

Continuum School Beverley

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Amraz Ali HMI

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Continuum School Beverley is an independent day school for students aged from 10 to 18 years of age with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Part of Continuum Care and Education Limited, the school originally opened in 2001 but relocated to its current site in September 2006. There are nine students on roll aged between 14 and 16 years, six of whom have a statement of special educational needs and some are in the care of local authorities.

The school aims to establish a culture that promotes excellence, equality, positive regard and high achievement for all the young people who attend. All the students come from four local authorities, with some who attend in care homes run by the Continuum group. The school was previously inspected in July 2008.

Evaluation of the school

Continuum School Beverley successfully meets its aims and provides a satisfactory quality of education for its students. Measures to promote the welfare, health and safety of the students continue to be good. Improvements to the curriculum and the provision for the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development mean that these areas are now good. The good curriculum, with strengths in promoting students' personal development and satisfactory teaching leads to students making satisfactory progress in their academic work. All of the requirements to safeguard students are in place and improvements to the building, such as creating a medical room and a dedicated outdoor play space, mean that all of the regulations for independent schools are now met.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum has been improved and it is good overall. It is based on the National Curriculum and includes vocational and life skills courses at Key Stage 4 and, since the last inspection, Spanish and music have been added. A particularly strong feature is the work in food preparation which is liked by students and contributes to their successes in achieving external qualifications. Provision for English and mathematics is helping the majority of students to make at least satisfactory progress in their basic skills. Provision for students with a statement of

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

special educational needs, particularly the provision related to modifying their behaviour, is satisfactory. Although well-chosen interventions and extra help for students are provided, some of these are new and have not yet helped to improve the key skills of all identified students. Where, for whatever reasons, students' attendance at the school is restricted, flexibility with the curriculum and the timetable is not always used to ensure that English and mathematics lessons are prioritised. Personal, social and health education, citizenship, religious education and sometimes English lessons effectively tackle a wide range of topics that are particularly relevant to the students such as managing emotions, relationships, rules and racism. For example, in an English lesson, looking at the use of headlines in newspapers, the subject of racism in football was discussed. Off-site activities enhance the students' learning, which includes their appreciation of English institutions, democracy, the judiciary and local government. For example, students visited a prison and on another visit took tea with a magistrate. Good careers guidance is provided through strong links with the Connexions service personal advisers to ensure that the students develop their understanding of the world of work and, where appropriate, work placements have been arranged for older students.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory overall and a core of the lessons observed were good. Teachers and support staff work well together. The relationships between teachers and students are good and all staff use their knowledge of students to encourage them to make the right choices about their behaviour and engagement in lessons. Teachers' planning of lessons has improved since the last inspection and a common format is being used across the school. Where these work particularly well, teachers use their knowledge of students to set well-tailored tasks for individuals. For example, in a mathematics lesson one student was challenged to complete and devise repeating patterns while a second student was helped to tackle mathematical problems. Learning objectives are clear and are routinely shared with pupils. Despite the generally detailed planning, opportunities are sometimes missed to extend learning and capitalise on students' interests in order to improve their basic skills. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear and reflect their satisfactory subject knowledge and, when students attend the school and engage in the lessons, their progress is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. However, this is not always the case where attendance is poor and students' attitudes to learning are less positive. Additionally, some students' temporary part-time attendance limits their progress. Where these factors come in to play there are missed opportunities to engage parents and carers to support learning at home, particularly where students' English and mathematics skills are weak. Where learning is most successful the topics interest students and there is a strong element of practical work. For example, in vocational studies students worked well to make 'toad-in-the-hole' along with potatoes and vegetables as part of their studies to gain an externally validated qualification in hospitality.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school makes good provision for the development of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through citizenship and religious education lessons.

Across the curriculum, topics are chosen well in order to provide students with relevant issues to consider and reflect on, for example, the importance of rules and regulations in everyday life. The school provides students with good opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures. They learn about world religions and different cultures, for example, through looking at food and customs from around the world. As part of the school's well planned work to teach students about English institutions they have visited local council offices and met the Lord Mayor of Kingston upon Hull. The caring environment and good relationships between staff and students have a positive impact on students' attitudes to school. Although this has resulted in some pupils improved attendance, overall attendance is well below average. Behaviour, although much improved when compared to their behaviour in their previous schools, is satisfactory overall. Students are generally polite and courteous to visitors and mix appropriately with one another. The school has a clear policy to promote acceptable behaviour and to encourage students to develop independence, self-control and self-esteem. Behaviour is generally well managed and the behaviour of students is good at times. However, there are instances when individual students choose not to engage in learning activities.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Good provision is made for students' welfare, health and safety. The high staff-to-student ratio and good relationships between staff and students ensure that students are safe. The school has a wide range of policies in place including policies for child protection and health and safety. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out in all areas of school life; risk assessments for educational visits and for transporting pupils to off-site provision are in place. Accidents and incidents are properly recorded. All staff, including the named person for child protection, have received the required training at the appropriate level. Students are encouraged to eat healthily. Students have access to outdoor spaces for exercise and regularly take part in physical education activities at a local sports centre. The school fulfils its duties with regard to the Equalities Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

A single central record of all the required checks is kept up to date and shows clearly that all staff have been subject to an enhanced check by the Criminal Records Bureau before they start work at the school.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school's premises provide suitable accommodation for the needs of the students. Located in two units on an industrial estate there is a reasonably-sized, multipurpose hall that is used as a social and recreational area, in addition to being a dining room at lunchtimes. There are eight classrooms, all of which are relatively small in size but are generally suitable for the small size of the groups using them. A good quality of decoration and educational displays mean that the premises provide a good learning environment. There are specialist rooms for woodworking and information and communication technology. The school building is in good condition, with a range of

washing facilities and toilets appropriate to the age range of the students in the school. Improvements since the last inspection mean that there is now a suitable space for use as a medical room and fencing has helped to create a reasonable-sized outdoor play space.

Provision of information

The school provides parents, carers and others with all of the required information through the prospectus and the recently improved website. There is a clear statement of the aims and curriculum of the school and of the arrangements for discipline. The school provides parents and carers with termly written reports on the progress of their children.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's procedures for handling complaints are clear and concise and meet all requirements for independent schools.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve the effectiveness of liaison with parents and carers to ensure that opportunities for supporting students' learning and progress at home are maximised, if they are temporarily prevented from attending school, and particularly in English and mathematics
- review the strategies for amending the curriculum to meet the individual needs for pupils, particularly where they have identifiable weaknesses in one of their basic skills of English or mathematics.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education			✓	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			✓	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			✓	

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils			✓	

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Secondary day special school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties		
Date school opened	2001		
Age range of pupils	10-18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 6	Girls: 1	Total: 7
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 2	Total: 2
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 5	Girls: 1	Total: 6
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 2	Girls: 3	Total: 5
Annual fees (day pupils)	£31,824 - £36,552		
Address of school	20 Priory Road Industrial Estate Beverley East Riding of Yorkshire Hull HU17 0EW		
Telephone number	01482 307833		
Email address	melanie.jackson@continuumgroup.org.uk		
Headteacher	Miss Melanie Jackson		
Proprietor	Mr Bob Hall		

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.



16 February 2012

Dear students

**Inspection of Continuum School Beverley, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU17
OEW**

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to me when I inspected your school. I found talking to you, looking at your work and observing you learning very helpful. It was also helpful to listen to your views about the school and see what you had to say in the survey we asked you to complete. I am pleased to report that your school provides you with a satisfactory quality of education. Staff work well to take good care of you and help to keep you safe. The subjects, courses and experiences that are provided for you are good. Satisfactory teaching helps you to make satisfactory progress. Although your attendance at school has improved, and is much better than when you attended mainstream schools, for some of you it is still low and this restricts how much progress you are able to make in your key skills.

Your school does all the things that it has to do in order to continue to operate as a school. All the staff want the school to be even better so I have agreed two areas with the school that they should try to improve. First, to improve how they work with parents and careers to ensure that if you are not attending school there is work and help for you at home, particularly in English and mathematics. Second, where your attendance is limited, to review the curriculum and timetable to meet your needs in English or mathematics.

You can help by making sure that you attend school regularly and if you are asked to complete work that you try to do so.

Yours sincerely

Amraz Ali
Her Majesty's Inspector