

Paces High Green School for Conductive Education

Independent Special School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	373/6029
Unique Reference Number	131686
Inspection number	321824
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Brian Blake HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: 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.

Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Paces High Green School, which is an independent special school with charitable status, takes children from ages 2 to 18 with motor disorders. It is part of the Paces campus, which is located on the site of a former secondary school in the High Green area of Sheffield. The school was registered in 1999, and currently has 10 full-time and 20 part-time pupils on roll. A number of children live locally in Sheffield, but there are also some who travel daily from Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Bolton and Kirklees. In total, five local authorities currently place children at the school. The school aims to provide Conductive Education for children with motor disorders, emphasising the development of their motor skills, cognitive functions, speech and communication skills, intellectual skills, self-care and social skills. The school also aims to give the children a positive learning environment by focusing on their ability rather than their disability. The school was previously inspected in January 2005.

Evaluation of the school

Paces High Green School provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The curriculum and quality of teaching are good, and are helping the pupils to make good overall progress in both their educational learning and in their physical development. The pupils benefit from attending a school that emphasises their individual worth and contribution to all aspects of school life. Parents are fully supportive of the ethos of the school, appreciating greatly the work of the teachers and other specialist staff in helping their children to enjoy school, and achieve well in relation to their capabilities. The school has continued to make good progress since its previous inspection and meets almost all the regulations for independent schools.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good overall. The curriculum provides a good balance of Conductive Education with the subjects of the National Curriculum in both the primary and secondary classes, and a satisfactory link with the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage class. This is helping to ensure that those primary aged pupils who are dual registered and attend a mainstream school for part of their education cover as much of the statutory curriculum as is practically possible. Throughout the school, this integrated curricular approach is giving the pupils good coverage of a range of key literacy, numeracy and language skills appropriate to their abilities and needs. It is also supporting well their physical, social and emotional development. Links with external specialist agencies are good, including Connexions

advisers who provide advice of further education and training opportunities for secondary aged children at the time of their annual review.

The quality and effectiveness of teaching and assessment are good. All lessons are very carefully planned to include teaching tasks and clearly identified outcomes that ensure all pupils are suitably supported and challenged in all aspects of their physical, social and intellectual learning. Relationships between teachers, support assistants and the pupils are outstanding throughout the school. All adults show great sensitivity and awareness of the needs of the pupils, but are still demanding and encouraging of them to develop as much independence in their learning as possible; this includes their physical development. Ongoing assessment of pupils' achievements is working well in ensuring that lesson content accurately meets the identified needs of every pupil. Time is used well and every opportunity is taken to encourage pupils' learning. For example, mealtimes are an essential part of pupils' daily routines and help to develop their social skills alongside the development of good posture, and whole-body and fine motor skills.

The pupils make good overall progress, with some showing good improvements in their physical development and movement dexterity during their time at the school. Such gains are impressive, given the profound movement difficulties of the pupils.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The quality and effectiveness of the school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is good. The pupils are well supported by staff throughout the day, which builds their self-confidence and contributes significantly to their enjoyment of school and positive attitudes to learning. Teachers ensure that pupils are regularly told of their achievements, which are celebrated exuberantly by the whole class; this motivates the pupils to try hard and do well. Pupils are effectively encouraged to think about others, for example, in one lesson, pupils reflected on their relative good fortune as they considered the victims of the recent Chinese earthquake disaster, and how they could help them. The pupils' good overall progress, including their physical development and improved independence, prepares them well for the future, especially those who also attend a mainstream school. Relationships between the pupils are outstanding. As a result of the strong emphasis the school places on pupils making friends, knowing each other's names and greeting each other, they develop good self awareness and concern for others. Social development is good and provides pupils with a firm basis for treating all people with respect; the curriculum develops this quality further through the studying of different cultures and beliefs. Pupils' attendance is good, and in lessons they respond very positively to their work and activities. They are willing contributors in lessons and, wherever they can, they act in helpful ways. The school rules help pupils to distinguish between right and wrong, which contributes positively to their outstanding behaviour.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The school's measures to promote the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are satisfactory overall, but currently underdeveloped in some of its curricular and class-based risk assessments. The school provides a very caring and safe learning environment, which contributes to the good overall progress made by the pupils. Health and safety policies are clear, and all are well linked to the needs of the school and the physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs of the pupils. All adults who work in the school have a very good awareness of safety matters, including those relating to the physical development of the pupils. External visits are carefully assessed for risk and suitability, and all are planned in great detail to ensure the specialist needs of the pupils are met fully. Fire fighting equipment is checked annually, and a detailed record is also kept of the more regular monitoring of equipment by campus staff. The fire safety record includes details of those occasions when the pupils and other campus members practise exiting the building, as part of the campus fire safety procedures. The school does not have a three-year accessibility plan, as required by the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring that all staff, including those new to the school, are appropriately checked for their suitability to work with the pupils.

School's premises and accommodation

The school's premises and accommodation are satisfactory overall. The school is situated on a campus site, which is managed by the High Green Development Trust. The campus hosts a number of organisations, all of which are part of the Development Trust. Since the school's initial registration in 1999, the Trust has paid an annual peppercorn rent for leasing the site from the local authority. A new long-term lease agreement is close to being finalised, which will guarantee the site for the school for the foreseeable future. The general fabric of the building is satisfactory, and all classrooms are of a suitable size for the number, age and physical needs of the pupils. There is good access into and out of the school for the pupils, and a suitable outdoor space, which includes a sensory garden.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and others is satisfactory overall. However, although a range of important curricular and policy information is in the school brochure, there is no reference to the entitlement of parents to request separate and full copies of policies and other important information about the school. This includes, in particular, specific policies about child protection and health and safety. The school maintains very close and regular contact with parents regarding

the children's progress. Annual reports are very detailed, and contain good quality progress reports for the National Curriculum subjects taught, and the Conductive Education provision within the school's programme.

Procedures for handling complaints

The procedures for handling complaints are clear and concise, and comply fully with all requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- provide particulars of the chief executive of Paces Sheffield Ltd., including the full contact name, address for correspondence during term and holiday time, and a contact telephone number or numbers (paragraph 6(2)(b))
- provide particulars of the chair of the governing body, including the full contact name, address for correspondence during term and holiday time, and a contact telephone number or numbers (paragraph 6(2)(c))
- ensure that parents are made aware they can request a copy of the child protection and health and safety policies (paragraph 6(2)(h))
- ensure that parents are aware they can request details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(2)(j))
- submit to the local authority, and to the Secretary of State on request, an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of all pupils who are registered at the school, and are wholly or partly funded by the local authority (paragraph 6(7)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- develop the Early Years Foundation Stage planning to reflect more accurately the six areas of learning and the Early Learning Goals
- ensure that there are appropriate risk assessments for all curricular and class-based activities across the school.

School details

Name of school	Paces High Green School for Conductive Education		
DCSF number	373/6029		
Unique reference number	131686		
Type of school	Special school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1997		
Age range of pupils	2-18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys:8	Girls:2	Total:10
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys:9	Girls:11	Total:20
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys:11	Girls:10	Total:21
Number of children receiving funded nursery education	Boys:1	Girls:0	Total:1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£21,000		
Address of school	Paces Campus Pack Horse Lane High Green Sheffield South Yorkshire S35 3HY		
Telephone number	0114 284 5298		
Fax number	0114 284 5298		
Email address	gabor.fellner@paces-school.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mr Gabor Fellner		
Proprietor	Paces Sheffield Ltd		
Reporting inspector	Brian Blake HMI		
Dates of inspection	14–15 May 2008		