

Vale Resource Base

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102176
Local Authority	Haringey
Inspection number	307919
Inspection dates	12–13 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Smith

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs G Priddey
Headteacher	Mr G Hill
Date of previous school inspection	23 February 2004
School address	c/o Northumberland Pk Community Trulock Road Tottenham London N17 0PG
Telephone number	020 8801 6111
Fax number	020 8801 1140

Age group	2-16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Provision is based on two primary and one secondary mainstream school sites. Pupils have statements of special educational needs for a variety of physical and sensory impairments, medical conditions, learning difficulties, communication difficulties and emotional and behavioural needs. Most pupils come from a culturally diverse and often socially deprived background with the largest group coming from Black African family backgrounds. There are just under twice as many boys as girls and currently seven pupils are looked after by the local authority. The school has been awarded the Investors in People Award and has recently secured the International School Award Foundation level as the first step in the accreditation process. The school offers an outreach support service to teachers and pupils in mainstream schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding and dynamic school where leadership and management promote high quality care and education across all three sites. Learners' achievement is at the heart of all decision making. The headteacher, senior leadership team and business manager work very effectively together and have a clear strategic vision for school improvement. Clear roles and responsibilities ensure consistent practices support the smooth running of each site. This enables all learners to make the very best of their learning opportunities. All staff are highly committed to the care and achievement of all learners and, with well-informed governors, continue to improve school provision through their systematic monitoring and effective self-evaluation. Development planning clearly shows there is an understanding of what needs to be improved and what strategies are needed to achieve success. A parent, reflecting the views of many, wrote, 'The school offers excellent facilities to challenge and develop my son's strengths and support his needs'. The chair of governors, an ex-parent said, 'The school gives learners confidence and never limits their horizons'.

Learners' standards within and across the sites vary widely. They are well below expected levels on entry to the Foundation Stage and when they leave school most are still performing below those of their mainstream peers because of their learning difficulties. Some learners, however, achieve age related standards and do very well in their GCSE examinations and other accredited courses. Given their low starting points, and the personal barriers to their learning, the achievement and progress of the great majority of learners are outstanding. The youngest children get the best possible start to school life and make excellent progress overall, particularly in their communication and personal and social development. As pupils get older they develop confidence and continue to improve their communication and personal development skills that support their move up to the secondary school. Learners develop confidence through their successes and appreciate being cared for and valued by staff. This helps to promote their social and emotional development.

Learners' outstanding progress is directly due to the outstanding relationships, teamwork, curriculum, guidance, and teaching and support they receive for their individual needs. There is an emphasis for all learners on independent learning, making choices and working towards their individual challenging targets, which the great majority successfully achieve. The assessment of learners' needs and the tracking of their progress are effective and different learning styles are adopted to ensure they get the very best from all school activities. The school is aware of the need to further analyse whole school progress data and offer teachers an additional perspective to use in their planning.

The curriculum offers a relevant, interesting, rich and challenging range of learning activities across all sites that effectively meets the needs of all learners. Information and communication technology (ICT) very effectively supports learning and the school is continually developing this aspect to meet learners' ever increasingly complex needs. Learners' personal development and understanding of the world around them is exceptionally well supported by visits into the community and visiting specialists supporting learning projects in the school. After school and weekend clubs and activities enrich learning and greatly contribute to learners' knowledge, confidence and overall achievement. Outstanding links with the mainstream schools support the inclusion of learners across all sites. Learners work alongside their mainstream peers whenever it is seen to meet their individual needs. Learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They show positive attitudes and empathy towards each other and

the inclusion opportunities with their mainstream peers is of huge benefit to all learners. Attitudes to learning are excellent and everyone enthusiastically engages in all activities. All learners love coming to school and any absence is usually associated with medical needs. The school has continued to improve since the last inspection and the best practices are consistently being delivered across all sites. The support offered to teachers and pupils in mainstream schools is very well coordinated and is clearly recognized and appreciated by the schools. Governors are well informed and take an active part in monitoring, self-evaluation and in the strategic management of the school. The impact of leadership and management is enabling all learners to achieve and make continued excellent progress. The capacity to improve further is excellent.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children have the highest possible level of care and support and have regular inclusive contact with their mainstream peers. The teamwork between teachers, nursery nurses and therapists, and the joint planning with mainstream teachers, ensure that all individual needs are exceptionally well met. Children make excellent progress from initially very low levels of attainment in their communication and personal development. They learn to be independent, make choices and explore their own learning through well-planned, relevant and stimulating activities. They are very well prepared for when they move up the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further analyse the information and data on learners' progress to enhance and inform teachers' planning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Learners' standards vary enormously from well below, to in line with national averages. However, the progress and achievement of learners of all ages, are excellent in relation to their starting points and their challenging individual targets. Children in the Foundation Stage are given the confidence to try new things and primary aged pupils make excellent gains in English, mathematics, science and in their personal and social development. This continues into their secondary education where students make good to excellent gains in all subjects across the curriculum. There is no significant difference in the achievement of different groups of learners. Parents are very happy with the progress their children make both personally and academically. A parent said, 'My son has made great progress since he started at the school and is now far more independent'. All students achieve a range of relevant accreditation by the time they leave school and they are well prepared to take on the challenges and transition to the sixth form provision.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of all learners are outstanding. Excellent relationships and mutual respect between staff and learners result in a very positive learning environment. Learners say they really enjoy their lessons and they particularly like the interesting trips out of school. One learner said, 'Lessons are fun and I really like the teachers who help me with my work'. Learners are encouraged to think of others and trips into the community make them

reflect on the lives of others and consider their own place in society. Learners of all ages relish taking responsibility whenever they are able, for example, being a representative on the school council or selling enterprise products to the inspector. Attendance is excellent. Learners are rigorously encouraged to voice their opinions and are involved in the processes of teacher recruitment. They show their understanding of their rights and responsibilities when asking relevant questions and considering their own solutions to problems. They know how to be healthy and safe and recognise the importance of regular exercise. Useful skills are learned through taking part in enterprise and fund raising events. Older students take part in community and work experience placements and learn practical skills that will help them when they leave school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

All learners thoroughly enjoy their lessons and make excellent progress. This is because activities are interesting, fun and relevant and they receive excellent support for their individual needs. Learners gain confidence from their successes and respond to do their very best in a positive and challenging environment. Teaching and learning are consistently of the highest order and the excellent teamwork and support ensures learners make the best possible progress. All staff are eager to improve their skills and practice, and have good access to relevant training opportunities. The most effective learning styles for different learners are carefully considered, planned and delivered to ensure progress rates are the best they can be. Staff know learners very well and use information and progress data in their lesson planning. All support staff make a significant contribution to learners' progress and achievement. They are also responsible for managing a wide range of additional learning activities in and out of school time that are greatly appreciated. Resources, including ICT, are very effectively used to support learning and effort and achievement is celebrated at all times.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding and rich in exciting and pertinent activities. It is constantly under review to ensure it reflects the complex and ever changing needs of the different groups of learners. The youngest children learn to explore their environment and activities fully support their personal development and encourage them to become more independent. Activities across all the sites provide a motivating context for the development and reinforcement of essential skills. There is an appropriate emphasis on the importance of keeping healthy and undertaking exercise. Sporting activities are a strength in the school and the close working relationship with a professional football team is an example of how the school effectively utilises community links to give learners meaningful experiences. Importance is given across the sites to the progression of skills in communication, literacy, numeracy, science, ICT and personal development. Learners particularly enjoy the educational visits, which very effectively support their learning. The personal social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is particularly effective in developing life skills and learners' understanding of their place in the community. Work related learning, enterprise projects, community work and work experience opportunities helps prepare students for when they leave school. The extended schools programme offers an excellent range of activities that very effectively support learners' academic and personal

development. The exceptional two-way links and partnerships with mainstream schools offer valuable opportunities for learners in both schools to study and learn alongside each other.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support for learners across all sites are outstanding. The combination of efficient and consistent school procedures and practice keeps learners safe and secure while helping them to acquire the skills of self-management. There are clear measures for safeguarding learners, which are understood by all staff. Very effective teamwork ensures individual needs are well met and personal dignity is respected at all times. The coordinated planning and teamwork between the therapists, nurses, support staff and teachers ensures the support and care for learners are of the highest order. Learners receive specific individual guidance that ensures that they make excellent progress with their personal and academic development. The very effective partnerships with support agencies ensure the specific needs of all learners are well met. The partnership and communication with parents is excellent. A parent wrote, 'We could not be happier with the school and the dedication of the staff ensures our child achieves his potential. He loves school and his progress is beyond what we could have hoped for'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher gives excellent strategic guidance and backs up all staff. Together with the business manager and deputy headteachers, the high quality of practice is consistently maintained across all sites. Senior staff are fully committed and effective in fulfilling their responsibilities, ensuring the smooth and positive running of the different sites. There is a systematic focus on school improvement for the benefit of all learners. The impact of everyone's work is clearly reflected in the outstanding care, guidance and support for learners and the excellent progress they make. Through wide and effective consultation and self-evaluation, areas for improvement and strategies for action are clearly identified. High expectations are made of staff, their work is valued and morale is high. There are high expectations of learners, which are reflected in their challenging targets. Parents appreciate the care and dedication of staff, who have positive aspirations for their children. The school works extremely effectively with external support agencies to ensure the effective coordination of support to meet learners' individual needs. A parent reported, 'I am very pleased with my daughter's progress which is all down to the dedication and care of the staff who understands her needs and challenges her to try new things'. The school is always looking to improve its provision and is innovative in its thinking. For example, it is developing links with special schools in Poland which will lead to exchange visits for staff and learners.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

03 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Vale Resource Base, London, N17 0PG

Thank you for welcoming me into your outstanding school. I had an extremely enjoyable two days. A special thank you to those pupils who spoke to me and told me all about their school and to the students who made the Valentine presents at such very reasonable prices. I agree with you and your parents: your school is wonderful. It supports your needs and ensures that you make the best possible progress in your learning and personal development. The school is always thinking how it can improve and you can help by working hard towards your individual targets and always doing your best.

- All staff care, guide and support you exceptionally well.
- You get on really well with each other and all adults.
- You have very positive attitudes and show excellent support for each other.
- You really enjoy your lessons and make excellent progress in your learning.
- You really like all the activities on offer, particularly swimming and school trips.
- You really like the activities on offer after school and on weekends.
- You learn useful skills that will help you when you leave school.
- You enjoy working with other pupils in the mainstream school.
- There is excellent communication between the school and your home.
- The school ensures that you all learn as well as you can and works extremely well with other people to ensure you receive the support you need.
- The school ensures you get the best resources to support your learning, in particular, resources in information and communication technology.

Your headteacher, governors and all staff are always thinking how they can improve the school even further. For example:

- they can think about how to use all the information they have on the progress you are making to help plan your activities so you continue to make the best possible progress you can.

It was a delight seeing such an excellent school and I wish you all every future success.

Yours faithfully

Mike Smith

Lead Inspector