

Kennel Lane School

Kennel Lane, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG42 2EX

Inspection dates 6–7 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Many pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 do not make adequate progress because of weak teaching over time.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are often too low and pupils waste too much time completing poor quality activities in lessons. Teachers do not always match activities well enough to the needs of different pupils.
- Pupils are not given enough information about how well they are doing or what they could do to improve their work.
- In lessons, some teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to learn independently. As a result, pupils become passive and this does not help them to make good progress.
- The sixth form is inadequate. Too many pupils make insufficient progress in literacy and numeracy.
- Leaders and managers do not analyse or use data about pupils' outcomes well enough to ensure that pupils are making expected progress. They have not ensured that there is an effective whole-school approach to teaching reading or writing.
- Despite recent improvements, leaders and managers have not been effective in sustaining the necessary improvements since the previous inspection. They have not done enough to secure good teaching over time.
- Leaders' judgements about how well the school is doing are not detailed or accurate enough. They do not have precise plans for further improvement based on data or on their own evaluations.
- Governors do not hold the school to account well enough because they do not have accurate information about how well the school is doing.

The school has the following strengths:

- As a result of good teaching and interesting activities, pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school are professional and respectful at all times. Pupils are very well cared for and feel very safe.
- There is some good teaching in the school on which the school can build.
- Adults are very skilled in managing pupils' sometimes challenging behaviour.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons in a range of subjects and year groups, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the sixth form. An inspector also visited the inclusion class at Birch Hill Primary School.
- Approximately half of lessons were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors took account of the 30 responses to the online parents’ and carers’ survey, Parent View, and of the school’s own recent parents’ and carers’ survey.
- Meetings were held with various members of staff and representatives from the governing body. Inspectors spoke to pupils and looked at behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspectors also looked at documentation about pupils’ progress, teaching and planning. The school’s documents on safeguarding were scrutinised, together with records of attendance and pupils’ behaviour.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading in classes and looked at their work.

Inspection team

Helen Howard, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andy Lole

Additional Inspector

Michael Buist

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

Information about this school

- Kennel Lane is a special school for pupils aged from two to 19 years of age, most of whom have moderate or severe learning difficulties, including autistic spectrum disorders. A few have profound and multiple learning difficulties. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. There are more boys than girls.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes within each key stage.
- Just over one quarter of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are eligible for free school meals, pupils from service families and those in care), which is in line with the national average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Nearly one half of pupils join the school at different stages of their school career and at different times of the year.
- The majority of Key Stage 4 and 6th form pupils attend college placements part time at Reading College, Berkshire College of Agriculture and Bracknell and Wokingham College. Many also take part in activities at a wide range of local schools and colleges including Meadow Vale School Nursery, Ravenswood Village, Heathfields School, Addington School and Garth Hill College.
- Eleven primary-age pupils attend an inclusion class at Birch Hill Primary School, Bracknell, for four days each week.
- The school is part of a teaching schools partnership with local schools, providing support and training for other teachers. It also provides an 'outreach service', providing support and advice to schools that have pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that none is inadequate and more is good by ensuring that teachers:
 - have high expectations of what pupils can do
 - focus their teaching more on telling pupils what they are expected to learn, rather than simply on what tasks they will complete, so pupils are able to assess how well they have done
 - match activities to the different needs of pupils
 - make sure time is not wasted in lessons on poor quality activities
 - let pupils know how well they have done and, where appropriate, how they can improve their work.
- Raise achievement in English and mathematics, especially in Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form, by:
 - ensuring that there is a consistent, whole-school approach to teaching reading and writing skills
 - giving pupils more opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in a range of different subjects.

- Improve pupils' behaviour by ensuring that teachers give pupils more opportunities to think about their learning and work more independently.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - analysing information about pupils' achievement over time, compared to national data, so that the school is secure in judging whether pupils are making expected progress
 - ensuring the impact of additional funding is carefully evaluated so the school, including governors, know whether this money is being used effectively to support eligible pupils
 - using data about pupils' achievement to evaluate the school's strengths and areas for development
 - planning detailed actions for improvement, based on an accurate self-assessment of the schools' provision and outcomes
 - making sure that the phonics (matching letters to the sounds they make) approach to teaching reading to younger pupils is embedded across the school
 - ensuring that governors have the information they need in order to understand their role in holding the school fully to account.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Many pupils currently in Key Stages 3 and 4 do not make expected progress in literacy or numeracy from their starting points because the quality of teaching over time is inadequate. School data show that a significant number of these pupils have made little or no progress in the last three years in either subject.
- Many pupils make far less progress in reading than is expected for their age. While some younger pupils are able to sound out letters and combinations of letters to help them read new words, many older pupils are not taught these phonics skills and their progress is much slower as a result.
- In the sixth form, pupils' progress is inadequate in both English and mathematics as a result of weak teaching. Too many pupils have made progress that is well below that expected from their starting points. New accredited courses have recently been introduced but it is too early to see the impact of this action on achievement.
- The information that the school has about pupils' performance overall has not been analysed sufficiently and it is difficult to gain an accurate picture of how well all pupils and groups of pupils have done in the past. There are no significant differences in progress between boys, girls, other groups and all pupils. Pupils who join the school at different times during the year make similar progress to all pupils.
- School records for the last year show that pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding made similar progress to others. Nearly one third of eligible pupils made less than expected progress overall. There is no evaluation of the impact of the use of the additional funding and so the school is not aware of whether this money is being used effectively.
- Pupils enjoy a range of physical education activities in lessons and after-school clubs and are encouraged to participate in order to support a healthy lifestyle. The school plans to use additional sports funding to give more pupils the opportunity to try a wider range of sports both at the school and in the local community.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in listening, attention and in self-confidence. This reflects the ability of adults to successfully engage children and focus them on learning. The established approach to reading is helping children to make fast progress. The majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 also make good progress in both literacy and numeracy because teaching, in this part of the school is consistently good.
- Key Stage 2 pupils, including those who attend an inclusion class at a local primary school, achieve well from their starting points because they are taught well. The school supervises and monitors the progress of pupils who attend other local schools and colleges and they make good progress in these sessions.
- Pupils make good gains in their communication and social skills. Adults skilfully support the range of communication systems, including symbols, signing and electronic aids, to enable pupils to join in and make responses.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially in Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form. Consequently, activities are frequently too easy or consist of poor quality activities, which waste time and slow the progress that pupils could make.
- Although pupils often have a wide range of abilities, in some lessons they all do the same work, which means that they do not make the fast progress they could. Some teachers do not regularly match activities to pupils' abilities well enough.
- In many lessons observed, teachers planned tasks, rather than focusing on what pupils needed to learn by completing the activity. The purpose of the lesson was not made clear to pupils and so they were not able to check how well they had achieved or, where appropriate, to know what

they could do to improve.

- There is an inconsistent approach to teaching reading, writing and mathematics for the older pupils. This means that the progress they make depends too much on individual teachers' skills or knowledge. Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to practise the skills they learn in mathematics lessons across a range of other subjects. Teachers offer more opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills, including communication and writing, in other subjects.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Adults carefully plan, provide interesting equipment and make regular assessments to match activities to children's needs. This ensures that they enjoy learning and make good progress.
- There is some good teaching across the school and it is consistently good in Key Stages 1 and 2. In these lessons, teaching is interesting, challenging and fun. Adults know the pupils well and fully involve them in their learning. Teachers make sure that pupils know what they need to achieve and use criteria to measure success, which are small steps to remind them what they are trying to achieve and that they can use to check how well they have done.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- In lessons, the standard of behaviour relates directly to the quality of teaching. When teaching is inadequate or requires improvement, pupils are not offered enough opportunities to learn independently. In some lessons, pupils rely too much on adults to tell them what to do or they wait for prompts: they become passive and uninvolved so that the pace of learning slows and they do not make rapid progress.
- When teaching is good, pupils are enthusiastic and motivated to do well. They are able to think about what they have learnt and make choices about their next steps in learning.
- Pupils mostly behave well, especially in the better lessons and around the school. There are very good relationships with adults and between pupils. Pupils say that they trust the adults and can approach them if they have concerns. They told inspectors that bullying is rare but that they know what to do if it happens. They trust adults to manage concerns and say that bullying is not tolerated. There is no evidence of racist or homophobic bullying. The school tackles discrimination robustly.
- Over time, there is evidence to show that the behaviour of individual pupils, especially those who have an autistic spectrum disorder, improves significantly. Consequently the local authority commissions support from the school to support other teachers. Individual teaching assistants are very skilful in building relationships and enabling pupils to join in activities. The secondary resource area provides a caring and supportive environment for the most vulnerable pupils and, as a result, these pupils make good progress in their communication skills.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and most parents and carers, who responded to Parent View and to the school's survey, agree. The school's pastoral systems ensure that pupils are well cared for and are happy in school. Adults are overwhelmingly positive and encouraging and consequently pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is above that found in similar schools nationally.
- Incidents involving the need for adults to use physical handling have greatly reduced over time. When such incidents do happen, they are carefully recorded and the pupil's views are sought afterwards. Exclusions are very rare.

The leadership and management

are inadequate

- Leaders and managers have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to make further improvements. They have not done enough to sustain the improvements from the previous inspection. They have been unable to secure good teaching and too much remains inadequate. This has resulted in inadequate achievement overall for older pupils.
- Self-evaluation is weak. Although the school has information about pupils' achievement, it has

not analysed this in enough detail to establish whether pupils have made expected progress over time compared to national data for pupils with similar needs.

- Leaders and managers do not have detailed information about the school's strengths and areas for development, or precise actions for further improvement. They have not ensured that there is a whole-school approach to teaching reading and writing so that pupils can make good progress as they move through the school.
- The local authority has given light touch support to the school since the last inspection by providing advice for new leaders on analysing data. However, this has not led to sufficient improvement in the school's ability to evaluate pupils' performance.
- The school is developing the curriculum to provide a wider range of activities and courses, some of which were introduced recently. The school promotes equal opportunities to ensure that all pupils have the same access to all activities, but not all pupils make good progress. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness through themed days, the curriculum and in tutor time.
- Pupils achieve best when they have something practical and memorable to do in lessons. They especially enjoy outdoor learning activities such as those in the forest school. Sixth form pupils say they enjoy work-related activities such as construction and cooking and the short courses at local colleges. Most pupils go on to college or residential placements when they leave school.
- The school has developed very good partnerships with other agencies, including a range of therapists who support speech and language and sensory needs and pupils' physical development. There are many strong links with the local community and with other schools.
- The majority of parents and carers are positive about the school although a few who responded to Parent View do not feel that they receive enough information about their child's progress.
- Other leaders and managers, who are responsible for areas such as subjects or key stages, are developing their role. The new systems for collecting data and for monitoring are helping them to become more accountable for their area of work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Although governors have received training on a range of areas, they have not held the school properly to account because they do not have accurate information about outcomes or the quality of teaching. They do not know enough about pupils' achievement or about the impact of the pupil premium funding. They have therefore been unable to challenge school leaders to make the necessary improvements. While teachers' performance management is linked to the teachers' standards, it is not yet linked to pay as this does not come into effect until next year. Governors meet statutory requirements. Safeguarding requirements are met and governors have undertaken appropriate training in child protection and safe recruitment.

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	110190
Local authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	426556

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	36
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Shillcock
Headteacher	Andrea de Bunsen
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 February 2011
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