School report

National Institute of Conductive Education

Cannon Hill House, Russell Road, Birmingham B13 8RD

Inspection dates	24–26 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	**Outstanding**
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for children and learners	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The school's outstanding practice and provision have been continued and strengths identified at the last inspection have been built on.
- Changes to the leadership and management of the school and an increase in the amount of part-time placements offered to pupils have been managed well.
- Parents and staff have confidence in leaders and managers and hold the school in high regard. Staff are extremely dedicated and many are long-serving members of staff, who enjoy their work.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are exposed to a wide range of trips and visits to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- Children get off to an excellent start when they start school in the early years. Activities are correctly pitched because of close links with home and other schools. Staff make careful assessment of children's needs.
- Pupils make outstanding progress. Particular strengths were seen in children's physical development and in their ability to communicate using a range of different methods.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff's specialist knowledge of conductive education is excellent and is seamlessly integrated into all aspects of learning, so that all opportunities are maximised to promote pupils' independence.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are exemplary. They are inquisitive learners and enjoy lessons. Pupils are determined to succeed and their positive attitudes to learning, to staff and each other contribute to the outstanding progress they make.
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Staff are always looking at how aspects of pupils' learning or teaching may be improved. They ensure that barriers to learning are overcome, so that pupils can thrive in a warm, supportive learning environment and are kept safe.
- Governors hold the school to account well, although measures to help them compare how well the school performs year on year are not developed enough. The school's website does not contain all the required information.
- All the independent school standards are fully met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further strengthen the leadership and management of the school by:
  - developing more systematic measures to help governors to monitor the work of the school even more effectively.
  - ensuring that the school's website contains information in relation to how well pupils achieve at key stage 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- Leaders and managers create an ambitious culture, which encourages pupils to achieve exceptionally well. Changes to the leadership, and to the intake of pupils, have not deflected the school in delivering outstanding provision to its pupils. Expectations of staff are extremely high and a premium is placed upon extending their professional knowledge and skills, which benefits all pupils. Staff are very dedicated and committed to the values of the school.
- Staff's continuing professional development is informed by ongoing training. The school provides training for aspiring staff in movement disorder. Staff also improve their professional practice through peer observations and discussions.
- The curriculum is excellent. It combines a strong emphasis on the development of physical, communication and independence, together with excellent coverage of all the required areas of learning, to help both the cognitive and physical development of pupils. Planning for subjects is very thorough and takes into account pupils' individual needs. Pupils visit places of local interest, which both stimulates their curiosity and develops their self-confidence effectively.
- The assessment of pupils' skills has improved well and staff use a range of different methods to capture pupils' progress in various areas of learning and development. This information is analysed carefully to check that pupils are making rapid improvements and that additional help and support is made available when a pupil is struggling.
- Leaders and managers have implemented rigorous arrangements for monitoring all aspects of the school's work. Their judgements about the quality of teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils are secure and accurate. The school's self-evaluation correctly identifies the school's many strengths and where further developments are needed, particularly in relation to future viability. The school's improvement planning sets out clear goals in order to secure improvements.
- Staff, in response to an inspection questionnaire, stated overwhelmingly that they enjoy working at the school and are extremely passionate about their work.
- The school has strong links with families and parents who hold the school in very high regard. The school has also forged very good liaison with a range of schools that place their pupils on a part-time basis.
- Safeguarding is effective and appropriate risk assessments are in place.
- The promotion of British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are excellent. Pupils benefit from a rich variety of experiences, and visitors teach them about different backgrounds, traditions and cultures, so that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school ensures that all pupils, regardless of ability, experience the full range of learning and that individual needs are carefully met. The positive, affirming ethos of the school reflects the dignity and respect given to all members of the school community.
- The purpose-built premises provide an ideal learning environment, with space for pupils to practise their physical skills and to undertake active learning.
- The website does not contain pupils' achievement data.
- **The governance of the school**
  - A focused group of trustees have been established to act as governors. They meet regularly to receive reports from the headteacher and contribute constructively to school improvement planning and the school's self-evaluation. They have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the challenges that it faces.
  - Governors know that the quality of teaching and learning is a strength of the school and that pupils make outstanding progress. They have ensured that the school fully meets all the independent school standards.
  - Governors prioritise safeguarding. This is a standing item at the governors meeting and ensures that appropriate procedures are in place to check pupils are kept safe.
  - Governors check the work of the school, but are not easily able to compare the quality of teaching and pupils' progress from one year to the next to see where improvements can be made. The use of such measures are in early stages of development.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are diligent in ensuring that pupils are safe and protected. Pupils' self-esteem thrives in the safe environment, but one which does not stifle appropriate risk taking. Staff engage well with parents, carers and other stakeholders to make sure that all pupils are

supported and safe. Staff have received appropriate safeguarding training and the designated lead person has undertaken more extensive training, so that they are up to date with the latest guidance.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- Conductors (the name given for qualified staff to teach conductive education) have expert knowledge in movement techniques. They set high levels of physical demand for pupils, and through encouragement, support and motivation enable them to achieve well to overcome their difficulties. Staff use their in-depth knowledge of pupils superbly, and know how to get the best out of pupils.
- Pupils are taught how to develop their physical skills such as walking unaided or with minimal support and are given strategies of how to cope with a fall.
- English and mathematics are taught in creative and imaginative ways, to keep pupils motivated. Learning tasks are interesting and capture pupils' attention well. Tasks are practically based. For example, in an English lesson, pupils made their way to the corridor to find envelopes in order to recognise their own addresses, thereby practising their physical as well as their reading skills.
- In a mathematics lesson, sensory activities using biscuit dough helped pupils to count up to 10 and understand how to divide.
- Work is well matched to ability and staff adjust their level of questioning to ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged.
- Lessons are characterised by very high expectations, academically, physically and behaviourally. Pupils respond well to these expectations, by trying their very best.
- Excellent use is made of technology, such as voice speech devices, to help pupils communicate effectively, so that they can make choices or their views known.
- The pace of learning is well judged, with appropriate amounts of time given for pupils to respond.
- The integration of physical development across other areas of the learning is excellent. This means that there are discrete movement sessions and times when these skills are put into practice and incorporated into daily routines.
- Very good assessment procedures are in place to capture pupils' small steps of progress across a range of cognitive and physical development. Online assessments of pupils' achievements are shared with home and other schools, and promote good communication between various stakeholders.
- Teaching actively promotes British values in an appropriate manner, for example, democracy is taught through encouraging pupils to make choices about likes and dislikes.
- Teaching prepares pupils well for future independence in life by developing essential independence and communication skills

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils show a thirst for learning, are keen to engage in lessons and their enjoyment in lessons is evident.
- Pupils develop their self-confidence extremely well and learn to become more resilient. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, as appropriate to their level of understanding. Pupils' confident demeanour indicates how safe they feel in school.
- Pupils' physical and emotional well-being is fostered superbly and lays the foundation for the significant improvements they make. Pupils enjoy socialising with adults and each other. There is no evidence of bullying and pupils are taught to accept and understand each other's differences. There is a strong emphasis on helping one another and being empathetic to each other's needs.
- Independence is promoted well at every opportunity. For example, lunchtimes are used as valuable occasions to teach pupils social and self-help skills. They learn to take turns and share appropriately.
- Pupils are involved in a range of charitable and sporting activities, such as boccia, which helps to develop their confidence.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around school is excellent. They have extremely positive attitudes to learning.

They relish lessons and are keen to participate in all activities. At the end of one lesson one pupil said, 'Can I have another four hours?'

- Pupils develop deeper self-knowledge and recognise feelings and needs of others from different backgrounds, showing tolerance.
- The school does not use any form of physical intervention and does not exclude pupils.
- Pupils are keen to attend school and do so very well. Any prolonged individual absences are due to medical appointments, or illness.
- The school provides an extremely safe environment for pupils' learning and personal development. Risks are assessed and addressed, both on the premises and for off-site activities.

The outcomes for pupils are outstanding

- The majority of pupils make better than expected progress in all areas of learning and many make outstanding progress from their starting points. Pupils make exceptional gains in developing their physical and communication skills. When a pupil does not make the expected progress, this is identified quickly, and additional support and help is provided to enable them to catch up.
- The work of the school is very effective in maintaining pupils' mobility and giving them confidence. Parents recognise the improvements their children make academically, physically and socially. The very effective support the school provides to pupils also enables many of them to carry on in their education in their original school.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in developing communication skills to become more confident communicators. Pupils learn to sign competently and where they have no speech, use switches to give their answers and communicate their choices. In a science lesson, pupils made predictions of which objects were living or non-living. One pupil signed colours of various objects appropriately.
- Pupils make outstanding physical improvements. For example, they learn to stand for longer periods of time, balance and walk with increased independence and confidence using walking sticks or unaided. Pupils are presented with high levels of challenge to improve their motor coordination, such as learning to climb stairs or tackling an obstacle course in order to find a picture or object. Pupils respond well to these challenges and relish lessons.
- Reading is systematically and regularly taught. Phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is taught effectively, so pupils can recognise common consonant blends. The most able pupils recognise irregular spellings, such as spaghetti.
- Pupils are prepared well for their next stage of education and are equipped with the essential skills of communication and mobility to help them transition into other schools effectively.

The early years provision is outstanding

- Children attend the early years provision on a sessional basis, specifically for additional physical input and development. Children join the school with skills that are well below those typically expected for their age, but they make outstanding progress in their physical development and mobility.
- The bright, stimulating environment and excellent use of sensory activities encourage children's interest to be inquisitive learners.
- The online learning journals, which record children's achievements in a wide range of areas, are of very high quality and enable easy access for parents and other schools, so they know how well children are progressing.
- The excellent links with parents and detailed initial assessments lead to well-focused programmes based on the prime areas of learning and set out specific goals for children to achieve.
- Children learn to recognise and pronounce different letter sounds in literacy and they enjoy listening to stories and join in with familiar phrases. In a science activity, children identified which objects floated or sank and some used switches to make their choice known. This activity also encouraged children to stand and improve their coordination.
- Daily routines focus on communication, language, physical, personal and social development, and provide continuous opportunities to practise movement-based activities, such as lying, sitting and standing positions. This relentless focus on important skills enables children to make excellent progress toward

their individual targets. Movement tasks encourage children to problem solve, and are presented in fun learning activities.

- Excellent use is made of observational assessments. These inform future planning so that children's progress is maximised.
- The early years provision is exceptionally well led and managed. The emphasis on equipping children with independence skills and high-quality learning experiences is outstanding. Children are exceptionally well behaved and feel very safe. Children are very well prepared either for education in a partner school or for transition into year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	103588
Inspection number	10012864
DfE registration number	330/6080

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Number of part time pupils	14
Proprietor	Roger David Wood
Chair	Les Lawrence
Headteacher	Melanie Brown
Annual fees (day pupils)	£25-34,000
Telephone number	0121 4491569
Website	www.conductive-education.org.uk
Email address	foundation@conductive-education.org.uk
Date of previous school inspection	2-4 July 2013

Information about this school

- The National Institute of Conductive Education (NICE) is a co-educational independent day special school providing for the learning and development needs of children who have physical disabilities and wide-ranging learning difficulties.
- The school, situated in purpose-built premises in Birmingham, opened in 1987 and is registered for boys and girls aged from three to 11 years old.
- Nearly all pupils attend part time, sharing their placement with other mainstream or special schools. This is a significant change since the last inspection. Some pupils attend full time for a fixed period of time to concentrate on their physical skills and mobility.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- The school uses conductive education and aims to help children to overcome problems with movement disorders and extend their potential for academic learning and personal development, to promote more active and independent lives.
- The school does not receive any additional funding.
- The school was last inspected in July 2013 and since that time there has been a change of headteacher, who took up her post in September 2013.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed seven parts of lessons, most of which were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Pupils' work, surveys, annual reports and other records, including those that were held online, were scrutinised.
- The school's documentation was examined, including planning for subjects, records of pupils' progress and the welfare and safeguarding of pupils. The inspector checked the school's compliance with the regulations for independent schools.
- The views of pupils were sought through individual discussions.
- There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire Parent View, but the inspector met with three parents and took into account other comments from a school-based questionnaire.

Inspection team

Frank Price, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: http://eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

Ofsted