



# Colnbrook School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 117670  
**LEA** HERTFORDSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 280127  
**Inspection dates** 5 October 2005 to 6 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Ms. Janet Thompson LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	Hayling Road
<b>School category</b>	Community special		WD19 7UY
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02084281281
<b>Number on roll</b>	87	<b>Fax number</b>	02084215359
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Bernard Bell
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. Richard Hill

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 5 October 2005 - 6 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 280127
-----------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) in the fifth week of the Autumn term.

## **Description of the school**

Colnbrook provides education for primary aged pupils with a range of learning difficulties and disabilities. Approximately half the pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Other pupils at the school have severe learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. Eight of the pupils with autistic spectrum disorders are based in designated specialist provision at the school. Each year the school provides 500 sessions of outreach service for mainstream schools. The school has an exceptionally good standing in the community and receives very high levels of support from parents of pupils both past and present.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

Colnbrook is an outstanding school where pupils make extremely good progress. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of pupils' personal development but have a more positive view of the pupils' achievement. The school has invested heavily in very good training and professional development. As a result, high quality teaching ensures that pupils make significant progress in all areas. Adults at the school have exceptionally good relationships with the pupils and give them well-targeted help. However, some pupils would benefit from being more actively involved in planning and reviewing their own learning. The outreach service has enhanced provision within the school by increasing staff expertise and is well thought of by staff from receiving schools. The curriculum is carefully structured to meet the needs of all pupils across an increasing range of abilities. There is appropriate emphasis on ensuring that learning is relevant as well as providing rich experiences. Leadership by the headteacher and deputy is a strength that gives the school great capacity to improve. This is evident from the very good progress made since the last inspection and the careful use of resources to improve progress made by pupils. There is responsible management of the budget to improve provision for pupils at the school and those supported by the outreach programme. Pupils obviously enjoy school and were very keen to invite the inspector into their classrooms to see their work. Well established routines enable pupils to grow in confidence and independence. The school endeavours to encourage social opportunities after school; for example many pupils attend local sports clubs for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to work or socialise with pupils from mainstream primary schools during the school day.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase opportunities for pupils to be involved in assessing their own learning and setting new challenges - Increase opportunities for pupils to be involved in decision-making about their futures - Establish more regular opportunities for pupils to mix with other pupils from mainstream schools.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Progress is outstanding for a large majority of pupils particularly in English and mathematics. The few pupils who enter school in the Foundation Stage are given a very good start to their education. Many pupils move up through the steps of learning by more than two levels between Key Stages 1 and 2; this is well above the expectations for pupils with similar levels of learning difficulties and disabilities. The school quickly identifies pupils not making sufficient progress and provides additional help. There are many examples where this is highly effective in raising achievement. Frequently, pupils who have started at the school with very limited communication are now confidently communicating with adults and other pupils. In one example, a pupil's

exceptional progress has enabled him to take a very active role in the school council and in supporting younger pupils. The school effectively promotes inclusion within its own community. Pupils with more significant needs frequently make the required progress to access the curriculum from the main school classes. The pupils' achievement is well established and pupils are able to transfer the skills they learn to a variety of situations. This prepares them well for the future. Teachers set high expectations for work and pupils eagerly rise to the challenge. While the work is well targeted for pupils they are sometimes too dependent on the adults to tell them how to improve. They are not sufficiently involved in reviewing their own work in order to develop their own understanding of how they can improve their learning.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Personal development and the well-being of the pupils are outstanding. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to understand and learn about different cultures and religions. During the inspection there were some very good examples of pupils identifying similarities between two religions. Spiritual development is encouraged in acts of collective worship and pupils are given many opportunities for reflection. Pupils take great pride in their own achievements and those of others and are quick to share these with visitors. Many lessons inspire pupils and photographic records illustrate the high levels of enjoyment experienced by the pupils. Pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school and attendance is good. Pupils take active exercise at the start of the school day and have a good understanding about the benefits of this for their learning. Healthy eating is promoted and many children make healthy choices. For some children with a very restricted diet, the school, in conjunction with the speech and language therapist, designs individual learning programmes that are effectively implemented to extend the range of foods eaten. Pupils behave extremely well and have a well developed understanding of right and wrong. They are actively engaged in their learning and take a great deal of pride in their school. Pupils have a good understanding of socially acceptable behaviour. The way in which the pupils conducted themselves with the inspector was exemplary. At less formal times during the school day the children cooperate well with each other and many examples of child-led games occur at play time. Older pupils are given increasing opportunities to take on responsibility within the school, supporting younger pupils at play time and assembly. In every class, pupils are given opportunities to make decisions about their conduct and these are closely related to the very popular whole school reward system. There is a good range of lunch-time clubs for pupils to choose from. The school is extremely consistent in using symbols to aid communication. The vast majority of pupils are able to follow the routines of the school day independently. This encourages safe practices at school, home and when out in the community, and helps pupils to prepare for the future. The school works well in partnership with parents and has helped pupils understand and learn about unfamiliar situations.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

Teaching is outstanding. The inspectors observed some exemplary practice that enabled pupils to make outstanding progress. The headteacher has a very well developed monitoring system using lesson observations and pupil progress to identify areas where teachers can improve their practice. This and very good assessment procedures have ensured that teaching constantly improves and as a result pupils make great strides in their learning. Effective links with parents further extends pupils' learning. The high quality of teaching has been maintained over time. All staff are highly trained and this is evident in their everyday practice. The most effective teaching is characterised by outstanding relationships between staff and pupils. Staff are able to use humour to encourage pupils to make extra effort. A deep understanding of the pupils' needs and detailed planning lead to the effective use of support staff and resources to meet a wide range of ability. Communication systems are well established and pupils with particular communication needs have well targeted help. Staff encourage good behaviour by always being positive but at the same time giving clear messages about expectations. They are creative in presenting activities that help pupils learn and reinforce their learning in a variety of ways. Pupils are encouraged to work individually as well as cooperatively.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all pupils. Appropriate time is given to all subjects. There is well planned progression and it is designed to maximise links across subjects so that children learn the same thing in a variety of different ways. There are very good examples of work using dance and drama to enrich and reinforce learning in other subjects. The curriculum is greatly enriched by visitors to the school as well as meaningful visits to the local community. These have a good impact on children's future lives. In one example an under-confident child who was not always keen to attend school flourished after going away with his friends on the school camp. This helped him attend school more regularly and gave him confidence for his secondary school placement. The annual harvest festival celebration is organised by pupils. The pupils write to invite people from the local community and then act as their hosts. This helps them transfer learnt skills to other situations and provides a good contribution to the community. The additional curriculum for speech and language and social skills has had a significant impact on pupils' progress. These regular focused sessions are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils and enable them to transfer skills back into their usual classrooms. The school has not been successful in establishing regular opportunities across the school for pupils to work alongside their mainstream peers. For some pupils this has led to a lack of opportunity for them to further develop social skills.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good care, guidance and support. Effective systems are in place to safeguard pupils. Staff are well trained and they are very good at working with other agencies. There is well planned teaching in personal, social and health education to help pupils keep themselves safe. They are taught how to explain why they are upset or where they are hurt and relevant symbols are always available to help this. The pupils are treated with respect at all times. Pupils feel safe and are confident to try new things with the support of staff and friends. Risk assessments are thorough and inform additional programmes required by some pupils to help them remain safe and to gain full access to the curriculum. However, the practice in place for exploring pupils' views about aspects of the school has not been developed sufficiently to inform future choices. Pupils are not sufficiently involved enough in decision-making processes. The school works hard to share information with parents. Shared learning programmes help parents to be actively involved in assisting their child to make progress. Occasionally, parents feel they would like more information about their child's progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Outstanding leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is directly linked to the exemplary progress made by pupils. They are extremely thorough in checking the quality of teaching and learning. Highly effective systems are in place to find out how well practices and resources at the school benefit the pupils. This information is used to inform future developments and ensure equality of opportunity. Not all members of the leadership team, however, have the headteacher's detailed understanding of self-evaluation systems. Occasionally written evaluation does not reflect practice, which is always centred on the outcomes for pupils. Because of the strength of the leadership, the school is well placed to make further improvements. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. As a result of evaluating their own effectiveness, a new structure for the governors is now in place. This is sharply focused on teaching and learning. The importance given to staff development has resulted in a very high number of staff gaining additional qualifications. This helps staff to meet the needs of the pupils at the school and those receiving outreach more effectively. The development opportunities for staff encourage them to stay at the school. Parents' views are sought regularly and any issues are taken seriously. There is clear evidence of the school acting on what they have found out even if it is only mentioned by a very small number of parents. The recently formed school council and opportunities for circle time have opened up a forum for the pupils to offer their opinions and there is already evidence of changes that have been made in response to their ideas.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------	--------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for helping me to feel so welcome at your school. I enjoyed meeting you and learnt a great deal about your school. I would especially like to thank the school council for meeting with me and those pupils who helped me at lunch time. What I liked about your school: - You all enjoy coming to school and are proud of your achievements. - The school helps you to work hard and you make excellent progress. - All the adults in your school work very hard to make learning fun. - They know you very well and help you if you are sad or ill. - Many of you help each other at school and you behave very well. - Mr Hill is an excellent headteacher and all the teachers at your school prepare very good lessons to help you learn. What I have asked your school to do now: - I would like the school to make sure they know what all of you think of the school. The school council helps some of you tell adults what you think and I would like members of the school council to make sure they find out what other children think as well. - I would like the school to give you more opportunities to mark your own work and decide how you might improve. - I would like the school to work with other schools so that you meet and work with more children of your own age. I hope you continue to enjoy your learning and make such excellent progress.