

# Rigby Hall Day Special School

Rigby Lane, Astonfields, Bromsgrove, B60 2EP

**Inspection dates** 13–14 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has good capacity for further improvement.
- All pupils make good progress, although this is a little slower in mathematics.
- There are no marked differences in the rates of progress between boys and girls.
- The sixth form is good and provides a good standard of learning. This enables virtually all sixth formers to successfully move on to further education.
- Although many pupils struggle with their reading due to their starting points, the school ensures that they achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning has improved considerably since the last inspection and is good across the whole school.
- Teachers have high expectations and aspirations for all pupils but a small number of pupils are unsure of their targets or the levels at which they are working.
- Leaders and managers at all levels have ensured rapid improvements in teaching and achievement since the last inspection and know what is needed to improve further.
- Attendance is above average and pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe in school and have very positive attitudes to learning. All these help them to achieve well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in mathematics has not kept up with other subjects due to a lack of subject leadership over recent times.
- A small minority of pupils do not always know their targets and so are unclear about how to improve their work and achieve the higher levels.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, of which 11 were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, local authority representatives, parents and carers, the Chair of the Governing Body and pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and reviewed a number of documents including: the school's self-evaluation form; school development plan; records of monitoring of teaching and learning; documents related to attendance and behaviour; and data on pupils' progress.
- The team took account of the 12 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection

## Inspection team

Ronald Hall, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Joseph Skivington

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Rigby Hall Day Special School caters for pupils with disabilities and those with a variety of special educational needs
- The majority of pupils have moderate learning difficulties with an increasing number having a range of other special needs including: speech, language and communication difficulties; autistic spectrum disorders; and severe learning difficulties.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- A number of pupils enter and leave the school at times other than the start or end of a school year from or to other educational establishments.
- The sixth form consists of two classes taught in a separate building on the same site.

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

- Ensure that all pupils know and understand their targets and levels, and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Raise the rates of progress in mathematics across the school so that it matches those of other subjects by:
  - appointing a subject leader by January 2013
  - ensuring that all staff have the skills to teach the subject effectively.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils **is good**

- Standards and rates of progress across the school are rising rapidly with all students making good progress from their starting points. Senior leaders and managers have effectively raised progress rates since the last inspection.
- Those in the sixth form leave with a wide range of suitable qualifications and are well prepared for their future lives. Virtually all go on to further education when they leave the school.
- For those with the skills to read, the school successfully uses a range of methods to build on pupils' starting points and enable them to reach levels suitable for their ages.
- All pupil groups are well catered for and the school promotes equality of opportunity effectively. Pupils who join the school at different times settle well and make good progress as a result of the good quality individual support they receive from staff.
- A small number of pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4 do not always know their targets and are not sure how they can reach the higher levels in their work.
- Changes in the curriculum, especially in Key Stages 3 and 4, to a more practical approach has led to marked improvements in pupils' attitudes and a real desire to learn. As one pupil summed it up, 'Learning is fun and our work is interesting.'
- Assessment and data on pupils' progress is used effectively to meet the individual needs and abilities of each pupil and ensure challenge.

### The quality of teaching **is good**

- The quality of teaching over time has rapidly improved and is good across the whole school and in the sixth form.
- Teachers routinely use assessment and data on pupil progress to plan for their pupils and ensure that they provide sufficient challenge and pace to lessons.
- Typically, teachers use a wide range of suitable resources and methods to enhance learning. They use questioning well to extend and develop pupils' thinking and understanding.
- Pupils, parents and carers say that teaching has improved and is good. In a good English lesson, pupils explored the differences between fact and opinion through the theme of a murder investigation. This inspired pupils' learning and motivated them to explore the theme thoroughly and make good progress in their learning.
- Teachers have high expectations and are aspirational for their pupils. They have good subject knowledge and meet the Teachers' Standards set by the government.
- Although most pupils know their targets, a few in Key Stages 3 and 4 do not and are therefore unclear as to how to move on and prepare for their future learning. This is because of a little inconsistency in marking and feedback to pupils in a small minority of lessons.

- Teachers deploy support staff effectively and this results in all pupils gaining the support they need. In a good mathematics lesson, the teacher and assistants helped younger pupils explore numbers up to 20 with a range of coins. This practical approach provided a good stimulus which helped pupils to overcome communication problems.
- Lessons are well planned and suitable for every pupils' needs and abilities and so ensure that pupils make good progress.

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

- Pupils across the whole school have a positive attitude to learning and this is further demonstrated by their above average attendance.
- Pupils, parents, carers and staff all stated they felt safe and secure in school, as one pupil stated, 'We feel very safe because all the staff care about us, all the doors and gates have codes so we can't just run out, and nobody else can get in to hurt us.'
- Although a small minority of staff, parents, carers and pupils expressed some well-founded concerns regarding behaviour, further investigation by the inspection team revealed these concerns were based on incidents which occurred in the last academic year and had been resolved.
- Pupils themselves recognise that a few of their peers have difficulty in managing their behaviour but that, over time, behaviour in school is good. The school successfully provides good support and assistance to those with behavioural difficulties to ensure they know how to manage their own behaviour.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with effectively as are any bullying issues. This was clearly observed during the inspection when a minor incident arose in the dining area. Staff dealt with the situation calmly, caringly and with skill, resulting in no disturbance to anyone else.
- In one outstanding life skills lesson in Key Stage 2, pupils were learning how to make sandwiches and to feed themselves properly. Not only did the staff take great delight and pleasure from the pupils' successes but the pupils also demonstrated support for each other and genuine pleasure at one another's successes.
- The school has no reported racial incidents. Bullying logs and behaviour records show only a small number of minor incidents, and indicate that these have been addressed promptly.
- Given their learning difficulties, the pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They particularly enjoy physical activities and play well together. They have a good basic understanding of the various types of bullying they may encounter and particularly those linked to use of the internet. This is due to the concerted efforts of all staff to ensure pupils can keep themselves safe.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher, well supported by her leadership team, has successfully improved all aspects of the school since the last inspection, particularly the quality of teaching.

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- The improvements to the school since the last inspection, coupled with current improvement plans and accurate self-evaluation, demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve further.
  - Performance management is used effectively to ensure that all staff are accountable and yet also fully supported through appropriate professional development. This has resulted in the quality of teaching rising considerably since the previous inspection, which in turn has raised standards and rates of progress.
  - The school is fully inclusive and the senior leadership team ensures all pupils reach their full potential. As part of this process, they have good links with other agencies, schools and groups to ensure that all the pupils' needs are met.
  - The extra funding the school receives through the pupil premium is well deployed to provide additional support, resources and opportunities for pupils to make good progress.
  - Due to the loss of the mathematics co-ordinator the school has seen a dip in the rates of pupil progress in this area, which is a little below that of English and other subjects. However, there are robust plans in place to both replace the co-ordinator and to ensure that staff have further support and guidance in the teaching of this subject in order to address this.
  - The local authority has provided effective support in helping the school to validate its monitoring of the quality of teaching and evaluate the steps taken to bring about improvement.
  - The school's monitoring of teaching is effective and this has resulted in the school exceeding the targets set for it in the previous inspection. Senior leaders and managers have a clear understanding of what makes good or better teaching and have successfully communicated this to all staff.
  - There is a clear and shared vision for improvement across the whole school, which is shared by pupils, parents and carers, staff and the governing body. This includes high expectations and aspirations of, and for, all the pupils.
  - The curriculum has been extended and made more practical across the whole school. This has resulted in a marked improvement in pupils' attitudes to learning, greater enjoyment of lessons and a more pupil-focused, relevant content.
  - Assessment systems are robust leading to accurate data on pupil progress. This in turn is effectively used by teachers to inform planning and to ensure that lessons are well matched to the needs and abilities of pupils.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - effectively supports and robustly challenges the school
    - ensures a clear strategic direction and sets challenging targets for both the headteacher and school as a whole
    - secures good arrangements for safeguarding pupils.
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## 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>	117049
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401635

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–18
<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>	113
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	15
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paula Hutchinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cynthia Pitts
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01527 875475
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