities to enable them to make good progress. In good or better lessons, most pupils are challenged and fully engaged in learning because lessons are well planned and provide a range of interesting activities. Pupils especially enjoy the lessons that stimulate as many of their senses as possible or provide real life, practical experiences. There are, however, a few lessons where the pace of the work is too slow or assessment information is not used well enough to set individual learning targets. When this happens, pupils do not get through enough work and opportunities are missed to achieve their individual learning targets. As a result, although there is some satisfactory teaching, most is good and there is some that is outstanding.

Feedback to pupils at the end of lessons is a good feature of teaching. For instance, teachers encourage pupils to use smiley face cards to show whether they enjoyed and understood the work. Adults do this for pupils where necessary.

Teachers use the accommodation, learning resources and information and communication technology (ICT) very well to support learning across the school. For instance, communication equipment is very well used as are computers. A large, electronic and 'interactive floor' was seen being used for learning games by pupils with severe learning difficulties and autism, making a significant contribution to learning. Facilities in the school include sensory stimulation areas and well-equipped soft-play areas.

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Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is also effective and results in mostly good progress. Inspectors saw a good lesson in the hydrotherapy pool where the teacher and her assistants ensured that a child with profound and multiple learning difficulties enjoyed his time in the pool. The child could hardly stop smiling as he splashed in the water enjoying the sensation and resulting in good physical development. The outdoor environment is well used to teach children.

Pupils are very keen to help others or act as monitors. For instance, pupils with severe learning difficulties did a splendid job during the inspection by taking orders for toast under the wings of a member of staff. They revelled in the responsibility and took great satisfaction in asking adults, including inspectors, for payment. Such activities make a strong contribution to raising pupils' economic awareness. The school council has a strong voice that is taken very seriously by leaders regarding school improvement. These are good examples of the contribution pupils make to their community.

The headteacher, together with the senior staff, has been instrumental in establishing the excellent partnerships with parents and carers, and a wide range of external agencies and other schools. The school responds very well to parents' and carers' wishes regarding information workshops in school. Many events take place and they are well attended. Workshops include behaviour management, medication and moving and handling. The school also has excellent links with welfare and other agencies. For instance, several therapists and medical practitioners are available on site for substantial periods during school time and this helps pupils to receive support in school to ensure their well-being. Senior leaders and governors are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have demonstrated effective strategies for improving the standards of teaching and have created a vibrant curriculum which is enjoyed by all pupils. The curriculum includes opportunities to develop speech, language, communication, literacy and ICT skills. Lunchtime activities are extremely popular. These include dance, bike and creativity clubs. Governors play a leading role in the gardening club and the school has just established a wheelchair swing club. These improvements have been achieved rapidly and, demonstrate that the school has an excellent capacity to continue to improve. Leaders and managers at all levels promote equality and tackle discrimination, embed ambition and drive improvement very effectively.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chellow Heights Special 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 inspector received 19 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 101 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	16	84	3	16	0	0	0	0
Q2 My child feels safe at school	15	79	4	21	0	0	0	0
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	13	68	6	32	0	0	0	0
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	11	58	5	26	2	11	0	0
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	14	74	5	26	0	0	0	0
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	13	68	5	26	1	5	0	0
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	9	47	9	47	0	0	0	0
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	7	37	9	47	1	5	0	0
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	8	42	8	42	1	5	0	0
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	12	63	6	32	1	5	0	0
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	12	63	6	32	1	5	0	0
Q12 The school is well led and managed	11	58	7	37	1	5	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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 achievement of all pupils. ■ Behaviour and safety. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The effectiveness of leadership and management. <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
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.



26 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chellow Heights Special School, Bradford, BD9 6AL

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed it a lot. This letter is to tell you what I found out about your school.

You are happy because you feel safe and behaviour is outstanding. You enjoy learning because teaching is good. Outstanding school leaders make sure that there are many great things for you to do and that you achieve well.

To make the school even better I have asked leaders to improve teaching by speeding up some lessons which are a bit slow. I have also asked the school to give even more help to a few pupils whose attendance could be better. You can help the school by carrying on doing your best.

I know that everyone is very proud of the things you have achieved in school. Well done.

Yours sincerely

Saleem Hussain
Lead inspector

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