

# Addington School

Woodlands Avenue, Woodley, Reading, RG5 3EU

**Inspection dates** 2–3 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- This is a vibrant community where every pupil is valued and known exceptionally well. Pupils learn to communicate and develop the academic, personal and life skills necessary for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- The relationships at all levels and between adults and pupils are exceptional. Adults are extremely sensitive to each individual and adjust conditions continually so that pupils learn to manage their behaviour well and there is an excellent attitude to learning in lessons.
- Pupils make excellent progress in communication, speaking, physical development, reading and mathematics at all five key stages in the school because of the well-planned teaching activities closely matched to individual development.
- The excellent range of subjects and many activities, especially music and sport, enable pupils to develop a wide range of skills. All subjects are exceptionally well taught so that pupils can make the small steps of progress necessary.
- Leaders and managers at all levels are ambitious. They constantly plan and carry out actions to develop the school further. Plans are wide ranging and based on an accurate view of the school. Middle leaders are well trained and are extremely effective in taking responsibility for initiatives, demonstrating well what pupils have achieved as a result. Leaders and managers are aware that there need to be more precise details for the small steps of learning for more able pupils.
- The governing body is well trained and provides support and challenge for the school. Governors use their expertise well in supporting further development at the school.
- Parents say that they are very pleased with the school and it is definitely the place for their children because they have made such great progress. This was summed up in the comment: 'It truly is an amazing school on every level.'

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 25 lessons taught by 23 teachers, of which eight were joint observations with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, a group of pupils, six members of the Governing Body including the Chair, Vice-Chair and parent governors, and an advisor from the local authority. Informal conversations were held with pupils and parents.
- Inspectors listened to a selection of pupils read.
- The inspection team scrutinised school documentation, including information relating to assessment and pupils' progress, planning for school improvement and records about behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. They took account of 103 questionnaires received from staff.
- There were 32 responses to the on-line questionnaire Parent View. The team considered a survey of parents' views recently undertaken by the school and two letters from parents.

## Inspection team

Janet Dinsmore, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ian McAllister

Additional Inspector

Mary Geddes

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a special school. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. These are for profound and multiple learning difficulties or severe learning difficulties a few pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Over half also have autistic spectrum conditions.
- There is an average proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and also in receipt of the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and those from service families). There is a higher than average proportion of children looked after by the local authority and a few children from service families.
- There is a slightly higher than average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups.
- The school moved into a new purpose built building in 2009. It is a specialist music college and a Special Educational Needs specialist school in Cognition and Learning

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

- Always ensure teachers have accurate knowledge of the small steps of learning for more able pupils and this is clearly communicated to pupils so that they know what to do to succeed.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils often start at the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make excellent progress particularly with their physical and communication development and there are examples of rapid and sustained progress for significant numbers of pupils. Those with the most profound difficulties make outstanding progress in developing forms of communication because well-trained and sensitive staff meet their needs extremely effectively. This developing communication also enables there to be rapid changes in behaviour as children become much less anxious.
- Pupils continue to make excellent progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. They learn letters and the sounds they make and keenly explain which stage of reading books they have reached, enjoying stories and confidently explaining what they have read. Pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding, including those entitled to free school meals, and also those from ethnic minority groups, have made rapid progress with reading. There is no difference in their progress in either mathematics or English and that of their peers at any key stage in this school.
- Pupils develop mathematical skills well. They learn to count, measure and handle money throughout the school so that they will be able to have the skills necessary to move onto further training or employment. More able pupils in Key Stage 2, for example, can measure accurately and calculate volumes needed to make a 'witches potion'.
- Pupils continue to develop communication skills very well as they progress through the school. By the time they reach Key Stages 4 and 5, they can clearly explain what they need to do when they are in the workplace and how the school has helped them to learn. They can express opinions about race equality and understand that everyone is different but equal.
- Pupils develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills well, learning to use a range of equipment to support communication and music. Pupils in Key Stages 4 and 5 apply reading and mathematical skills well in different subjects, for example when following a recipe and checking labels and quantities. Pupils in Key Stage 4 and 5 achieve entry level qualifications and a few pupils a GCSE in mathematics. .

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers plan activities that are very well matched to pupils' abilities so that they can make rapid and sustained progress in lessons. They have excellent knowledge of the small steps of learning for those with the most profound learning difficulties. Teachers and teaching assistants work exceptionally well as a team in each class to enable the correct amount of support and enabling opportunities for increased independence as pupils become more confident in their developing skills.
- Lessons are interesting because teachers plan activities to maximise the development of a full range of skills, especially at Key Stages 4 and 5. Older pupils can use drama and information and communication technology to explain the effects of cyber bullying, for example, and younger pupils used a good range of skills in practical activities as they explored the topic of 'The Greeks'. Visits, real-life situations and work experience placements are used very well for pupils to demonstrate their learning and gain new skills.
- Activities for those with the most profound disabilities and learning difficulties are clearly focused for each individual so that early communication is nurtured and pupils learn exceptionally well. The pace of learning is maintained very well in these lessons. Older pupils respond very effectively to challenging tasks, and technology is used imaginatively to extend 'eye pointing' and hand-eye coordination. Younger pupils actively communicate through excellently planned sensory stimuli.
- Adults use questioning very successfully to develop pupils' speaking skills and abilities to understand what they are learning. Teachers regularly check the progress pupils are making but

there is insufficient detail for the small steps of learning for more able pupils, particularly in writing, for them to make even better progress, as the most able pupils do not always know exactly what they need to do to succeed.

- Reading is taught very effectively. Pupils have individualised programmes and the opportunity to practise literacy skills each day. Any slowing in progress is quickly identified so that 'catch-up' can be successfully planned and carried out.
- Music and sport are taught and used exceptionally well to enable pupils to develop a wide range of skills: working in a team, congratulating each other, performance and developing the resilience and determination that enable them to have very successful work experience placements in Key Stages 4 and 5. Employers comment on how well pupils apply these skills.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Pupils have exceptionally good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is outstanding in and out of lessons. They feel very safe and know that adults are always there to help them and they can talk to them. They move around the purpose-built new building as independently as possible, always being polite and considerate. All staff provide excellent role models for relationships.
- There are rapid and sustained improvements in behaviour for those pupils whose social communication difficulties can lead to poor behaviour. Staff are very well trained to support these pupils, continually communicating encouragement and explanations so that pupils learn to manage their own behaviour and reactions very well.
- Pupils have many opportunities to develop their wider personal and social skills in the rich curriculum that is provided; for example, the younger pupils knew how to be a good audience in the school's performance week, eagerly applauding and supporting their older peers.
- Attendance is good and above average for schools of its type. Pupils report that bullying is very rare and minor name-calling is dealt with very well by staff. Older pupils are fully aware of the potential danger of social networking sites and how to stay safe on the internet.
- Parents comment that their children really want to come to school and it is evident that pupils really enjoy the activities that are provided by the school, eagerly anticipating lunchtime clubs and the many opportunities for being involved in musical performances. Parents report that their children have gained in confidence and make 'great progress'.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- Leadership and management are shared widely across the school so that senior and middle leaders have clear responsibility for ensuring further improvements, for example in developing literacy and mathematics, music and sport. All staff are very confident in the leadership of the school and have all been exceptionally well trained for their roles and responsibilities at all levels.
- The school is highly valued by the local authority and provides training and support for mainstream schools. The local authority provides light touch support for this outstanding school.
- Senior leaders, including the Governing Body, ensure that salary progression is related well to performance in the classroom and responsibility across the school. There is no underperformance as leaders and managers regularly check pupils' progress and the quality of teaching with a range of well-focused activities.
- The school has strong partnerships with local initial teacher training institutions, providing expertise for training programmes. It has excellent relationships with the local colleges and employers to enable pupils to gain work experience and transfer successfully after Key Stage 5.
- The curriculum is exceptional because the excellent teaching of music and sport to all pupils and the precise teaching of very early learning skills mean that all pupils have many opportunities to excel. The methods used for those with autistic spectrum conditions and severe communication and behaviour difficulties ensures exceptional progress in both these areas for these pupils.
- Statutory safeguarding requirements are fully met. The school promotes equality of opportunity

and lack of discrimination in everything it does, for and with the children and young people at the school, giving them the very best educational opportunities possible. Parents speak highly of the school and it provides excellent support, working with other agencies to provide high quality information and support to parents who have disabled children.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are well trained and have an excellent range of skills in business, finance, ICT and local government to effectively challenge and support the school. They ensure that the performance of the headteacher is well managed and continually review the progress of the school against the excellent school improvement plan. They know what parents and pupils think of the school and are actively involved in the monthly school council meetings, amongst other regular visits. They receive reports from all middle leaders on developments and know that pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up premium have been very effectively spent to improve reading skills and these pupils are achieving as well as their peers. They know how well the school's performance compares with that of other schools nationally.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110187
<b>Local authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	403109

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	207
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	41
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Prior
<b>Headteacher</b>	Liz Meek
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13–14 March 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01189 669073
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