

Inscape House

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134901
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	341565
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Terry McKenzie

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	4–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	24
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Claxton
Headteacher	Mr Keith Cox
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2007
School address	Silkhey Grove Worsley Manchester M28 7FG
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited most class groups and observed 15 lessons taught by 14 teachers. Discussions were held with members of the governing body, senior staff and teachers. Inspectors looked at the school's work, and scrutinised policies, improvement plans and parents' and carers' questionnaires.

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

- how assessments are used to help pupils make progress
- the impact of curriculum on promoting basic skills and preparing pupils for the next stages of their lives
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in improving the school
- the specific arrangements needed for the care, guidance and support of pupils within the autistic spectrum.

Information about the school

Inscape House educates pupils with autistic spectrum conditions. Many pupils also experience other learning barriers including severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. All have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils enter the school at any time in their school career and many continue beyond 16 at the sixth-form site. A very few occasionally have dual registration with other schools. Around 17% are girls, most are of White British heritage and a small number come from minority ethnic groups. Four are looked after and around 17% are known to be eligible for free school meals. Since the last inspection the provision for post-16 students has greatly increased and proposals for reorganisation of the school in 2013 have been advanced by the proprietary body known as The Together Trust. Inscape House holds the award for Healthy Schools.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Inscape House makes good academic provision for pupils and cares for them very well. It is valued by parents and carers. A typical comment received was, 'The school has done a wonderful job with my grandson, both with his education and his general well-being.' Most pupils attend willingly, enjoy lessons and contribute well. Behaviour is good and overall attendance is above average compared to other similar schools. However, a very few pupils persistently attend less often than they could. Pupils feel safe and enjoy forming positive relationships with the adults. Inscape House places a high priority on pupils being healthy; therefore pupils gain plenty of exercise and eat well. As a result the extent to which they adopt healthy lifestyles is outstanding. Interesting opportunities are provided for learning off-site and participating in holidays and visits. Thus, pupils gain experience in socialising and they begin to learn about communities. Pupils are taught about right and wrong and Inscape House helps pupils to manage their own behaviour. The school works well with others to ensure that care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding.

Pupils arrive with attainment very much below national averages but the school's assessments indicate that all groups make good progress compared to others in similar schools. Consequently, they develop skills that prepare them well for moving on to their next stages. Older pupils gain qualifications and some learn to cope in the workplace. Teaching is good and improving rapidly under the effective leadership. Assessment is good and most teachers make effective use of assessment information to understand about pupils' attainments. However, the application of clear and focussed targets in lessons and through support plans is not yet uniform throughout the school. Additionally, assessments in the sixth form have not yet been implemented in all areas of the curriculum. Consequently, throughout the school, some pupils are not always sure what is expected of them and it is not always possible to accurately measure their progress. The recently improved curriculum is good and ensures that all pupils are included, develop basic skills and have access to a range of opportunities. Managers and governors are rigorous in ensuring that statutory obligations are met. For example, school data is interrogated with increasing skill to ensure that none are disadvantaged or discriminated against. Inscape House interacts positively with many other communities. School leaders are improving the use and allocation of resources such as the use of new technologies. The overall quality of education at Inscape House is good and the many changes implemented by the headteacher since the last inspection have improved the school. Improvement planning undertaken as a result of effective self-evaluation builds on these successful changes and provides evidence that the good capacity to improve is sustained and can be maintained.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2011, improve pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers provide appropriate targets for pupils in lessons
 - helping pupils to understand better how to achieve their targets.
- By July 2011 raise pupils' attendance through improving links with parents and carers.
- By July 2011, improve assessments in the sixth form so that students know more about how well they are doing.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils take part in the activities planned for them, indicating that they are keen to learn. For example, in classrooms they settle quickly and engage with lessons willingly. They begin to share experiences as far as they can tolerate and behave well. Most make good gains in communication skills. All of those in Year 11 and sixth form are successful in gaining accreditations, some to the higher stages of GCSE. Because of their learning difficulties, pupils' attainment remain below the national average for all schools but all groups make good progress and all are included in learning.

That pupils feel very safe in school is indicated through their own remarks in discussions and through responses provided by parents and carers. This is confirmed by the work undertaken by Inscape House to try to establish how these pupils with severe communication difficulties feel about school. Regular exercise is undertaken as part of the curriculum and utilised very creatively, for example, through taking part in cycling away from the school site. Pupils also work in the allotment area and sometimes undertake gardening in cooperation with a local primary school to gain experience of growing their food. These activities and exercise help to reduce stress and thus help pupils engage more effectively with school. Pupils are encouraged to eat the healthy school lunches and they respond well to this.

Pupils contribute very well within their limitations to the life of the school. The school council represents their views and has been instrumental in bringing about changes such as to residential visits. Fund-raising and charity work occurs at the suggestion of pupils and a few recently travelled to London to lobby Members of Parliament. Regular trips out of school support the curriculum and pupils take part in residential visits that support learning and interaction with other communities. Where they can, older pupils take part in supported work experiences both on and off the school site and this contributes to their social and moral education. A few go on to undertake aspects of learning in other schools and colleges. Visits to cultural centres and places of worship familiarise them with people from different cultures and religions. Pupils welcome people from different backgrounds into school for events such as Irish music.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching ranges from good to outstanding and overall it is good. Teachers know pupils well and largely plan tasks to match their abilities. However, not all teachers challenge pupils with well-matched targets, and the success criteria of lessons are occasionally not individualised. In these circumstances pupils make less progress than they should. Outstanding lessons, however, make use of clear and sharply focused targets carefully planned for each pupil and assessed during the lesson. Classroom assistants generally guide pupils well and help them to engage in activities with controlled respite from work. Pupils form close relationships with the adults who care for them and thus benefit in their learning from highly effective support.

All pupils of statutory school age follow courses linked to the National Curriculum. Exciting new developments are improving the school's programmes of study, particularly in Key Stage 4. School leaders are ensuring that the curriculum in the lower school provides a broad and balanced coverage of subjects through a themed approach. The curriculum takes good account of pupils' communication needs. In post-16 the emphasis is on gaining good social skills and improving communication to aid further transitions beyond school. The development of basic skills is a high priority in all parts of the school. All pupils engage in nurturing activities throughout the day to revisit and reinforce aspects of personal, social and health education. Thus, they develop skills for

¹ 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.

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living that help them to move on to the next stages of their lives. In Key Stage 4 and post-16 curriculum, pathways have been developed to take account of the new national 14 to 19 curriculum. These include the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network, Entry Level Certificates, GCSEs and Functional Skills so that all have opportunities to gain qualifications. Pupils gain confidence from work-related learning, supported work experiences and outdoor activities. Religious and cultural celebrations are maintained and pupils are regularly introduced to music and drama from other countries. Their learning about others is enhanced through aspects of the curriculum and by trips and residential visits.

The care guidance and support of pupils is highly effective. Staff work closely with other each other and with other professionals to ensure that pupils spend as much time as possible in school and in lessons. They provide outstanding care and support across all areas of the school, for example in ensuring that pupils are ready to begin learning, and in helping them to be ready to tolerate the transport arrangements home. Thus, staff are successful in helping pupils to feel positive about their school when that had not been the case when they attended other education provision. Pupils and their families receive valuable advice about transitional arrangements for moving on to the next stages of their lives.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Since the previous inspection the headteacher and leadership team have greatly improved learning by raising the status of assessments and encouraging teachers to use them more effectively. They have instigated new curriculum pathways that take account of the needs of pupils with autism. Consequently, all have opportunities to learn and succeed. School leaders appraise the work of the school to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to progress and that none are discriminated against. Despite entering a period of uncertainty about the school's future, leaders have maintained a clear vision for Inscape House and morale of the staff remains high. Following a difficult period the governing body is becoming increasingly supportive. Recent changes in membership have produced a good mix of talents and a wide range of backgrounds and the governors are gaining effectiveness. For example, governors are playing an active role in the reorganisation of the school and some make regular visits to observe the work of pupils. Safeguarding practices are satisfactory because all required policies are in place

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and procedures are undertaken correctly. Designated safeguarding staff and governors have completed the required training and all aspects of safeguarding are undertaken by experienced personnel.

Inscape House places great importance on its contribution to the community and reviews this work regularly in order to promote community cohesion. Consequently, pupils begin to understand as well as they are able about maintaining good relations with others, including people from different backgrounds and religions. Contacts are maintained with other organisations to help pupils know more about public services such as the police and fire brigade. The great majority of parents and carers cooperate well with the school and are highly supportive. However, although the school works hard in this respect a very few parents and carers do not yet acknowledge the importance of full attendance. Teachers generally make good use of resources including new technologies and communication aids to help pupils to learn. Inscape House therefore provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good. Students report that they feel safe in this well structured environment and they are supported well. Most arrive from other Inscape pre-16 provision so they quickly settle to routines and become ready to learn. They continue to develop communication and social skills that are fundamental to their progress and future well-being. Good planning and attention to detail ensures that the curriculum meets the needs and interest of all students through, for example, providing

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opportunities for off-site study. There is a very wide range of ability and many different stages of development but the assessment tools used by the teachers do not always help to ensure that staff understand what students can do and what their capabilities are. Consequently, although they do well in their classes it is not always possible to gauge students' progress throughout longer periods of time. The coordinator for this area of the school has only been in post for nine months but leadership and management of the facility is good and improving.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Nineteen parents and carers returned questionnaires. Inspectors also spoke with one parent at length. The great majority of parents and carers were very positive about the school and many took the trouble to write supportive comments. For example, one went as far as to say, 'My child has attended this school for nine years and enjoyed every minute. Teachers and managers have always been generous with their time and have extensive knowledge of each child.'

A few parents and carers said that they wanted more regular information about the progress that is made by their children. Following perusal of the home-school diaries the inspectors suggested to the headteacher that better use could be made of them. For example, whilst the diaries currently report the details of medical and behavioural incidents and attributes they rarely deal with the substance of learning. The inspectors therefore support the views of parents and carers in this matter.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Inscape House 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 62 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	11	58	8	42	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	84	3	16	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	8	42	10	53	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	42	11	58	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	53	9	47	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	47	9	47	1	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	53	7	37	1	5	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)	11	58	7	37	1	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	74	5	26	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	47	9	47	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	37	12	63	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	37	12	63	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	12	63	7	37	0	0	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). 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



6 May 2010

Dear Pupils and Students

Inspection of Inscape House, Manchester, M28 7FG

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you on the playground, at lunch and in classes.

Inscape House is a good school and the adults look after you very well indeed. We believe that you feel that the school is a safe place to learn and to meet other people. Your contributions to the school are good through behaving well and trying very hard to adopt healthy lifestyles. Attendance for most of you is good and many of you try to share your learning with others at school and in other places.

Your teachers produce good lessons with many interesting things to do. The headteacher, other senior leaders and governors are working hard to make sure that you gain an even better education. You have many exciting opportunities outside of school and Inscape House communicates well with most of your parents and carers.

The inspectors feel that the school could be even better, for example, by all teachers planning challenging lesson targets for you so that you understand them and make even better progress. We would like there to be better assessment information in the sixth form so that your good progress can be better demonstrated. Also, we believe that some of you could attend more regularly.

We wish you all the best for the future and once again thank you for your help and interest in the inspection.

Yours sincerely

Terry McKenzie

Lead inspector

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