

Newman School

East Bawtry Road, Whiston, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 3LX

Inspection dates 14–15 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Nearly all pupils across the school make the progress expected in learning to communicate, read, write and calculate using number. Many go beyond this in improving their knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects.
- Pupils are very effectively helped to learn by staff who have considerable experience and skill in meeting pupils' special educational needs.
- The most able pupils are challenged by their work and most make more progress than expected and achieve good GCSE grades in English and mathematics.
- The sixth form is good. Students benefit from a curriculum well suited to preparing them for work and independence and they make good progress in applying their skills to a variety of real-life issues.
- Most lessons are well planned and this ensures pupils' work is closely matched to their individual learning needs. Teachers and their assistants are expert in making learning lively, enjoyable and worthwhile.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and make every effort to come every day and be on time. They behave exceptionally well. Some whose behaviour is challenging settle and stay calm because this is superbly managed by staff. Pupils feel very safe. Staff vigilance and their measures to keep pupils safe are outstanding.
- Leaders and governors are driving improvement in teaching and achievement effectively. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have maintained the strengths that have distinguished this school for many years and they are being effectively developed through leaders' good capacity for further improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small amount of teaching requires improvement because pupils are given more new information than they can manage and no ways of easily remembering this.
- Some leaders who check teaching are over generous in judging its quality and this gives a slightly false impression of the overall strength of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited eight lessons and observed eight of the school's 16 teachers. The headteacher joined an inspector in observing one lesson.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders and representatives of the governing body.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils and a sample of pupils' work was checked.
- The school documentation scrutinised included data on pupils' progress, the school development plan, policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils and the school's own evaluation of its work.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 12 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the school's own recent survey of parents' views and comments made to inspectors by two parents. Questionnaires completed by staff were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Alan Lemon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Bailey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and nearly all are of White British heritage.
- The large majority of pupils have complex special educational needs which often involve combinations of physical disabilities, physical and psychological medical conditions, autistic spectrum conditions, challenging behaviour, moderate and severe learning difficulties, as well as difficulties with communication.
- Pupils join at different stages of their education and more recently, the special educational needs of pupils new to the school are increasingly complex. Numbers on roll are rising and plans are progressing for the school to expand.
- There are three children at the Early Years Foundation Stage who are in their Reception Year.
- There are 19 students in the sixth form. Students from mainstream and special schools in the local authority are accepted into the sixth form. The majority of students currently on roll joined the sixth form from another special school.
- Students attend courses at local further education colleges and they gain work experience with a number of local businesses and service providers.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The headteacher took charge of the school in September 2011 and the deputy headteacher took up post in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all lessons are good or outstanding by:
 - ensuring all teachers are very precise in what they want pupils to learn in lessons and that these aims are well matched to pupils' different abilities
 - using effective ways of helping pupils remember and use new knowledge and skills being taught.
- Ensure when leaders check teaching that in balancing the strengths and weaknesses observed, they are rigorous in their judgement of the overall quality of the lesson.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Starting points are low for many pupils and they quickly gain a firm foundation in linking letters and their sounds, controlling a pen to form letters correctly and confidently counting. Over time this improves so that many pupils read and speak about stories, write in sentences and add and subtract sums accurately.
- Staff use their considerable expertise very effectively to reduce the impact of the conditions that prevent pupils from learning. Pupils' interests, talents and capabilities are unlocked as a result and the school's strong commitment to promoting equal opportunities for its pupils is well served.
- For most pupils, fine-tuned work and activities mean they are able to build securely, step-by-step on what they know and can do. However, teaching is not yet fully adapted, as it is for most pupils, to meet the needs of pupils with very complex needs. Leaders are aware of this and are providing training, making teaching effective in this respect. These pupils are supported very effectively in their personal, social and emotional development but are not yet making the rapid academic progress of most other pupils.
- Pupils make rapid progress in overcoming impaired communication skills using systems of signing and symbols. Disabled pupils unable to use effectively signing and symbol communication quickly become very adept at using electronic communication equipment, some operating these by head switches and eye pointing. This opens the door for them to a wide range of learning experiences and the opportunity to make progress and achieve.
- The most able pupils are working at near the expected level for their age in most cases, particularly in English and mathematics in which they achieve GCSE A*-G grades above those predicted by their results when they were at the end of Key Stage 3.
- The starting points of the few children at the Early Years Foundation Stage are at a very low level. While children's development stays well below the level expected by the end of Reception Year they make rapid progress in their personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication. They sit and listen to the teacher and answer questions, naming animals from a story. Children handle, cut and mould art materials energetically and get much enjoyment from their creativity and share this with the adults supporting them.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress improving reading, writing, number and communication skills. Work experience, vocational qualifications and college courses all demand these skills are applied in finding information, keeping records, writing reports and managing timetables and budgets. Students work methodically and the most able are good at summing up the value of their experiences at work and college and what they have learnt.
- The achievement of pupils supported through the pupil premium matches that of other pupils. The proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals making expected progress or more than this is similar to that of other pupils across the school. The pupil premium fund has improved learning and progress through more intensive adult support and particularly through giving help to families, equipping them to better support their children at home.
- The extra money to support Year 7 pupils has been used to buy reading books and train teachers and their assistants to use a new reading scheme. Increased individual support for pupils is effectively helping them improve their reading and enjoyment of books.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and their assistants work together well in lessons. Over time they have developed considerable expertise in assisting pupils overcome their difficulties with learning. This stands out in teaching the use of electronic communication aids. In addition, challenging behaviour is managed expertly throughout the school and keeps lessons calm and purposeful.
- Clearly defined ways of working with severely autistic pupils are applied consistently with the

result these pupils start and finish work as a matter of routine. This achieved, some pupils reach good academic standards in subjects, which did not seem possible. Teaching assistants often play the key role in this good support for autistic pupils.

- Much of the teaching and support for learning is well planned. The use of accurate assessment of each pupil's point in learning leads mainly to exercises that reinforce and build upon their knowledge and skills particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Good relationships, lively teaching, enjoyable and some exciting work gets pupils involved and working hard. Pupils love practical tasks and a Key Stage 3 class became thoroughly involved in science, experimenting with batteries and switches making lighting circuits and operating electric motors.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage strikes a good balance between the teacher leading the group such as reading or questioning and children's own choice of activities. The good opportunities for children to experience, explore and create drives effectively their interest and curiosity.
- Students in the sixth form, as is appropriate for their age, exercise more control of their learning and teaching is good at making this happen. According to the direction they want to take for the future, students choose courses and are well supported through these.
- Preparations for leaving the sixth form and moving to college or vocational training settings are planned well in advance and supported very effectively. Transition is successful for the great majority of students and nearly all complete the next stage of their education or training.
- The quality of a small amount of teaching required improvement because too much was expected of pupils. Teachers were not sufficiently precise about what they wanted pupils to learn nor in giving them effective means to remember and talk about what they had learnt.
- In these few instances, too many technical terms introduced in lessons were more than pupils could cope with. They needed to see new words and not just hear them and be asked to recall fewer new terms by the end of the lesson. The volume of information in some lessons took too long to explain and pupils did not keep up with this and needed to get on with work earlier in the lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Many pupils are able of their own accord to behave very well and know the importance of their own and others' good behaviour. These pupils understand the school's expectations for behaviour and they consistently adhere to these. They have decided to adopt the school's values and independently be of the best behaviour.
- Sixth form students behave with maturity and are very good role models to the younger pupils.
- Staff provide pupils with positive role models through developing good relationships, treating them with respect and protecting their dignity. This is clearly reflected in how pupils treat each other in lessons and on the playground.
- Pupils' experience of school is that it is good, it is fun and it is calm. Attendance is good although several pupils are unavoidably absent as a result of their medical conditions.
- Pupils consider behaviour throughout the school to be good and that nothing gets in the way of learning. There is much they gain from their experience of school that contributes positively to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The nature of pupils' behaviour, what causes their outbursts and what calms them are thoroughly assessed and form the basis of detailed behaviour plans which staff carry out very consistently.
- Pupils who cannot cope with crowded rooms such as classrooms and the dining hall have quiet spaces to eat and do their work. This reassures them, creates calm and builds trust and confidence.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel safe. Bullying rarely happens and is not a worry to them. They know the different ways in which

bullying happens and the risks in using the internet to their wider safety.

- The strict measures taken by the school to keep pupils safe are in direct proportion to pupils' vulnerability. Risks are thoroughly assessed. Safety procedures are very clearly defined and implemented very effectively. During the inspection a fire alarm led to an unplanned evacuation. Everyone was out of the building and accounted for in within five minutes, which is very reassuring given the significant number of pupils in wheelchairs.
- The safety of students who do work experience or attend college is thoroughly checked beforehand and checks are maintained by staff during the time students are away from school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has given leadership and management a timely boost at a point when the school is facing new challenges and high expectations for pupils' progress and achievement. She has set out the priorities in pursuit of excellence and a clear direction for the future.
- The local authority is positive in its support for the school. Close working partnerships with other special schools and headteachers of outstanding schools have been very valuable to the headteacher in judging the school's effectiveness and driving improvement.
- Middle leadership has risen to the challenge and their focus on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching is sharpened. They perform a very comprehensive range of roles in support of pupils, their families as well as links with agencies relating to safeguarding pupils and all of their preparations for leaving school.
- Checks on pupils' progress are thorough as a result of improvements in gathering progress data and the very detailed analysis managed by the deputy headteacher. This has raised expectations for pupils' progress and challenging targets to aim for. Progress is discussed systematically and this strengthens further the staff's understanding of pupils' learning and their needs.
- The quality of teaching is examined thoroughly by senior and middle leaders and their judgements are checked by consultant colleagues and senior staff from partner schools. However, leaders new to the role of observing lessons, while accurate in listing strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning, are sometimes over generous in the overall judgement of the lesson. This blunts leaders' understanding of teachings' overall quality.
- Teachers have clearly stated and challenging objectives to reach as part of the management of their performance and the school's policy links the achievement of objectives to pay.
- The school has a very strong tradition of professional development for staff which has given the school the high level of expertise in meeting pupils' needs. The headteacher has maintained this and currently focuses training on the skills staff require to tackle pupils' more complex needs.
- The curriculum ensures pupils learn key skills and make progress in their personal development and independence. The wide range of work and activities are planned well to stimulate interest and enjoyment. The sixth form curriculum provides the breadth of experiences leading to students being ready and well prepared for the future.
- The Primary School Sports Funding is well spent on providing the additional adult support required for pupils, particularly the most disabled, to have regular access to the swimming pool. There are better opportunities for pupils to learn to swim and promote their physical development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are dedicated to the continued success of the school and through their expertise and knowledge of the school they sustain a close engagement in its improvement. On appointing the headteacher, they were very clear on the vision and the qualities of leadership the school needed. They are skilled at judging the data on pupils' progress and take a critical look at reports on the quality of teaching and how well teachers have achieved their performance targets. They are very clear on the school's aims and future direction and challenge leaders if they see these are not being met. Governors are active in seeking assurance that pupils' progress and the improvement of teaching are on track. They visit regularly and check the work of the school for themselves.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106966
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	431579

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	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	79
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	19
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Bridge
Headteacher	Julie Mott
Date of previous school inspection	14 December 2010
Telephone number	01709 828262
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