

Oxfordshire Hospital School

c/o St Nicholas' Primary School, Raymund Road, Old Marston, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX3 0PJ

Inspection dates

6–7 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher and her team of leaders have transformed the culture and outlook of the school. All the weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been eradicated.
- Safeguarding is now highly effective. Arrangements for making referrals, communicating with other agencies and record-keeping are exemplary. The school's vigilance and focus on pupils' welfare contributes immensely to their personal development, academic progress and recovery from illness.
- Teaching, learning and assessment have not only remained outstanding, but have gone from strength to strength.
- Pupils make excellent progress during their stay at the school. They not only keep up with their studies, but are pushed to succeed and achieve even more. In particular, pupils in the outreach sector are making more progress than they were previously.
- Pupils have splendid opportunities to develop their knowledge of the outside world, through inspiring activities, cultural events and opportunities to contribute. Leaders and staff make the most of the wide range of experiences offered by Oxford and the wider area.
- Students in the post-16 provision are extremely well-prepared for their next steps. Staff take all possible steps to enable students to overcome any barriers to their achievement, irrespective of the courses or pathways they are following.
- The school's provision for children in the early years is outstanding. Planning and transition work with parents are particular strengths. Children are supported to learn and play so that they are on a level footing with their peers. As a result, children make an excellent start to their education.
- The interim executive board members have been highly effective in supporting and challenging the school. Their expertise and insight, together with sophisticated monitoring of the school, have helped it turn around.
- The headteacher and leaders have successfully promoted their vision of 'one Oxfordshire hospital school', uniting the best practice and developing leaders across the whole provision. While some leaders are relatively new to their roles and require ongoing support, the school is in a superb position to share expertise and provide specialist guidance throughout the local authority.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the confidence, accountability and creativity of leaders at all levels in order for them to have the maximum impact on outcomes for all pupils.
- Make more use of the expertise within the school to support the education of pupils with medical and mental health needs throughout the city and local authority.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher, together with leaders and staff, has courageously and thoughtfully transformed the school. The serious shortfalls identified at the previous inspection have been completely eradicated and safeguarding arrangements are now exemplary.
- The headteacher and leaders wasted no time in tackling the issues from the last inspection, when poor practice had the potential to put pupils at risk. They did not prevaricate, but made sure that systems and expectations changed immediately.
- Staff and leaders work as a cohesive team. They fully grasp that each sector is different, but, as one school, the whole provision is bigger than the sum of its parts and all can learn from each other.
- The school is operating as one institution, with a sense of common purpose, clear direction and ambition. Leaders and those responsible for governance have gained the trust, respect and loyalty of all staff. And, most importantly, pupils are safe, making excellent progress and at the centre of every decision made.
- The headteacher has communicated her powerful vision for the future of the school to new and established likeminded leaders. She has built upon leaders' and the wider staff's existing talents and experience, while not being afraid to develop those who need more support and guidance to make the most difference.
- Leaders make highly effective use of their deep understanding of the best practice in hospital education. There is no complacency. Leaders are determined to make even more difference to pupils' lives and futures. Some staff, who are new to leadership, and who will need time to develop complete confidence and accountability, have already made a significant impact. Staff are confident in the school's leadership and are excited about the future.
- Staff benefit from high-quality professional development. They share excellent practice through training and visits to home schools and other hospital schools. Leaders also make sure that staff have access to regular supervision to support them with the challenges of working in a hospital school.
- Leaders and teachers have continued to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, which has not only remained outstanding, but has gone from strength to strength. The quality of provision across all three sectors is consistently high.
- The school's curriculum has to be flexible as it is driven by the needs of the pupils admitted to the hospital. Leaders and staff are responsive and do all they can to help pupils to keep up with their studies and discover the role they might play in their own futures. English and mathematics are rightly priorities, but leaders also make sure that pupils have the chance to keep up with studying their option and foundation subjects, as detailed in their home-school timetables.
- Leaders and staff motivate pupils to challenge themselves with competitions, publications and regular newsletters, where their views and work are published and valued. Pupils have the chance to learn about and celebrate the cycle of the year, and

how different cultures celebrate it. Leaders and staff make the most of what Oxford and its surroundings can offer in terms of culture, landscape and history.

- Pupils in the outreach sector benefit from compelling opportunities to socialise and restore their sense of well-being through learning outside the classroom. Leaders and staff make sure that pupils in all sectors deepen their thinking about right and wrong and consideration for each other through the well-planned 'values curriculum'. During the inspection the theme was 'kindness', which enabled pupils to consider others and look outside of themselves and their own difficulties.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have continued to develop the depth and range of topics for study, including a programme designed to extend pupils' personal development. Physical education is a key priority, including 'walks with purpose' for pupils who attend the Highfield unit.
- The sport premium is used very effectively to ensure that pupils can benefit from a range of different therapeutic activities to enhance their mental and physical health.
- Leaders and staff rightly focus on those pupils who may be particularly vulnerable, including those who are disadvantaged. In addition, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are catered for particularly well. Leaders and teachers are highly alert to any additional barriers to learning and make sure that all reasonable adjustments are made to help pupils learn and make progress.
- The headteacher has made sure that there is sufficient challenge and objective scrutiny of the school. The school benefits from external oversight from a school improvement leader. Since the last inspection, relationships with the local authority and with other schools have improved immensely, to the benefit of pupils.
- School leaders have rightly set themselves the task of sharing staff expertise more widely in order to support local schools who may face challenges with pupils' physical and mental health.

Governance of the school

- Following the previous inspection and the review of governance, which both took place in December 2016, all members of the then governing body stepped down and an interim executive board (IEB) was appointed. Members of the IEB are experts in education, including hospital education, and have made a huge contribution to the school's rapid improvement.
- IEB members have overseen the changes to the school with precise attention to detail. They are impressed with the reports they receive from the headteacher, but do not take these at face value. They challenge, question and check for themselves whether improvements are sufficient and sustainable.
- Members of the IEB focus on the progress, welfare and safety of all pupils, and are particularly aware of their responsibility for those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, including those who are disadvantaged.
- Members of the board supported the headteacher with staffing restructures, the safeguarding audit and the plans for the school to become part of a multi-academy trust. Members have evaluated the decision to close down the outreach hubs and have

carefully scrutinised the new arrangements for supporting pupils, both at home and at their home schools.

- Members of the IEB support and guide the headteacher with managing the school's finances, with the interests of pupils firmly at the heart.

Safeguarding

- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Following the previous inspection, the headteacher and leaders immediately took action to tackle all the shortfalls and establish effective procedures. Arrangements for safeguarding are now exemplary across all three sectors of the school.
- Leadership of safeguarding is strong. The assistant headteacher responsible for safeguarding and child protection as designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is highly trained and meticulous. The headteacher has also made sure that there are deputy safeguarding leaders who are well trained to support safeguarding. All other staff are trained at a suitable level and carry out their duty of care with diligence.
- The headteacher made swift changes to the arrangements for monitoring attendance, pupils' safety and progress in the outreach sector. Part of these changes involved ensuring that pupils in the outreach sector were seen, and that staff working with them made contact with the DSL to record that they had made direct contact and that there are no concerns. All staff meet the raised expectations and there is a natural sense of heightened vigilance.
- Records of child protection and safeguarding concerns are overseen centrally by the DSL, headteacher and deputy DSLs. Records are orderly and provide a helpful chronology of communication with schools, other agencies and parents. Inspectors checked record-keeping thoroughly and were impressed at how tenacious leaders are in following up concerns and chasing other professionals for prompt responses.
- In order to ensure that the school's arrangements are completely secure following the work to make improvements, the headteacher invited the local authority designated officer (LADO) to carry out a check on any potential child protection concerns. In addition, an independent safeguarding consultant carried out an audit and found that the school's procedures are strong.
- Safeguarding is a standing item for discussion at all senior leadership and executive board meetings. As a result, there is a clear line of accountability from staff working face to face with pupils, all the way through to the headteacher, those responsible for governance, the NHS trusts and the local authority children's services.
- Checks on staff appointed to work in the school are carried out assiduously. In addition, pupils are provided with useful guidance and prompts about where they can raise concerns. Pupils also complete a compulsory programme covering e-safety on their admission to the school.
- In short, staff are confident about raising concerns. They fully understand that there is no such thing as a 'silly' question and know that their concerns will be dealt with. Pupils report that they are safe, and parents say they feel that their children are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- The excellent progress made by pupils starts with teachers' expert checking of each pupil's welfare, readiness to learn and recall from previous lessons. Teachers take full account of the immediate and long-term needs of pupils when planning learning.
- Leaders enable staff to be thoughtful in finding the best way to motivate and inspire pupils to do their best. Pupils' responses throughout sessions are tracked precisely, minute by minute. Through this conscientious approach, teachers skilfully unfold pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers' questioning is a huge strength. Step by step, with patient pushing for deeper responses, teachers reveal what pupils know to build up their confidence. Pupils are then stretched to think more carefully and widely as teachers adeptly relate concepts and ideas to the outside world. In this way, pupils' understanding goes from the specific topic to the more general. Teachers refocus pupils gently but firmly back to the work at hand, prompting and supporting them, but also stepping back so that pupils can attempt tasks without as much support.
- Staff wisely ensure that learning focuses on developing pupils' skills in English and mathematics, but not just when these subjects are on the timetable. Opportunities to extend pupils' reading, writing and knowledge of number are built into other curriculum areas, particularly for younger pupils and those who find learning more difficult.
- Leaders and staff have ensured that the pupils' environment and resources are attractive and support learning. Dedicated classroom areas look like a school and pupils' work is collected, displayed and celebrated for inspiration.
- Some pupils have difficulties with their long-term and short-term memory because of their illnesses or medication. Teachers are mindful of this, testing out pupils' understanding of what they have learned or practised that day. Pupils are actively encouraged to register the purpose of the lesson to put it in context and crystallise their learning.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and concentrate well. Many feel that they are learning more than when they were in the home school, making the most of the opportunity for personalised work and one-to-one support where needed. Teachers and pupils use gentle humour and have excellent relationships which are built up in a very short time.
- Teachers' expertise extends beyond the immediate needs of the pupils in the hospital school and outreach sector. Staff in pupils' home schools benefit from the advice and guidance of hospital school staff to help pupils with their reintegration.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils rapidly improve their self-confidence, independence and positive outlook because of the excellent relationships they form and the care and attention of staff.

- The school ensures that pupils have opportunities to get involved in activities and events that celebrate the cycle of the year and the world outside. In this way, pupils are able to spend time looking beyond their current circumstances, achieve something new and interact with unfamiliar people and experiences. This helps pupils develop self-esteem, experience moments of joy in the 'here and now' and enhance their relationships.
- Pupils are safe and feel safe in all sectors of the school. Safety of all kinds is intrinsic in all school activities and programmes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils try incredibly hard in lessons, are polite and considerate, and treat staff with respect.
- Pupils attend well. Their overall attendance is only just below that found in mainstream schools nationally and compares well with pupils in other hospital schools nationally. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is particularly high. Since the previous inspection, pupils' attendance in the outreach sector has improved as a result of the school's closer vigilance.
- Some pupils have difficulties managing their own behaviour owing to their illnesses or special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their behaviour improves while they attend the school because of the sensitive care they receive, the excellent teaching and the school's focus on understanding their needs and difficulties.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- During their time at the school, all groups of pupils make outstanding progress. Leaders and staff quickly and accurately gauge pupils' starting points on admission, using a range of information. This includes attainment information and targets from pupils' home schools and the hospital school's own baseline assessment, which takes into account pupils' health, medical needs and readiness to study.
- From their starting points, it is clear that pupils make excellent progress. They not only keep up with their studies, but, in many cases, go above and beyond what might have been thought possible.
- School leaders ensure that all their assessments are carefully moderated and checked against the standards set in home schools and external qualifications. As a result, although some pupils are admitted to the school for a very short time and others return on repeated occasions, the school's evaluation of their progress is accurate.
- Pupils' files contain an extremely helpful record of their daily progress and attainment. Teachers focus carefully on pupils' gains in learning, attitudes and their physical and mental well-being. Pupils are also given time to reflect on their learning, thoughts and feelings, enabling them to understand what helps them most.
- Pupils develop impressive resilience through learning and are successfully encouraged to be studious, confident and ambitious in all their subjects.

- Since the last inspection, pupils' rates of progress in the outreach sector have increased. Although it is not possible to make comparisons because the cohort of pupils changes on a daily basis, it is evident that standards have risen in the outreach sector. Pupils' motivation has improved and their progress has accelerated, particularly in English and in mathematics.
- The most able pupils attain highly. Much of their work is of an excellent standard, with English and art standing out as subjects where pupils produce superb work.
- Although the school does not receive pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils, leaders rightly track this group of pupils very closely. Their progress matches and, in many cases, exceeds that of other pupils in the school.
- Recently, school leaders have focused even more closely on those pupils who may have additional special educational needs and/or disabilities in addition to their illnesses. They have made sure that pupils who have additional needs make excellent progress in line with other pupils.
- Pupils' outstanding progress puts them in a strong position for reintegration into their home schools. Close liaison with their home-school teachers, which includes setting of work and regular reviews of progress, helps to smooth pupils' transitions.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Provision for the youngest children in the school is excellent and ensures that they get off to a strong start and are well-prepared for their next steps.
- Preparation and strong communication are rightly key priorities from the moment decisions are made about planned admissions. Leaders and staff assess children's abilities and needs sensitively, which reassures parents, who are understandably worried by their children's illnesses. In this way, parents are fully involved and supported as partners in their children's early education.
- Leaders and teaching staff make sure that children have a stimulating and motivating environment in which to learn and play. Activities echo what home schools have chosen in order to provide continuity for pupils whose stay is shorter. Topics and themes are rotated in order that children who are regularly admitted make excellent progress and enjoy acquiring new knowledge and skills.
- Leaders and staff continually seek better ways to promote children's love of learning and cultural development. For example, the school has recently modified teachers' planning so that there is an increased focus on children's personal development and their participation in music.
- Leaders ensure that there are close relationships with the children's likely home schools and take into account the need to prepare those children in the Reception Year who may never manage to join their mainstream school before Year 1.
- The school ensures that children are able to benefit from strong phonics and mathematics teaching. Consequently, their progress in reading, writing and numeracy skills are in no way set back by their hospital stays.

- Leaders and staff pay meticulous attention to detail when reviewing children's safety and welfare. As a result, children feel safe and are safe in the school, which contributes hugely to their outstanding behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.
- Leaders and staff in the early years ensure that their assessments are accurate. They regularly take part in moderation exercises with local primary schools and the local authority. The school is linked with a local outstanding primary school, which ensures that the early years works in partnership with others and not in isolation.

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- Sixth-form students attain well and make excellent progress because of the expert teaching they receive. Their health, welfare and academic progress are minutely monitored by staff and leaders, who do their very best to make sure that the hospital school provision supports them. As a result, students maintain their positive attitudes to the future and keep up their academic and vocational studies.
- The post-16 provision is well equipped to cater for a wide range of courses. Recently, numbers of students on vocational pathways have increased and the school has wisely broadened its offer of courses, so that no students fall behind. School leaders 'go the extra mile' to ensure that there is specialist teaching available, by appointing teachers from home schools or locally to teach particular subjects. In this way, no student is placed at a disadvantage.
- The school works extremely well with home schools and local post-16 providers in order to ensure that programmes of study are completely up to date with requirements and that students are fully prepared for further and higher education, employment or training.
- Staff who teach students in the post-16 provision benefit from thorough professional development to enable them to teach the wide range of programmes and subjects on offer.
- Students follow very well-designed life-skills programmes, which include preparation for employment or higher education. Care is taken to ensure that age-appropriate guidance is given to students to encourage them to set their own goals, look after their own welfare and become resilient and independent as young adults.
- Staff give students excellent support with writing personal statements and applying for university. As a result, there are extremely low numbers of students who do not manage to obtain employment or places at higher or further education. The school closely monitors and supports those students who may be at risk of not making a success of their next steps.
- In 2016, a very high proportion of students attained high grades at A level. For those students who may have not been able to sit their A-level examinations because of their illnesses, the school also offers functional skills courses in English and mathematics and unit award courses in other subjects. In this way, students gain self-esteem through a 'quick win', giving them confidence to consider more demanding examinations.
- Students in the sixth form are safe, have positive attitudes and demonstrate admirable focus on their studies.

School details

Unique reference number	123337
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10038597

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	50
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	6
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Julie Tridgell
Headteacher	Angela Ransby
Telephone number	01865 957480
Website	www.oxfordshirehospitalschool.education
Email address	office@ohs.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 October 2016

Information about this school

- The Oxfordshire Hospital School caters for pupils who are experiencing medical or mental health conditions. The number of pupils on the school roll is subject to change. Pupils are admitted to hospital, identified as requiring outreach support or are reintegrated to their home schools on a daily basis.
- The school has three sectors, two of which admit pupils as inpatients, with the third sector supporting pupils as part of the outreach provision. Pupils with a range of medical and surgical conditions are admitted as inpatients to the Oxford Children's Hospital (Oxford), the John Radcliffe Hospital, the Nuffield Orthopaedic Hospital and

the Helen and Douglas House Hospice (Oxford). Pupils are also admitted as inpatients to The Highfield Adolescent Unit, which is a psychiatric unit for young people with mental health needs. All pupils remain on the roll of their home school.

- The outreach provision supports pupils in the community with medical or mental health needs. Until recently, these pupils were taught in hubs in different sites across Oxfordshire. Following the previous inspection, the hubs have closed and pupils in the outreach sector are taught at home or in their home schools.
- A small number of children in the early years and students of sixth-form age are taught in the inpatient sectors.
- The proportions of pupils who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities continually change. The school does not receive any additional funding from the pupil premium.
- The current headteacher took up her post in September 2016, shortly before the previous inspection.
- Following the previous inspection, the governing body resigned and an interim executive board (IEB) was appointed.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection started as the first special measures monitoring inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. On the afternoon of the first day of the inspection, the inspection was deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.
- Inspectors met with leaders, members of the interim executive board, staff and pupils.
- An inspector spoke to parents in person and on the telephone. Telephone calls were made to local authority representatives, a representative from one of the home schools and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors visited Oxford Children's Hospital and the Highfield Adolescent Unit to observe teaching and learning. They also met with leaders to discuss the outreach provision.
- Samples of pupils' work were reviewed, together with the school's information about pupils' progress.
- Inspectors took into consideration the views of parents, provided through the school's own surveys of parental feedback.
- The school's safeguarding procedures and record-keeping were evaluated. Inspectors reviewed a substantial sample of the school's files related to safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- A range of school documentation was reviewed, including the school's own evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of IEB meetings and information about staff training and development.

Inspection team

Janet Pearce, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Hilary Goddard

Ofsted Inspector

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