

Inspection of Royal Free Hospital Children's School

6 West B, The Royal Free Hospital, Pond Street, London NW3 2QG

Inspection dates: 9–10 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are settled, safe and happy. Leaders reassure pupils who are admitted to the ward that they can continue learning and keep up with school work. Teachers help pupils learn at their bedside or in the classroom. Pupils complete an 'all about me' booklet so that all adults at the school understand the pupil's personality, interests and goals for the future.

For older pupils, leaders immediately find out about their examination subjects. They make sure that pupils, parents and carers, and the pupils' mainstream school know exactly what special examination arrangements are available. Parents and pupils really appreciate this. It has a positive impact on pupils' attitude to their condition and treatment as well as their learning.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are kind and supportive of each other because adults show them how. Pupils are confident that there is no bullying, or, if there were, that adults would deal with it.

Teachers make sure that the work is suitable for individual pupils. Adults help and support pupils to succeed. Pupils work independently, in pairs and in groups. Adults make sure that pupils challenge themselves in new and sometimes unfamiliar situations.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school provides an exceptional quality of education for pupils. Pupils are well supported to manage their medical conditions and to focus on learning and achieving their best. Some pupils overcome considerable gaps in their education and study successfully for a range of GCSEs and other qualifications. Almost all pupils re-join their main school or go on to college at the end of Year 11.

Expert subject leaders develop a curriculum that is well structured and organised. For example, teachers used primary-aged pupils' interest in dinosaurs as a context for teaching about the formation of fossils, and to develop an understanding of time.

In Years 10 and 11, pupils study well beyond examination requirements. For example, they study a wide range of literature and poetry from different cultures in English. Subject leaders are creative. They design and produce high-quality resources for pupils.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent because adults' expectations are clear and consistent. Pupils concentrate well in class and show empathy for each other. The school is a tolerant and respectful place, with a mature learning ethos.

Pupils experience a wide range of positive personal development opportunities. In arts week, pupils visit and work with artists and galleries across north London. Pupils

were asked by the hospital to provide artwork for its current building project. Pupils take part in a wide range of trips and residential experiences.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of pupils. They work diligently with the hospital, Camden local authority and the pupils' main schools to get all the information they need. They spend time with pupils and do their own assessments. They take into account pupils' educational and medical needs, examination subjects and career aspirations.

The headteacher and senior staff are ambitious for pupils to return to mainstream education. They have high expectations. They encourage all staff to show leadership and take responsibility, and trust them to do this. Staff model this same approach for pupils. Leaders have the expertise and skill to lead a complex and diverse provision.

Governors have a clear vision of the school. They bring together education, health and safeguarding for the benefit of the child. They fully support the school's research with the medical teams. The headteacher and senior leaders have developed a national reputation in hospital schooling, for example in developing the hospital school as a resource for supporting pupils with type 1 diabetes.

Parents say that their children's academic progress, self-esteem and confidence have grown a lot since coming to the school. Leaders provide family days for parents to support them in understanding their child's medical condition.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders develop strong partnerships within the hospital and with external partners. These help to keep pupils safe. Pupils get the right help if there are concerns about their well-being. Leaders identify risks, seek advice and follow up quickly.

All school staff meet at the start of the day to share information. They reflect on pupils' needs and agree on actions to support pupils. School leaders also meet daily with medical professionals on the wards in the 'safeguarding huddle'. This ensures that everyone works together in the best interests of the child. Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100094
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	10110394
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dr Nicky Rogal
Headteacher	Alex Yates
Website	www.royalfree.camden.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 November 2018

Information about this school

- The Royal Free Hospital Children’s School caters for pupils with a range of medical and mental health needs. Some pupils have additional learning needs, including some with education, health and care (EHC) plans.
- The Royal Free Hospital Children’s School includes four different types of provision. The school provides education for children who are in-patients or day patients on the paediatric wards of the Royal Free Hospital. The address of this provision is 6 West B, The Royal Free Hospital, Pond Street, London NW3 2QG. The school provides education for the Royal Free Hospital child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) eating disorder service. This provision is at Queen Mary’s House, 124 Heath Street, Hampstead NW3 1DX. The GCSE day school is for pupils who are not currently in-patients at the hospital but who would benefit from attending the school on a full- or part-time basis. This provision is at The Hive, 18 Harben Parade, Finchley Road NW3 6JP. The school also manages the delivery of the Camden medical needs outreach teaching. The school took over this provision in September 2018. There is an outreach teaching site at Camden City Learning Centre, Charrington Street, Somers Town NW1 1RD.
- The school caters for primary- and secondary-aged pupils. However, the majority of pupils, those at the GCSE day school and Queen Mary’s House, are in Years 10

and 11. When these pupils arrive at the school, they have typically missed between three and 24 months of schooling.

- Pupils are referred to the school in a variety of ways, including from hospital staff, mainstream primary and secondary schools, local authority CAMHS services and through parental enquiry. All referrals are made through a paediatric consultant.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is a leading practice school for mental health and well-being. The school leads and runs the mental health hub for Camden Learning partnership. The school holds the Healthy Schools gold award and Artsmark gold award.
- There have been no significant changes in school leadership or governance since the previous section 5 inspection in February 2015.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held a telephone conversation with the headteacher about the quality of education. Additional discussions were held on site with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, a paediatric consultant from the Royal Free Hospital and other senior leaders.
- We visited all four school sites.
- We focused deeply on English, mathematics, art and personal, social, health and economic education. We visited classes, looked at work, met with pupils and held discussions with teachers and subject leaders.
- We held a meeting with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- We met with the designated safeguarding lead, and reviewed the single central record and a range of documentation about safeguarding.
- We met with a range of staff to gather their views.
- Parents' views were considered through the two responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the parents of four pupils who came in to school to speak to us.

Inspection team

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