

# The Kingfisher Community Special School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133369
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	341381
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Marian Thomas

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	119
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Kevin Fennelly
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Anne Redmond
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Foxdenton Lane Chadderton Oldham OL9 9QR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 13 lessons taught by 12 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors, teaching staff and the school's leadership team. The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at teachers' planning for lessons, leaders' development plans and samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also took into account the views of 19 parents and carers who returned questionnaires to the inspection team.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress made by all groups of pupils
- the attendance of different groups of pupils
- the health, safety and welfare documents produced by school.

## Information about the school

The school provides education for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including autism, severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and complex medical conditions. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school also works with mainstream schools throughout the borough to help them support their pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Located within the school is a small assessment unit for pupils with visual impairment. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. A large number of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Some pupils have speech and language difficulties associated with their special educational needs. There are currently two pupils in the care of the local authority. The school has achieved the International Schools Award 2006 and 2009, the Healthy Schools Award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, four Eco-Schools Green Flag awards, Investors in People, a Leading Aspect Award for 'Personalisation through creative learning opportunities for pupils with severe and complex learning needs', the Artsmark Gold award and the Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMSIS) award. The school is also a National Support School.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

### Main findings

Kingfisher is an outstanding school which well deserves its excellent reputation with parents and carers, and the community. Parents' and carers' views are reflected well in the comment: 'I could not wish for my child to be in better hands. He sits and waits for the school bus because he loves school so much.'

The headteacher and senior leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and deliver the quality of provision necessary for them to do so. Overall, self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate and rigorous and the findings are acted upon to very good effect. The school is excellent at supporting pupils' unique needs and, as a result, barriers to learning are minimised. Since the last inspection the school has made excellent progress in many areas. For example, the school has introduced an excellent system for tracking pupils' progress against national data and the new art studio has increased pupils' access and approach to art. The school has demonstrated through its improvements that it has an excellent capacity to improve further.

Pupils in the main school and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress in their personal development and grow in confidence as they move through school. This is as a result of excellent care, guidance and support. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. Most are clear about how to stay healthy. Their behaviour is outstanding and they feel very safe. Excellent transition arrangements ensure that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Excellent teaching is based on thorough and reliable assessment of pupils' learning needs and, as a result, progress for all groups of pupils is excellent. A detailed assessment system has been introduced since the last inspection, with excellent analysis of data. This ensures that monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress is very effective. Behaviour is managed very effectively and teaching assistants provide excellent support in lessons. The outstanding curriculum has continued to improve since the last inspection, with new partnership initiatives to enrich learning. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding and the welfare of pupils is given the highest priority. Despite circumstances that make them vulnerable and the complex medical needs of many pupils, attendance is excellent.

Senior managers are highly effective in moving the school forward as a result of excellent self-evaluation. The committed and supportive governing body visits school regularly and is highly effective in monitoring its work and in holding senior leaders to account. Through its work with schools in the local community and abroad, the school has ensured that pupils have a very clear understanding of life in a multi-ethnic society.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- There are no significant areas for improvement which are not already being addressed by the school's leaders.

### Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Pupils joining the school settle quickly and respond positively to their individual learning programmes. These enable pupils to work consistently and achieve well in all areas of the curriculum. This was seen clearly in an outstanding art lesson with young pupils on the autistic spectrum. The large space in the art studio allowed pupils to move around and paint the giant canvas using their hands and feet. The ultraviolet lights reflected the fluorescent paint as pupils made exciting patterns. Staff's skillful support ensured that all pupils remained focused on the activity and gained obvious enjoyment. Given the nature of these pupils' learning needs, this was impressive.

All groups of pupils, including those on the autistic spectrum and those looked after by the local authority, make exceptionally good progress. This is because learning environments are specifically designed to meet the needs of differing groups of pupils. For example, in the classroom for pupils with profound and multiple learning needs resources and equipment are bright, colourful and stimulating. Conversely, the classrooms for pupils on the autistic spectrum have much lower levels of stimulation, ensuring that the learning needs of both groups are successfully met. Staff set inspirational targets for pupils in all key stages. This, coupled with the removal of barriers to learning, ensures that pupils across all the key stages make outstanding progress.

Pupils feel exceptionally safe because they know staff are supportive and help them at all times. Most clearly enjoy school. One pupil commented, 'I enjoy school because it's a special place.' Pupils recognise the importance of eating healthy meals and have an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet. Pupils enjoy the many different physical activities offered and appreciate the part this plays in a healthy lifestyle. Video conferencing with pupils and staff from pupils' future secondary schools is just one of the ways in which pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next phase in their education. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community both in and outside school by listening to and appreciating the needs of others. For example, pupils' work is currently being exhibited in a local art gallery, giving pleasure to many people. Pupils' excellent overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seen in the way in which they react to each other and take care of the environment.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers are highly effective at using assessment information to set achievable targets for pupils. Information and communication technology is used exceptionally well to support pupils' learning and promote independence. Lesson planning is a strength and great attention is given to ensuring that work is modified to meet the different needs of pupils. Marking of pupils' work takes many forms and ensures that they are aware of what is needed to improve. Support staff are highly trained and work very closely with teachers to support pupils' learning effectively.

The curriculum is well organised and is highly personalised to meet the needs of pupils. It is imaginatively enhanced by many visits and activities away from the classroom. Educational visits help develop pupils' independence. The Forest Schools activities help to develop team-building skills as well as offering pupils a range of outdoor experiences. This was described by one pupil in the comment, 'It's just the best.'

As a result of excellent quality care, guidance and support, pupils feel there is always someone who will listen and help. A careful and thorough assessment is undertaken when pupils arrive at the school, which is then used to target support effectively. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are exceptionally well supported and this is helped by the excellent links with many outside agencies. Attendance is excellent, particularly as many pupils have highly complex medical needs. It continues to rise year on year as a result of careful monitoring by staff and the building up of strong relationships with parents and carers. Transition arrangements are securely in place and pupils are exceptionally well prepared for moving to the next phase in their education.

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*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>1</b>
	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The perceptive and visionary leadership of the headteacher and senior leaders is moving the school forward exceptionally well and ensuring excellent outcomes for pupils. This, coupled with excellent partnerships forged with outside agencies, is driving improvement further. The school's governing body has implemented excellent procedures to ensure the health and well-being of all pupils. Governors offer an excellent level of support to the school and challenge to senior leaders. Procedures ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met and that practice is of a good standard. The strength and quality of these procedures mean that any safeguarding issues are dealt with effectively by senior leaders. Leaders and managers have ensured that the school is a highly inclusive community. Systems to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination within school are excellent.

Leaders have built successful links which benefit pupils and the local community and the school readily shares its expertise through partnerships with local schools. Direct links to schools within the global community are well established. Excellent links with local schools whose pupils are from different communities improve and develop pupils' understanding of life in a multi-ethnic society. The school is particularly successful at engaging parents and carers. The work of staff ensures that parents and carers are kept well informed about their children's successes. Education programmes for parents and carers and daily diary links with home are in place and, as a result, parents and carers are highly appreciative of the ongoing work of the school. It does this on a well-controlled budget and provides excellent value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	<b>1</b>
	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The Nursery staff develop excellent links with the parents and carers of very young children before they start school. As a result, all children get off to an outstanding start. They settle into their routines quickly because of the exceptionally high quality of care, guidance and support for their personal and social development. They clearly feel very safe and secure in the setting. Excellent partnerships with the on-site children's therapy team ensure that children are exceptionally well supported. A wide range of highly relevant and enjoyable learning experiences in a stimulating environment ensure that children's progress is excellent. Staff are highly committed to ensuring that children have opportunities to experience outdoor play and outdoor provision mirrors indoor learning experience.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is excellent and does everything in her power to ensure that children access a high-quality learning environment no matter what their physical and medical needs. As a result of the excellent teaching, and highly effective support from staff, children make outstanding progress. Tasks are exceptionally well adapted to children's ages and abilities because all staff use assessment information effectively to plan learning experiences. Children's progress is charted well through excellent records of each child's learning journey which are shared with parents and carers. Evaluation is excellent and identifies clearly what the setting needs to do to improve.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers



**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

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The vast majority of returned questionnaires were wholly positive and supported the work of the school. These matched the views of the inspection team.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Kingfisher Community Special School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 19 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 120 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	79	5	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	92	2	8	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	75	5	21	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	71	6	25	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	83	3	13	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	79	4	17	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	71	5	21	1	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	17	71	5	21	2	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	79	4	17	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	79	4	17	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	75	5	21	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	83	3	13	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	88	2	8	1	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



08 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Kingfisher Community Special School, Oldham, OL9 9QR

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. A very special thank you to those of you who missed your favourite activities to talk to us at lunchtime.

Lots of you told us that you were very happy at school and that your school is the best. We think you are absolutely right and we think your school is outstandingly good.

Some of the things we liked the most are:

- the way in which all of you are so polite and kind to visitors and each other
- the exciting curriculum which helps you to learn so well
- the excellent way you all worked so hard in art to produce the collages and pictures for the art exhibition
- the way that all staff make learning in all subjects so interesting and help you to succeed
- the excellent way in which staff care for you and help you to make the right choices.

As your teachers are doing such an excellent job at making school such a fun and exciting place to come to, we have asked them to follow their own plans for making the school even better.

We hope you all have a lovely summer holiday.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Marian Thomas

Lead Inspector

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