

Oxfordshire Hospital School

Raymund Road, Old Marston, Oxford, OX3 0SW

Inspection dates 6–7 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Students make good progress in each of the school's different sectors. This means that they can keep up with their peers back in their home schools and often successfully return to their mainstream school when they are well enough.
- Students show excellent attitudes to learning. They stress how safe they feel and how much they enjoy and appreciate the support of staff in the different learning environments.
- Teachers have high expectations for students to achieve and are almost always effective in encouraging students to work hard. They support students in a wide range of subjects and report back in detail on students' achievements to their home schools.
- The headteacher, with the support of governors, has been very effective in improving the quality of the education offered to students. Senior leaders have strongly focused on improving the performance of all staff and ensuring that teaching enables students in all sectors to make good progress.
- The school works very well with medical and mental health staff. This assists the school to provide good learning opportunities for students and helps many return to their home schools and live normal lives.
- The sixth form at the Highfield sector is good. It supports students well in continuing with their A-level studies in a good range of subjects.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- On a few occasions teaching is not fully effective. At times, a few teachers talk for too long before they engage students in activities. Occasionally, teachers do not question students enough to check how well they are learning.
- The sixth form unit does not provide sufficient opportunities for all students to follow courses which match their interests.
- Teachers who are subject specialists do not always share their expertise sufficiently well with other teachers for the benefit of all students.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited six of the ten sites used by the school. They were unable to visit the school room used at the Horton Hospitaor the Banbury hub, which are 25 miles from the main site.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in eight lessons, taught by eight of the school’s teachers, and they also visited the Helen and Douglas House hospice where they gained a view of the individual support provided for students.
- Inspectors checked on the behaviour of students in lessons and at break and lunch times.
- The inspectors held meetings with members of staff and had informal discussions with some students. Meetings were also held with the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at students’ work, teachers’ lesson plans and achievement data showing students’ progress.
- School policies were sampled and the minutes of recent governing body meetings reviewed.
- Four comments from parents on the on-line Parent View survey were considered, alongside the views of a parent who contacted the lead inspector via email.

Inspection team

Charles Hackett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christine Pollitt

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school takes students who are experiencing either medical or mental health conditions.
- The school has three sectors.
 - A Children's Hospital Teaching Sector for students with a range of medical or surgical conditions located at the Oxford Children's Hospital (Oxford), the Nuffield Orthopaedic Hospital and the Helen and Douglas House Hospice (Oxford).
 - A psychiatric unit for students with mental health issues located at the Highfield Adolescent Unit, Warneford Hospital (Oxford).
 - An Outreach Teaching Sector for students in the community with medical or mental health conditions. This sector also supports teaching at the Horton Hospital, Banbury. These students are taught at home or in one of four classroom bases, within LA Early Intervention Hubs. These are based on four different sites across Oxfordshire.
- The Highfield Sector has a post 16 provision. A small number of post 16 students are also taught in other sectors from time to time
- All students admitted remain on the roll of their 'home' schools. The length of time students are with the school varies from one day to several months. Some students with specific conditions regularly return to the school. The proportions of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional money provided by the government), of disabled students and of those with special educational needs or in the care of the local authority, are continually changing.
- The school does not receive additional money through the pupil premium.
- So far, during the present academic year, over 350 students have been supported by the school.
- Over the past year new senior staff have been appointed to lead each sector.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Over the current academic year, increase the effectiveness of teaching further by:
 - ensuring that teachers do not spend too much time explaining tasks and give students the opportunity to start learning activities as soon as possible
 - ensuring that teachers take sufficient opportunities during lessons to question and check with students on how well they are learning.
- Increase opportunities for students in the sixth form to follow vocational and practical courses.
- During the current academic year, increase the role of specialist subject teachers to enable them to lead learning in their subjects across the school's three sectors.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students achieve well in almost all lessons. Their achievements vary from a sixth form student being able to identify characters in Shakespeare's *Othello* who demonstrated jealousy and envy, to a lower ability student learning to add numbers over a thousand together.
- Examples of students' progress over the time the students are at the school show how well many achieve. Many arrive after lengthy periods out of education or with their previous learning having been restricted because of their illnesses. Examples of their work and the assessments of their achievement show that they usually make good, and sometimes rapid, progress.
- Students make good progress in improving their reading, writing and number skills. Many older students increase the confidence they have in their ability to research aspects on the internet for information to use in their projects. Other older students produce excellent pieces of poetry, which contribute greatly to their spiritual and cultural development.
- Students make particularly good progress in art in all the sectors. High quality A-level work was seen, together with good quality posters celebrating ideas from books studied in a recent 'book week'.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make similarly good progress to other students. For those students in the Children's Hospital Teaching sector and Helen and Douglas House Hospice, progress in continuing to focus on learning gives them excellent opportunities to maintain a sense of normality in their lives.
- Students achieve well in external examinations, such as GCSEs and A levels. These are in an ever increasing range of subjects that students have been studying in their home schools.
- A good range of information on students' achievements is collected in each of the sectors. For example, the Children's Hospital Teaching Sector has well developed systems to check on the achievements of both students who are in hospital for just a few days and those who are there for longer periods or who have to return regularly.
- On a few occasions students do not make good progress in lessons. At these times teachers are slow to involve students in learning activities and they do not always check how well students are learning as the lesson progresses.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers successfully make their teaching fit the personal learning needs of each student. For example, in the Highfield sector high ability students are able to continue GCSE and A-level studies in subjects such as Latin, photography and English, alongside students with learning difficulties who are developing their basic reading skills.
- Teachers and support staff are successful in giving students the experience of following normal expected routines. For example, working in the hubs of the outreach sector is a major step forward for many students who have previously found attending any type of school too stressful.
- Teachers do well to encourage students to engage in learning activities, even though they have been ill or are recovering from an operation. For example, in the Oxford Childrens' Hospital school room, students with a range of medical conditions were very well supported by the teacher and support assistants to take a full part in a cookery lesson. They were able to follow food preparation instructions and recipes carefully to produce simple snacks, such as tomato brochettes.
- In the best lessons, questioning was used well to encourage and develop students' thinking skills. For example, in a mathematics lesson at one of the hubs, a student who had

previously been unwilling to attend school made rapid progress as a result of the teacher's incisive use of questioning.

- In the Highfield sector, teachers consider very carefully their approaches to students to ensure that they take account of their different disorders. Teachers work very closely with medical and mental health staff to adopt the most effective approaches to support students with different conditions. This supports the social and moral development of these students very well.
- In all the sectors the marking of students' work is given a high priority. It successfully recognises students' achievements and gives the students suitable encouragement and ideas for how they can improve it further.
- On a few occasions teachers talk too much, especially at the start of lessons. This means that students find it difficult to remember everything they have been told and have limited opportunities to work things out for themselves.
- Teachers carefully record students' achievements at the end of their lessons. They use these well to plan future work and evaluate how well students are achieving. These records are then used very well to provide valuable information to teachers in the students' home schools.
- In a few lessons the checking of students' progress is less effective. In these lessons teachers do not question students enough to know whether they fully understand the work they are completing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students show excellent attitudes to learning in all the sectors. They enjoy the opportunities to continue their education and not fall behind their peers back in their home schools.
- Students gain confidence, improve their social skills and boost their self-esteem through achieving academic success. This often assists their recovery from their conditions and usually means they can successfully return to their home schools, and confirms good progress in their moral and social development.
- Behaviour across the sectors over time is outstanding. Students follow the expectations of classrooms and usually work very hard, without the need for staff to control their behaviour in any way. When very rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour occur, they are managed extremely well and students are given highly appropriate support.
- Bullying is not an issue in the school. Nevertheless, the school is very active in helping students to understand how unacceptable such behaviour is, through events such as a recent anti-bullying week. Students in the outreach sector, who are provided with laptops, are given very detailed guidance on cyber bullying.
- Students in each sector stress how safe they feel in school. In the Highfield sector students know that mental health staff are on duty at all times to provide them with assistance. At the Children's Hospital Teaching Sector, the quality of care is exceptional and gives students the confidence to try to engage in learning activities.
- Students' views are carefully considered by staff. The Children's Hospital Teaching sector has recently achieved the Investors in Pupils award in recognition of the work it does to encourage students to put forward their views. Displays in both this sector and the Highfield sector feature students expressing their positive views on their experiences in the school.
- Students often improve their attendance in mainstream schools through their experiences at this school. Attendance has often been an issue for many of the long-term students that the school supports. At the Oxfordshire Hospital school they respond positively to the excellent relationships they have with staff, and as a result often re-engage in learning through attending school more often.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is led and managed well by its headteacher and board of governors. The headteacher has a very good understanding of this complex organisation and has created an effective senior leadership structure to manage each of its sectors.
 - The senior team has a clear aim of enabling all students to achieve well academically. The newly appointed senior staff have quickly increased the focus on learning without losing the high quality of care recognised in previous inspections. There has been a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching, including raising expectations of what students can achieve. Good training, linked to the school's improvement plan, has been provided for new staff.
 - The management of the performance of teachers and support staff is given a high priority. Where weaker teaching has been identified, effective action has resulted in significant improvement. The headteacher also ensures that teachers paid on the highest salary levels make substantial contributions to the school's effectiveness.
 - Although standards and expectations are high, the leadership of subjects across each sector is not fully established. Although more specialist teachers have been appointed, these teachers are not yet fully effective in using their specialist skills throughout the school.
 - In each sector, lessons in a good range of subjects are offered. These often are linked to the subjects students were studying in their home schools and support the development of students' literacy and numeracy skills well. This ensures that students do not fall behind with their work.
 - The recently extended sixth form department at the Highfield sector successfully enables students to continue with their studies. There are, though, insufficient age-appropriate facilities and resources, and opportunities for these students to follow vocational courses, linked to those they are following in their home schools, are too limited.
 - The school has good links with other schools that are used well to improve its work. For example, a new assistant headteacher is working at both the hospital school and a local pupil referral unit on a joint project for the mutual benefit of both schools. The school manages its finances well. Although no additional money is allocated to the school through the pupil premium, the school is aware of the pupils for whom their home schools receive an additional allocation and ensures that these students are not disadvantaged in any way.
 - The local authority has provided the school with effective support in the management of staff performance and any staffing consequences as a result of its drive to raise the standards of teaching.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body shares the same desire as the staff team for the school to be as effective as possible. It makes very effective use of the professional skills of its members to check on how well the school is performing, including the quality of teaching. Financial control is stringent and governors are fully aware of how staff are rewarded based on the quality of their work. They have recently approved new procedures for checking the performance of staff evaluated in terms of the impact their work has on students' achievement. Governors give very careful consideration to school policies, ensuring that they are up to date and relevant. They are particularly effective in keeping students safe.
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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

Unique reference number	123337
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	402149
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	72
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	6
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Theresa Davey
Headteacher	David Matthews
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 October 2009
Telephone number	01865 253177
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