

Chaselea Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

Unique reference number	134351
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	381675
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2012
Lead inspector	Charles Hackett

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	44
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Barrie Scott
Headteacher	Pauline Bury
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2009
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Age group	11–16
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Introduction

Inspection team

Charles Hackett

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited six lessons, observing four teachers and a college lecturer supported by a Chaselea teaching assistant. Meetings were held with staff, two members of the management committee and a representative of the local authority. Discussions were held with students about their work and their views of the school.

The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at students' work and information on their progress; safeguarding policies and other documents were evaluated. Questionnaires completed by eight parents and carers, 13 staff and 10 students were scrutinised.

Information about the school

Chaselea is an average-sized pupil referral unit that provides education for students who have been permanently excluded from secondary schools or are at risk of exclusion. It also supports students new to the local authority unable to immediately gain a placement in a secondary school. A few students admitted have medical conditions that prevent full-time attendance at a secondary school. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is below average. A few students are in the care of a local authority. An above average number of students admitted are eligible for free school meals. The unit operates on two sites, one for students in Key Stage 3 and another base, new at the start of this academic year, for those in Key Stage 4. Currently there are 11 students in Key Stage 3 and 33 in Key Stage 4, a very different balance in its population from the previous inspection when the majority of students were in Key Stage 3. Key Stage 4 students access a range of courses offered by local training providers and a local further education college. Key Stage 4 students spend one day every week with an outdoor education specialist provider and Key Stage 3 groups alternate Fridays. The unit has recently been awarded Dyslexia Friendly Status and achieved the Healthy School Standard.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- Chaselea is a satisfactory pupil referral unit. A key strength lies in the improvement many students make in their behaviour over the time they are at the unit. They respond positively to the high expectations of staff and, as a result, their behaviour and safety is good. It is well supported by the emphasis placed on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The highly-respected headteacher leads a staff team fully focused on addressing the different needs of students admitted to the unit. The data collected on their achievements confirms at least satisfactory progress. It is not, though, sufficiently well analysed for the unit to be secure that all the different groups of students achieve at the same rates as each other in relation to their starting points.
- The achievement and teaching of Key Stage 3 students has been maintained as good since the previous inspection and a wider range of provision is now available for Key Stage 4. The unit is well regarded for its contribution to the partnership of schools in the area, but information collected to demonstrate the impact of placement at the unit is limited. This reduces the unit's ability to fully evaluate the effectiveness of its work.
- Achievement at Key Stage 4 is satisfactory and improving. This is reflected in the current Year 10 students making better progress in literacy and numeracy than previous Key Stage 4 groups.
- The curriculum gives good support for students' literacy skills, as highlighted by the recent award of Dyslexia Friendly status. The curriculum, though, does not give sufficient opportunity for students with the potential for higher attainment to achieve external accreditation.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good in Key Stage 3 and, although satisfactory, more variable at Key Stage 4. In both key stages insufficient attention is given by teachers to ensuring that the work always challenges higher-ability students.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- During the current academic year, improve the unit's ability to evaluate the impact of its provision by;
 - analysing and comparing the progress of different groups of students, such as those in the care of the local authority or with statements of special educational needs
 - collating and evaluating data on student outcomes when they leave the unit.

- Give priority this term to ensuring that all teachers consistently make full use of known assessment information on each student to set tasks that match their ability and challenge them to achieve.

- Over the next academic year, extend the opportunities for students to achieve success in a range of GCSEs.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students in Key Stage 3 show positive attitudes to learning. For almost all, this is a significant improvement from their previous conduct in a secondary school. They now show an interest in the topics and are keen to cooperate with each other on challenges set by the teacher. In English, students worked well in pairs considering the factors involved in producing a piece of persuasive writing. They were able to identify keywords used and then begin to use them in their own writing. The pace of learning was good, as it was in a mathematics lesson where students responded well to approach taken by the teacher. Students enjoyed the chance to gain information about a range of supercars as part of a data handling problem. They were inquisitive about the different characteristics of each car and able to group them according to specific criteria.

In Key Stage 4, students are completing a recently extended range of courses which now include functional literacy and numeracy. They are making good progress in completing each section of the courses, but for the higher-ability students the content is not always sufficiently challenging. There are, though, a significant number of examples of individual students making good progress in specific subjects. For example, a student previously reluctant to engage in any form of learning is now being well supported by the unit to attend college full-time following a specialist art course. Students are keen to point out how the unit is helping them. A Year 11 student stressed how the impact of the unit's support was supporting her to manage her behaviour, which in turn meant she would be able to sit her GCSEs back at her

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mainstream school.

Attainment, including in reading, is broadly average but varies significantly due to the very wide range of students the centre supports. The progress of each student is considered very carefully and six-weekly review meetings are held to monitor progress. Parents and carers welcome these and are generally positive about the progress of their children. There is, though, limited analysis of individual achievement data for each student to permit comparisons to be made on the progress of the different groups of students that the unit supports. However, the wealth of available data shows that there are no significant variations between different groups and that all achieve at least satisfactorily. Any gaps in attainment compared to other students nationally are closing.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Parents, carers and students have a more positive view of teaching but inspection evidence does not support this. Within Key Stage 3, though, the teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good. Typically, teachers make good use of information and communication technology to prepare presentations for students and, when appropriate, show short video clips to engage them in learning. A common feature of lessons is the good balance of time spent on teachers' explanations and students being engaged in tasks. This successfully keeps students fully focused on their work. Questioning is good and seeks to challenge higher-ability students, although the planning of lessons is not as focussed on students' different abilities. At times, this results in students of different ability being asked to complete the same work. The teaching of disabled students and those with special educational needs matches the quality of that offered to other students.

Teaching assistants know the students' different needs well and this helps them to quickly support individual students experiencing difficulties. This was seen in a Key Stage 4 information and communication technology lesson where the assistant quickly intervened when a student was starting to become unsettled. The student was able to achieve well by working one-to-one with her for the rest of the lesson. The positive relationships staff have with students and the good promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are used well to encourage students to engage in learning. This was evident in a catering lesson where the teaching assistant supported the work of the lecturer well to enable all the students to follow the recipe carefully to make some gingerbread. Similarly, a Key Stage 4 student responded very well in a functional skills literacy session because of the trust and respect being shown towards her by the staff. Teachers make good use of marking to assess how well students are achieving. They ensure that their assessments are accurate through rigorous systems for moderating their assessments with each other.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students, parents and carers all stress that behaviour and attitudes to learning improve over time following placement at the unit. The improvement students make in their behaviour means that in lessons staff can focus on learning rather than managing behaviour. During the inspection behaviour was good in lessons and unstructured times, such as breakfast club and lunch. Students were courteous and polite to staff and each other, and keen to show and discuss their work. In lessons, students relate positively to each other and co-operate well when asked to work together. There have been some incidents of poor behaviour but these are rare and the unit takes appropriate action to address these. Students understand the different types of bullying, such as name calling or cyber bullying, and say that incidents are rare. They are aware of the steps they can take to prevent it and say that, when it does occur, it is addressed promptly and with appropriate seriousness by staff. The unit is particularly stringent about internet use to ensure that bullying through the use of social network sites is eliminated.

Safety is given a high priority throughout the unit. Risk assessments of all activities, including the use of external training providers, are rigorous and this ensures that all groups of students are safe. Both parents and students agree with this. Students are aware of the importance of keeping healthy and for taking responsibility for their actions when faced with potentially unsafe situations. For all students attendance has been a real issue prior to joining the unit. Many make dramatic improvements and this contributes to them being able to return to a secondary school or be offered college or vocational training placements when they reach school leaving age.

Leadership and management

The headteacher is very committed to ensuring that the unit can have a positive impact on the lives of all students admitted. This has ensured satisfactory equality of opportunity for all students and eliminated any form of discrimination. Much has been done to enhance the provision and respond to the changes in student intake that the unit has faced since the previous inspection. Supported by the management committee, the headteacher has secured improved accommodation at the Key Stage 3 site and the use of a base for Key Stage 4 students. School improvement planning has been effective and ensured that students make at least satisfactory progress over time. All of these factors show the unit has a satisfactory capacity to sustain its improvement.

Good training opportunities are provided for staff to develop their skills. This has been particularly so in teaching where staff have developed good questioning skills to improve the quality of their teaching. Staff know the students well. The tracking of their progress is robust. However, the analysis of the individual achievements is insufficient for the unit to know if it is equally effective for all the different groups of students.

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The high standards set by senior staff are reflected in the good behaviour demonstrated by students. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects have been promoted well and this enhances students' chances of being successful when they return to mainstream. Important priority is given to safeguarding. This is well supported by the management committee's overview of the work of the unit and the risk assessments undertaken on the placements with outside providers. It is clear that the unit is regarded highly by the schools within its partnership. Effective links exist with other agencies, such as the youth service and the youth offending team.

The curriculum is adequate. Appropriately, there is a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. At Key Stage 3, the focus on covering a range of subjects through projects that interest students is effective. At Key Stage 4 students are following a wider range of courses but these do not fully challenge students of a higher ability or provide sufficient opportunities to take GCSEs. Good links are established with parents and carers right from the moment that students are referred for a placement and regular contact is maintained.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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 February 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Chaselea PRU, Cannock, WS11 1LH

Thank you for being so helpful when I came to visit your unit. The success so many of you have in being able to either return to a mainstream school or move on to college is good to see.

I have judged the unit to be satisfactory. I can see that many of you now work hard in lessons and that for most of you there are good improvements in both your behaviour and attendance. I consider both your achievements and the quality of teaching to be satisfactory. The accommodation has been improved and appropriately those of you in Key Stage 4 now have a teaching base. The unit has continued to support the individual needs of all of you since its last inspection. Much of this is due to the hard work of the headteacher and her senior colleagues. To be even better, I have suggested these areas of improvement to the school.

- Develop a more effective system of analysing your progress.
- Ensure that all teachers consistently make full use of known assessment information on all of you to challenge your learning in lessons.
- Extend the opportunities for you to achieve GCSEs

We do hope that you continue to work hard in your studies and that you are all successful when it comes to taking examinations.

Yours sincerely

Charles Hackett
Lead inspector

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