

Children's Hospital School at Great Ormond Street and UCH

Great Ormond Street, Camden, London, WC1N 3JH

Inspection dates

25–26 February 2014

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.

- The headteacher is committed to ensuring that all students achieve their full learning potential, despite the medical challenges they face. Her strong strategic management skills have ensured that the school has continued to improve since the last inspection.
- Leaders are very effective in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. They provide strong professional support and closely monitor the progress every student is making. Their own high standards are shared and embraced by all staff within the school. They are increasingly able to support other schools and organisations, both locally and nationally.
- The governing body provides high levels of support and challenge to school leaders. Together, they continually seek ways to improve further. For example, they have identified that parents would benefit from further support and are looking to develop the services provided by the activity centre.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers draw on their strong subject knowledge to provide creative and challenging learning opportunities that meet the needs of every student. They constantly review how well students are learning and make adjustments where necessary. They are inventive and make particularly good use of technology. Many students make accelerated rates of progress as a result.
- Students make outstanding progress during their time at the school. This is because individual starting points are established quickly, teachers set challenging targets and effective teaching interventions are skilfully delivered. Students engage enthusiastically with their learning and achieve more.
- Students demonstrate exemplary attitudes and behave exceptionally well. They appreciate how the school helps them to maintain regular links with their home schools through the use of technology. They are kept extremely safe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons taught in school rooms and wards at both hospital sites. Sixteen different learning activities were observed. Ten observations were conducted jointly with members of the school's leadership team.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other school leaders, groups of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and with a representative from the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with the school's professional partner.
- Inspectors took account of the views of students, parents and other professionals. These were expressed through the school's surveys as there were insufficient responses recorded on Parent View to evaluate. Inspectors spoke to parents and students informally throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed the 21 staff questionnaires returned during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised information about students' current progress, checked the quality of students' work and listened to students read. They examined records relating to safeguarding and looked at documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work.

Inspection team

Lesley Cox, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jackie Blount

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Children's Hospital School at Great Ormond Street and University College Hospital is a foundation special school on two sites. Teaching takes place in school rooms and wards at both hospitals, which are a short distance apart. Students are enrolled at the school while they are in-patients at either hospital, but remain on the register of their home schools. Students are receiving treatment for a wide variety of medical conditions. Many have medical needs which are complex and sometimes life-limiting. At the time of the inspection, 96 students were being taught at the school, but the number on roll varies on a daily basis. Over the course of an academic year the school helps educate more than 1,000 students. Students attend for long, short and recurring periods of time. The school can also offer education to siblings of children who are admitted to the hospital for long or recurring stays.
- Students come from a diverse range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. They come from all areas of the country and from overseas.
- All students are supported at school action plus while they attend the school. Some have a statement of special educational needs. There are occasionally some students in the care of the local authority. The school has received additional government funding known as the pupil premium for 45 students, although the actual number eligible continually changes.
- Students join the school with a wide range of needs and abilities. Some have disabilities and additional learning needs and some are extremely able.
- There are currently no students in the sixth form.
- No students took externally marked examinations at the school last year.
- No students are currently eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- This school does not use any alternative education providers.
- There has been a change of headteacher since the last inspection. The current headteacher took up her post in September 2011.
- The school is part of a teaching school alliance which includes mainstream and special schools. It also contributes to a number of local and national partnerships.
- The school has National Healthy Schools status. It has also achieved the Artsmark Gold Award, the International School Award and the Inclusion Quality Mark.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop how the school supports parents and students by expanding the services provided within the activity centre.
- Seek more opportunities to share the outstanding practice within the school with other educational providers and organisations.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students make outstanding progress. The school has developed a highly effective system for managing information about students' achievements. Tracking systems are sophisticated. Teachers record their observations and assessments on a lesson-by-lesson basis for each individual student. Using video and photographic evidence of work produced, they compile a detailed learning log for every child. Many are making rapid progress from their individual starting points in English and mathematics. The number of students achieving all or some of their targets has improved steadily over the last three years.
- There are no differences in the progress of different groups. Disabled students and those with special educational needs receive appropriate levels of support to ensure they can achieve as well as other students. Those with more complex needs or profound learning difficulties are supported by specialist staff and also make outstanding progress.
- Students eligible for the additional pupil premium funding are tracked carefully to ensure that interventions are successful. Any existing gaps between their performance and that of their peers nationally are reduced. No students were entered for external examinations in English and mathematics last year, so no comparisons can be made. However, they make the same amount of progress as other students in English and mathematics lessons.
- Highly effective and on-going communication with home schools ensures that students are exceptionally well prepared for the next stages in their education. All students follow learning pathways that align with their previous level of achievement. Every effort is made to establish accurate starting points on arrival so that challenging targets can be set without delay. Systems are in place to keep the home school informed about the progress students make while they are away. Further support is provided when they first return to their home school. As a result, any interruptions to learning are minimal, enabling students to achieve in line with their expectations. All students who sat external examinations, on returning to their home schools, achieved or exceeded their predicted grades last year.
- The most able students also make outstanding progress. This is because the school collaborates closely with teachers from their home schools and acquires further specialist support from within the hospitals and local universities, when necessary. Students continue with, and successfully complete, their chosen courses, despite their medical conditions. Some students achieved A* and A grades at their home schools last year after many months of hospital treatment.
- A strong focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills has led to significant improvements in achievement across all areas of learning. Staff are skilled at exploiting every opportunity to reinforce these skills. As a result, many students make accelerated rates of progress and any gaps in their understanding are closed.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding overall and none is less than good. Teachers are enthusiastic and set high standards for students to achieve. They are extremely skilled in adapting activities and levels of support to meet the needs of every student they teach. This ensures that students are engaged purposefully and make as much progress as they can.
- Teachers use technology very effectively. Some students, who are unable to attend the school room, are taught on isolation wards. Creative use of video links and work that is digitally recorded allow them to participate in activities without danger of contamination. A cooking activity, led by a professional chef, was shared with all students by using technology in this way. It was inclusive, kept vulnerable students safe and did not discriminate against those unable to leave the wards. As a result, all students were able to learn how to make pancakes.
- Teachers make excellent use of the school's information system. This allows them to immediately record and assess the work achieved by students and plan for the next steps to be

taken. They are meticulous in recognising and recording how much progress has been made by every student. This ensures that learning activities are always pitched at the correct level and learning time is used effectively. Consequently, students say they learn more and make better progress because they always know what to do next. Many do extra work outside timetabled learning sessions, responding to detailed oral and written feedback from teachers.

- All teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects and their combined expertise covers all key stages. They work closely with each other to share skills and to supplement their knowledge if necessary. This ensures that all students, including the most able, are provided with activities that are appropriately challenging. Other adults also make a strong contribution to learning activities. They are deployed and trained appropriately to ensure that students can benefit from their support and any additional skills that they can offer.
- Teachers are creative in how they deliver high-quality learning experiences. They do not allow the space limitations of the Great Ormond Street Hospital school room, restrictions placed on them by hygiene considerations or students medical constraints to limit learning experiences. They draw on all available resources including arranging trips off-site to cultural events and using visitors to give talks and demonstrations. Consequently, students have improved levels of engagement and make better progress.
- Parents have extremely positive views about the quality of teaching. They recognise how staff build strong relationships, demand high standards of work and provide high levels of support. They appreciate how this leads to students making exceptional progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Students have excellent attitudes towards learning, even when they are uncomfortable or in some pain. Their behaviour in lessons is exemplary and they mirror the positive relationships modelled by adults. There are no recorded behaviour incidents and students say that bullying never occurs.
- Learning mentors are used very effectively to improve the engagement of students who may find learning difficult. Some parents and teachers from home schools recognise how these interventions have led to longer term improvements in behaviour and more positive attitudes towards learning when they return home. Students are kept in close touch with their schools through the use of video links and email conversations with their teachers.
- The school monitors the attendance of students very carefully. Immediate action is taken if patterns of non attendance or lack of engagement are observed. Attendance information is shared with home schools regularly and the school continues to monitor students when they return home. Personalised support, targeted interventions and constant reinforcement of the need for good attendance mean that students attend as regularly as their medical conditions allow.
- Increasing numbers of students are using the activity centre outside school hours. This offers some clubs and extra-curricular activities for them to participate in. Parental surveys have indicated that they would appreciate a wider range of services and support. Leaders are therefore seeking ways to extend how the activity centre is used and exploring how they can support parents further.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Students say they feel safe and know who to seek help from if they are concerned. They are particularly well informed about the dangers of cyber bullying and know what actions to take if this occurs. Due to its extensive use of technology, the school has taken appropriate actions to keep students safe. Staff receive regular training to ensure that their practice is exemplary in this area.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, supported by other leaders and governors, has been determined that the school remains a centre of excellence. Consequently, it has continued to improve since the last

inspection. Staff value the headteacher's commitment and consider that the school is exceptionally well led.

- Leaders participate in a number of national associations that support the education of students with medical needs. However, they have ensured that this work has not distracted them from driving through further improvements at their own school. They are now better placed to share their expertise with other organisations.
- Middle leaders make a strong contribution to raising standards. They model outstanding teaching and have high expectations of others. Leaders at all levels contribute to the effective management of teaching and learning. Training opportunities are provided for all staff, using good quality providers. This has resulted in high levels of outstanding teaching within the school. Students therefore make exceptional progress.
- Leaders make sure that the additional pupil premium funding is used effectively to support eligible students. For example, focused teaching sessions, to support communication and language development, have led to students making better progress across all subjects.
- Performance management systems are rigorous. Staff roles and responsibilities have been restructured and pay scales now reflect the level of responsibility held by the post holder. Teaching judged to be less than good has been eradicated and teachers receive further pay enhancements only when students' progress targets have been met.
- The promotion of equal opportunities is extremely well embedded and underpins the school's commitment to inclusion. Students benefit from the outstanding social, moral, cultural and spiritual development opportunities provided within lessons and through extra-curricular events.
- The school's curriculum meets students' needs very well. Students benefit from lessons in a wide variety of subjects which are supplemented by an extensive enrichment programme. Leaders manage the regular requests made by high profile visitors using a policy agreed with governors. This ensures that the learning needs of the students are always put first.
- The school has made excellent use of the additional sports funding. Weekly physical education lessons include team games such as 'sitting down cricket'. Additional specialist equipment has been purchased. This encourages movement and allows all students, including those with physical or learning disabilities, to improve their skills.
- The local authority monitors the school through a professional partner. She has provided mentoring support for the headteacher, agreed improvement priorities and helped to moderate judgements on the quality of teaching. The local authority has also provided training for governors, which has been well received.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are knowledgeable and provide strong support to school leaders. They have aligned their own roles to support identified development areas within the school improvement plan. As a result of regular visits and analysis of data, they know how well students are achieving and are well informed about the quality of teaching. They have supported leaders to implement a strong performance management system that rewards only good teaching and learning. Governors have ensured that the current financial situation of the school is secure. The pupil premium and sports funding are carefully deployed and monitored to overcome any barriers to learning. Governors regularly review and refresh their own skills by participating in appropriate training. They ask challenging questions of school leaders.

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	100060
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	431278

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation special
Age range of pupils	5–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	96
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lara Fielden
Headteacher	Jayne Franklin
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2009
Telephone number	020 7813 8269
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