

Cricket Green School

Lower Green West, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3AF

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
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 because:

- The school inspires pupils at all ages to excel in their personal development as well as academic achievement.
- The pupils are highly motivated to succeed as a result of the high expectations placed on them by staff.
- The outstanding teaching is successful because of the dedication and high levels of skill displayed by teachers and support assistants.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils make progress which is excellent and above that expected of pupils nationally and especially in similar schools.
- The pupils' behaviour is exemplary. This is because they are happy learners and feel safe and secure and valued by all staff. They have excellent attitudes towards their learning.
- Leadership and management are of a consistently high quality. The established headteacher and senior staff ensure that the performance management of staff has a significant impact on development. The monitoring of teaching is rigorous and accurate and ensures that as the school grows the consistency of teaching standards remains high.
- The newly established sixth form is outstanding. A well-grounded curriculum and innovative practice in securing excellent vocational opportunities has enabled students to maintain very good progress and prepare them well for the next steps in their education.
- The governing body provides outstanding challenge and support to the school's leaders. Governors have a detailed knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons and parts of lessons, all of which were joint observations with members of the senior team.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, senior and middle leaders, governors, and in a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 responses to the on-line questionnaire, (Parent View) as well as recent questionnaires for parents and carers which the school issued. The 84 returned staff questionnaires were also taken into consideration.
- The inspection team observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documentation, including development planning and self-evaluation. Records of the pupils’ progress and standards of teaching since the previous inspection were scrutinised as well as information relating to behaviour and attendance and the safeguarding of the pupils.

Inspection team

Melvyn Blackband, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ann Sydney

Additional Inspector

Sandra Teacher

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school provides for pupils with a diverse range of needs, including those with moderate and severe learning difficulties, pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and those with difficulties in speech and language development.
- The school role has increased since the addition of provision, this year, for students in post-16 education and to accommodate a new primary class.
- The school also provides for the needs of a few pupils on the roll of mainstream schools, and supports re-integration for small numbers into mainstream schools. In addition, the school is designated as a teaching school in partnership with another local school. Together, they form the Merton Special School Alliance. The school does not use alternative provision.
- About half of the pupils are of White British origin while the remainder reflect the ethnic mix of the borough. Approximately 20% of pupils speak English as an additional language although there is none at the earliest stages of learning to speak English. About two thirds of pupils are boys.
- Half of the pupils, a higher than average proportion, are eligible for the pupil premium, which is extra funding to support the progress of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority.
- The headteacher and the great majority of her leadership team were in post at the time of the previous inspection when the school was judged outstanding in all aspects. The headteacher is a National Leader in Education (NLE).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the presentation of assessment information within each key stage is made more consistent across the classes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- While attainment remains low because of the pupils' learning difficulties, all pupils achieve exceptionally well and the overwhelming majority make progress which is significantly above that expected nationally especially in English and mathematics. The single child in the Early Years Foundation Stage has made excellent progress as have the students in the newly formed post-16 provision. Pupils make outstanding progress in literacy and numeracy as a result of good teaching.
- There are no differences in the performance of different groups including those with severe learning difficulties and autism and those who speak English as an additional language. This is because of excellent monitoring and tracking of their performance and the effectiveness of intervention when a pupil is seen to be making slower progress than he is capable of.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make very good progress and the school ensures that the gap is narrowed between these pupils and others in the school. Their reading, writing and mathematics development is excellent and they are well supported through the school's effective use of extra support to ensure they make progress to equal their peers. As a result, their average points score has risen. The equal opportunities of all pupils have a high priority in the school.
- The achievement of pupils since the previous inspection has shown consistent improvement. Pupils follow pathways appropriate to their learning needs and in Year 11 and in the post-16 provision they achieve accreditation for their efforts in a variety of suitable qualifications such as in Functional Skills awards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Other pupils are able to gain Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) awards in modules such as English and mathematics as well as in independence and life-skills focused courses such as food preparation and sport and leisure. The school's tradition of expertise in creative and performing arts provides students with the opportunity to study for BTEC first diplomas in art and design and ASDAN courses in art, drama, music and photography.
- Pupils make excellent progress in all aspects of their personal development. Due to an outstanding curriculum and very good teaching, pupils gradually become able to learn on their own, confident in their abilities and very well motivated to succeed in their studies.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching standards, which were judged outstanding in the previous inspection, have continued to improve despite some changes as teachers leave and are replaced. This is a result of rigorous and supportive monitoring and coaching by the senior team who have very high expectations.
- Extensive, regular checking and monitoring of pupils' progress enables teachers to adapt activities successfully to challenge each pupil to achieve very well. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' progress and as a result, they respond well by trying their best to succeed. This results in outstanding levels of progress in each key stage of the school, including the sixth form.
- Teachers and well-briefed classroom staff provide high levels of individual tuition and support where necessary to make sure each pupil learns confidently and successfully. The pupils receive very good oral feedback on their work. In each lesson, the teacher speaks to individuals so they know how to improve their work in the next small step.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is excellent and enables pupils to make outstanding progress. There are regular assessments of progress in phonics (the sounds letters make) and keywords and in each lesson, across all subjects, teachers ensure that pupils practise speaking, reading and writing at suitable levels. Other professionals such as speech and occupational therapists play a key part, working in partnership with teachers to assess pupils and to devise

challenging targets for them.

- The collecting and checking of information on pupils' progress is a strength of the school. The achievements of the pupils in their studies and their personal development are recorded in detail and this enables teachers to plan precisely for each pupil. Teachers' expertise in techniques to provide for pupils with autism enables them effectively to support their communication and behavioural needs. Nevertheless, occasionally there is insufficient coordination of the generally excellent individual checking methods employed by individual teachers and this can lead to needless repetition of recording when pupils move classes. The senior team is well aware of this issue and has planned appropriate changes.
- Pupils greatly enjoy their lessons. They develop excellent relationships with staff and outstandingly positive attitudes to learning. Due to skilled teaching their social and cultural understanding is increased while their interest in and tolerance of other pupils reflect their excellent spiritual and moral development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning. Parents and carers, pupils and staff are extremely positive about behaviour by all pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is exemplary. They are polite, attentive and respectful to the staff and other pupils. Learning is allowed to flourish without interruption.
- Pupils outside the classroom on the many trips and visits and in the extensive work experience opportunities behave impeccably.
- The pupils' behaviour has been consistently excellent since the previous inspection when it was judged outstanding. The school's records show very few incidents and these are extremely well recorded. Bullying is almost unknown. The pupils have made excellent progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. There are no recorded incidents of racist behaviour or derogatory comments about disability. An ethos of tolerance and positive support for others pervades the school.
- Incidents of challenging behaviour are looked on as opportunities to show pupils how to behave in the future. The management of behaviour is excellent. Pupils understand very well how to behave. As a result, there is a harmonious atmosphere where pupils are calm and helpful and can learn well.
- The pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe, especially as they are prepared for work experience and longer periods of vocational experience outside school. Safeguarding arrangements are secure.
- Attendance is high and significantly above levels for comparable schools. Pupils enjoy school; they are punctual to lessons and come into school each day with smiles and friendly greetings for staff and other pupils.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's energy, expertise and commitment to the school have ensured that standards have continued to improve since the previous inspection. She is well supported by a very competent leadership team. The school's track record since the previous inspection, the high standards of teaching, the very effective work of the governing body and rigorous self-evaluation by the school to ensure progress continues suggest that there is an outstanding capacity to sustain further improvement.
- Teaching is so good because of high levels of monitoring by the senior team and a refusal to accept second best. Teachers are supported very well through performance management and the work of individuals is monitored robustly and effectively linked to teachers' salary progression. This is accompanied by tailored and effective training. As a result, there is a highly skilled and enthusiastic work force. Teachers are in demand to advise and train other teachers

within the local authority because of the school's teaching school status.

- Procedures and policies are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness and implementation. Development planning is based on accurate information of pupils' progress and teachers' performance. Leaders are very aware of the areas still to develop further, including the co-ordination of assessment methods.
- Post-16 provision has got off to a flying start because of clear policies and regular monitoring of effectiveness. Significant partnerships have developed, not least the 'Project Search' where students work in a variety of roles on a long-term basis at the local hospital. The school provides excellent outreach facilities and advice to mainstream schools in the borough. This reflects the expertise of the staff and gives pupils the opportunity to mix with pupils from other schools, supporting their social development.
- Parents and carers have a very high opinion of the school. Responses to questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive. Parents and carers know their children are safe and well cared for, that they look forward to school and are doing well.
- The curriculum is outstanding. It is very well matched to the needs of the pupils and prepares them successfully for later life. There is a successful emphasis on the core skills of English and mathematics. The curriculum is broad and balanced. There are strengths in performing and visual arts and in the pupils' personal development. It is highly inclusive where discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. All pupils experience activities well adapted for their ability and interests and they all have equal opportunity to take part in trips and visits, including a residential experience. Older pupils have increasing opportunities to work on their own and take control of their learning in Enterprise work, in work experience and through specific opportunities to assess and comment on their own work and progress. The care and safeguarding of pupils are outstanding.

■ **The governance of the school: is outstanding**

Governors visit school regularly and have a very clear grasp of what is happening and standards of overall provision. They are very aware of the quality of teaching through visits and through excellent performance management arrangements in which they take full part. Governors have a strong understanding of how teachers are rewarded and what is done in the school to tackle underperformance. The governing body receives regular updates on the pupils' progress. Governors therefore are familiar with progress data and how the school compares with other schools. They undergo regular training to maintain their ability to challenge and support the school. The governors are very aware of safeguarding procedures and ensure that statutory requirements are met. They have had a substantial influence on the use of the pupil premium in making sure that the money is used to narrow the gap for children entitled to the support. The local authority monitors the school regularly and has had a positive input into the school's success.

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	102699
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	400184

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	4–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	20
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Vickers
Headteacher	Celia Dawson
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 March 2010
Telephone number	020 8640 1177
Fax number	020 8640 4539
Email address	head@cricketgreen.merton.sch.uk

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