

# The Children's Hospital School

Leicester Royal Infirmary, Infirmary Square, Leicester LE1 5WW

## Inspection dates

27–28 June 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher is a dedicated and visionary leader. Together with other senior and department leaders, he has created an aspirational learning culture.
- As a result, pupils make substantial progress across the curriculum and towards their personal targets. This includes children in the early years provision and post-16 students.
- The strong emphasis on improving pupils' behaviour and advancing their personal, social and emotional development enables each and every one to make great gains in all aspects of their learning.
- Extremely effective programmes of support underpin the school's work. Pupils receive personalised learning and support that ensure they make excellent progress towards their individual targets.
- Safeguarding is at the heart of the school. Staff actively promote pupils' welfare. They foster highly positive working relationships with parents and a wide range of agencies.
- Governors have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the school. This enables the governing body to provide highly effective support and challenge to leaders, ensuring the school's continued improvement.
- Teachers and support staff build trusting relationships with pupils and take time to get to know them. They use this information very well to provide effective challenge and support that ensures that pupils of all abilities make considerable progress.
- Staff have a very secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and use resources to great effect, capturing pupils' imagination and developing their confidence and self-belief.
- The curriculum is exciting and wide-ranging. Topics, enrichment activities and special events stimulate curiosity, promoting pupils' interest in learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is very well promoted through the curriculum and day-to-day interactions. All pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils take a great pride in their work and behaviour. They are supportive of each other and celebrate their own successes and those of other class members.
- Leaders have improved the way they collect and use whole-school information. This, however, is not yet presented in a consistent format.

## **Full report**

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

- Senior leaders and governors should refine the presentation of whole-school assessment and other data by:
  - developing and agreeing a format and system for data capture and analysis
  - working collaboratively with leaders across school bases to cover all aspects of the school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The headteacher has been highly effective in building on existing excellent practice and sustaining improvement throughout the whole school. In the two years since his appointment, he has strengthened leadership within the senior team and in other aspects of the school. As a result, department and base leaders now have more responsibility. They have risen to the challenge of ensuring that high-quality teaching and learning are in place in their area of the school.
- Together with other members of the senior team, the headteacher has promoted a learning culture in which pupils and staff feel safe and expectations are high for all. Everyone 'buys in' to this culture and, as a result, the work ethic in the school is very strong. Pupils conduct themselves with great professionalism, taking great pride in their achievements.
- Leaders have worked hard to achieve a seamless cohesion across the school, ensuring consistency for those pupils who move between bases during their time at the school. This means that no learning time is lost and pupils make the transition without becoming anxious.
- Leaders and governors have a very accurate view of the school's effectiveness and the next steps they need to take. They are relentless in their drive for improvement and they make carefully selected changes to the school. These are highly focused on having a positive impact on pupils. A clear system of ongoing review and refinements has led to the school becoming outstanding.
- The very effective personal development of pupils is integral to the school's approach. Every interaction is seen as an opportunity to reinforce pupils' confidence and social skills, and to rekindle their self-belief. Leaders know it takes time for some pupils to engage in learning. They work, therefore, with parents and within multi-agency teams as necessary to develop personalised programmes for pupils. Pupils, in turn, begin to engage, gain a readiness to learn and become successful.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able of them, make similar or better progress than their classmates. The pupil premium funding is spent wisely. Using their detailed knowledge of individual pupils, leaders have identified precisely the barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils face. Pupils of all abilities benefit from tailored teaching and support for their personal development. Leaders monitor these closely to ensure that pupils' achievement improves.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used very well to extend pupils' fitness and skills. Pupils value the wide range of sports on offer and the opportunities to use the new equipment that has been purchased. Older pupils have enjoyed bouldering and canoeing. These activities have supported team-building and developed pupils' confidence.
- Teachers know their subjects well. They use their teaching resources creatively to stimulate interest and promote active learning. They have benefited from training that enabled them to reflect on their teaching and make refinements in their practice to support individual pupils. One particular example is recent training on understanding

autism.

- The curriculum is wide-ranging and interesting for pupils. It is tailored to the needs of individual pupils and takes into account their physical and emotional well-being. Teachers keep close contact with pupils' mainstream schools. They make every endeavour to follow the curriculum and coursework that pupils were already engaged in before they joined The Children's Hospital School. Pupils engage in a wide range of enrichment activities which they enjoy, and which help to promote their self-esteem and confidence.
- Pupils have many opportunities, within and outside the curriculum, to learn how to stay safe and to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The school actively promotes British values. This helps to prepare pupils very well for life in modern Britain. For example, teachers have explored issues such as democracy, mutual respect and tolerance. Pupils have held thoughtful discussions and their written work expresses empathy and understanding.
- The local authority provides much valued support to leaders and governors. The raising achievement partner knows the school very well and provides robust challenge and support as appropriate.
- The school is outward looking and forward thinking. It works nationally with hospital schools across the country, within the Ash Field Teaching Academy Alliance and in partnership with a great many mainstream and special schools across the city, in Leicestershire and beyond. Staff have provided training for others and spoken at conferences. This, in turn, encourages reflective practice and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Parents are very positive about the school. They value its work, and especially the way in which it has enabled their children to succeed socially, emotionally and in their education. One parent said, 'I could not have dreamed how happy and successful my son would be at the school. The staff are amazing angels in disguise, every one of them.'

## **Governance**

- The governors share the belief and vision of leaders that every pupil should be given the very best opportunities to succeed. They have high expectations for the school.
- The governing body has a highly accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. Governors receive detailed information from leaders and seek out appropriate training. They make very effective use of their knowledge of the school to challenge and support leaders, hold them to account and improve the school even further.
- The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities effectively. Governors ensure that they are fully equipped to maintain careful oversight of the governing body's responsibilities. Governors make regular visits to the school and carry out checks. For example, a safeguarding audit took place recently.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The safety and well-being of pupils at The Children's Hospital School are a consistently high priority across all bases. The school places safeguarding at the heart of its work. Governors and leaders systematically check that arrangements for safeguarding, including recruitment processes, meet requirements and are fit for purpose.
- Rigorous checks regarding the suitability of staff and volunteers are made and the school maintains its single central record of these checks accurately.
- All policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated, and staff are very well trained in all aspects of safeguarding. Detailed risk assessments are regularly updated, for example by the outreach team working on home tuition.
- Staff work with a wide range of agencies and on hospital wards. They work within multidisciplinary teams to safeguard pupils and provide individual support to them and their families. Parents say their children feel happy and safe at school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- Extremely high-quality teaching enables pupils to make substantial progress, both academically and personally.
- Teachers and their support assistants know pupils very well. They take the time to build strong relationships with pupils so that they can provide just the right amount of help. Staff direct their support during lessons to individual pupils and motivate them to complete their work. As a result, pupils show excellent attitudes to learning and poor behaviour rarely interrupts learning.
- Staff use assessment information very well to enable all pupils to make excellent progress. Pupils' books show that tasks are matched very carefully to their individual needs. Teachers provide consistent feedback to pupils, giving them time to reflect and improve their work. For example, secondary-age pupils who were studying different artists demonstrated a high standard in their art portfolios, together with the ability to draft and redraft their opinions on particular pieces of their art work.
- Teachers' questioning is skilful and challenges pupils' thinking. Pupils respond with keen interest and a desire to improve their efforts and achieve even more. When asked to find three facts about Queen Elizabeth 1, a primary-age pupil searched for information independently from a range of books. He then showed a good level of understanding and the ability to apply his knowledge as he responded to the teacher's questions. Secondary-age pupils working towards their GCSE examinations demonstrate a determination to complete their coursework to a high standard.
- Teachers and support assistants have high expectations for pupils and, as a result, pupils take a great pride in their work. Presentation in their books across the curriculum is, without exception, excellent, and pupils will not settle for 'second best'.
- Teachers have an excellent knowledge of the subjects they teach and a thorough understanding of pupils' health and well-being. They judge precisely how to pace their lessons to ensure that pupils can achieve their best. Staff know exactly when to

intervene and provide extra support, and when to step back to allow pupils to work independently.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils benefit from far-reaching and highly effective personal support. It greatly improves their ability to gain access to learning and manage their own behaviour. Interventions and strategies to support pupils are personalised and allow them to learn at the right pace in relation to their health. Pupils appreciate the extra help. One pupil said, 'This school really makes a difference.'
- Across the school's three sites, pupils' social development is strongly promoted. Pupils at Leicester Royal Infirmary and Ward 3 at Coalville take part in activities within groups where possible, and demonstrate they can work well together, taking turns and engaging in polite conversation. At Willow Bank, pupils benefit from the school 'Uplift' programme and from the nurture group, through which they show improved self-esteem and a growing confidence.
- Pupils supported through outreach are given individual help and work through personalised programmes. These enable them, over time, to make the transition back to their mainstream schools or to come into one of the hospital school groups. Parents are very supportive and grateful for the quality of support their children receive. One said, 'The staff clearly have exceptional empathy for the children they teach and care for. The pastoral support is outstanding.'
- The strong multi-agency support they receive helps pupils to become confident learners who believe in themselves, despite their anxieties and health difficulties. Pupils benefit from access to a wide range of professionals, within a multidisciplinary team, to support their learning, social, mental health and specific health needs.
- Over time, older pupils have learned to grow more confident about taking their GCSE examinations. School records show that having taken their mock examinations, pupils now show an increased self-belief to enter into the room for the final examinations.
- Bullying is very rare. Pupils understand that bullying can be when someone is unkind or repeatedly hurtful, either directly to them or online. They are supportive of each other and they know whom to go to if there is a problem.
- Discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils learn to respect and appreciate their differences from others through assemblies and many aspects of their school work, such as history, religious education, art and English.
- Leaders expect pupils to attend school regularly and work very hard to improve the attendance of individuals. As a result of many strategies personalised to meet individual needs, together with close inter-agency partnerships, many pupils have improved their attendance substantially since joining The Children's Hospital School.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Staff apply the whole-school approach for behaviour management very consistently. This is because the headteacher and all staff have created a learning environment and belief that everyone will succeed. There are high expectations for learning and behaviour, and all pupils 'buy into' this.
- Staff assess and support behaviour daily and take action to minimise risks and poor behaviour. Risk assessments relating to individual learning environments and subjects are detailed and highly effective in the support they provide to pupils, keeping everyone safe.
- Well-established school routines strongly promote good behaviour. For example, seating plans during practical lessons allow pupils their own space to work. At breaktimes, activities are available together with designated areas for conversation and the opportunity to socialise with each other.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Pupils make substantial progress across the curriculum because teaching closely matches their individual needs, and because expectations of what they can achieve are high.
- Pupils join the school at different times during the academic year and some return because of their health difficulties. All have experienced gaps in their learning and some have highly negative attitudes to learning. No time is wasted in transforming pupils' attitudes. By working with health and other agencies, teachers very quickly close their gaps in learning very precisely. Pupils' rates of progress increase and many pupils make exceptional progress.
- Pupils make excellent progress toward their individual targets because they benefit from the high-quality interventions, therapies and strategies the school provides. These are closely interwoven into their personalised programmes and are reinforced through teaching. Many pupils have significant health issues and related treatment to contend with, and all staff know what to do to help them reach their individual learning goals. As a result, pupils respond very well to the challenges they are set.
- The most able pupils make significant progress across the curriculum. Pupils' books, folders and portfolios show that the tasks are interesting and demanding. Older pupils take their GCSE examinations and the overall results for the school are broadly in line with national averages.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. Many return to their mainstream schools where they are able to continue their studies alongside their classmates.
- Disadvantaged pupils make at least similar progress to that of their classmates, and it is often faster. Leaders ensure that they receive additional support that is closely matched to their individual needs. This ensures that the most able disadvantaged pupils achieve very well too.

- The school's information about pupils' progress shows that pupils make similarly substantial progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their varied starting points and considering their complex health needs.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- Children in the early years provision make outstanding progress. This is due to the very close support they receive.
- Leadership is strong and staff work very closely with children's parents, health and other professionals to ensure that a personalised programme is put in place to match their needs exactly.
- Leaders have a very precise understanding of the children in the early years provision. They work very closely with all professionals who are supporting the children and their families to ensure that very accurate small-step assessments are used effectively.
- Daily routines and procedures are well established from the outset. These ensure that children feel safe and secure in their surroundings. Communication with parents is very strong and parents told inspectors that they appreciate the work that staff put in to ensure that their children are happy.
- Children's pastoral needs are met well by dedicated staff who ensure that every child's social and emotional development is given the highest priority. Because of this, children quickly make outstanding progress from their different starting points.

### 16 to 19 study programmes

### Outstanding

- Students receive an outstanding education and make excellent progress. Leaders have a precise understanding of the needs of each student. All learning is personalised to provide individual programmes which support students to regain confidence and self-belief as they overcome their health issues and engage in their studies.
- Leadership of the provision is outstanding. Staff work very closely with a variety of agencies and within a multidisciplinary team to 'fine-tune' the support they offer to students, some of whom are experiencing really complex health problems.
- The curriculum is individualised and tailored to meet the very specific needs of each student. Because of this, students continue to make the excellent progress seen across the rest of the school.
- Teachers know exactly when to challenge students to do that bit more work, and when they really need extra support and help. As a result, students make outstanding progress from their starting points while they are at the school.
- Some students take or retake their GCSE examinations. All students take a great pride in their work and their books reflect their excellent attitudes to learning. They are supportive of each other and recognise the successes of others.
- Students are very well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment and are supported very well by staff to explore college courses and, where appropriate, to make the transition to them.

## School details

Unique reference number	120363
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10003535

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	4
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shaun Whittingham
Headteacher	Stephen Deadman
Telephone number	0116 229 8137
Website	<a href="http://www.childrenshospitalschool.leicester.sch.uk">www.childrenshospitalschool.leicester.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@childrenshospitalschool.leicester.sch.uk">office@childrenshospitalschool.leicester.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	20–21 February 2013

## Information about this school

- The school provides education for pupils who are too ill to attend their school. It is based on two sites in the City of Leicester and one in Coalville. Some of the education is part time and all pupils are dual-registered with their home school. The school also provides outreach support, mainly to pupils in their homes but sometimes within their local community, for example in a public library.
- One school site is located in the Leicester Royal Infirmary Hospital in the centre of the city. It provides education for primary and secondary pupils who are patients on the children's wards. The hospital is undergoing building and refurbishment work currently,

which has meant the temporary loss of the classroom. Staff are currently using other space available to them.

- Willow Bank School, the school's second site in Leicester, is for secondary-aged pupils who need longer-term provision. It is a fully functioning secondary school, with spaces for a wide range of subjects including art and drama, science, food and sports.
- The third site is Ward 3 at Coalville Community Hospital and educates pupils who are experiencing high levels of emotional challenge and have significant mental health needs. It is an inpatient psychiatric assessment and treatment centre for older patients aged 11 to 18. This facility was previously situated at Oakham House in Leicester City.
- The school also provides an outreach service, which includes home tuition, for pupils who are unable to attend the school's other provisions because of ill health, are recovering from surgery or may have other barriers to attending school.
- The nature of the school means that the roll of the school is constantly changing. The aim of the school is to prepare pupils for a return to their home school or college as soon as they are able to go. If a return to mainstream provision is not possible, the school provides appropriate education for longer. As a result of this, many pupils stay in the school for a few days but others remain for up to several years.
- Pupils who are educated on the Leicester Royal Infirmary or Coalville Hospital sites will sometimes move on to Willow Bank as a step in preparation for a return to their home school.
- The school is a member of the Ash Field Teaching Academy Alliance and staff contribute to training and development activities. It also works closely with colleagues as a member of the City of Leicester Association of Special Schools. The school maintains very close partnerships with the pupils' home schools and with a wide variety of professionals and agencies.
- The school holds the Eco-Schools Bronze Award. It is also a partner in the Learning at Home and in the Hospital (LeHo) European project.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Together with senior leaders, inspectors observed lessons across all sites, spoke with pupils and looked at their work in exercise books, folders and portfolios, and on wall displays.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, and teaching and support staff. Inspectors also met with a member of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a hospital consultant.
- Inspectors spoke with parents on the telephone and took into account 22 responses, including free-text comments, to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. The responses to a staff questionnaire were also considered.
- A range of documents were considered, including the school's information about pupils' achievements and records of pupils' attendance, behaviour and safety. Inspectors also looked at a variety of policies, procedures, the school's self-evaluation and its improvement plan.

## Inspection team

Lynda Morgan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Lewis	Ofsted Inspector

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