

# North West Secondary Short Stay School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135894
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	360778
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 January 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Canham

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	47
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	n/a
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Ashworth
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Kingsway Surrey GU21 6NT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector who visited five lessons and observed five teachers. The inspector also held discussions with members of the management committee, staff and outside agencies, and talked with students and a parent. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including assessment and attendance information, lesson plans, safeguarding arrangements, school development planning, management committee minutes and students' work. The inspector scrutinised the two questionnaires received from parents and carers, as well as those from staff and a sample of students.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of the recently formed senior leadership team in managing the complex provision that is based on different sites.
- The extent to which the flexible curriculum and individualised programmes are raising levels of achievement and getting students more involved in their learning, while preparing them for a future beyond the school.
- The effectiveness of monitoring and the impact of this.
- How far the management committee, while supporting the senior leadership team, is influencing the school's direction and lifting performance.

## Information about the school

The North West Secondary Short Stay School serves a wide geographical area. It was formed in September 2009 to serve 12 secondary schools following the reorganisation of the local authority's provision for pupil referral units. The school provides alternative education for students in Years 7 to 11 who have been permanently excluded from a mainstream school or who have had a change of placement to avoid permanent exclusion. Almost all students are from families of White British heritage and there are substantially more boys than girls. A significant proportion of students have not attended their mainstream schools for a considerable period. Currently, almost a fifth of students have a statement of special educational needs and these attend the school full or part time, but usually remain on the roll of their mainstream school.

The school comprises two centres, Pyrford and Kingsway, catering for the needs of students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Several staff share their time between the two centres, which are several miles apart. Students have regular access to a range of other professional support services, including the mental health team. Two separate groups of students in Years 7 to 9 attend the Pyrford Centre for ten weeks, during which they are jointly registered with their mainstream school and the centre. They spend two days at the centre and three days in school. Those students who attend the Kingsway Centre are mostly in Years 10 to 11, and participate in an alternative curriculum that prepares them for a return to a secondary school, further education, training or employment.

**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

The school provides a good education. It achieves its success through the hard work of committed staff under the strong leadership of the headteacher who is passionate about developing the best provision and gaining the highest outcomes for all students and their families. With effective support from the senior leadership team, the headteacher has managed change well since the reorganisation. As a result, staff are well supported and there is a common approach between the two centres.

An outstanding feature of the setting is the outstanding care of students. Staff provide an extremely supportive and nurturing environment, which places a high priority on enhancing students' self-esteem and in developing their confidence. As a consequence of this and the good teaching, students develop their skills effectively and make up for substantial deficits in their education. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school's work and welcome the influence it is having on their children's attitudes, behaviour and progress.

As a result of high expectations and strong relationships with staff, the large majority of students learn to manage their behaviour and attitudes are much improved. Students say that they feel safe and secure in a supportive environment and the trust developed between students and staff is at the hub of this success. Students make good academic progress, and also in developing their creative and performance skills. Such significant improvements lay down firm foundations for the students' successful reintegration to mainstream education, and preparation for enrolment at college or successful employment. It is an early indicator of the school's success that the large majority of students attend regularly and arrive on time. However, while in the short term the school successfully meets the educational needs of students waiting to be placed in a special school, it does not have the specialist staff or facilities to cater for complex behavioural and emotional needs for an extended period. Currently, those students waiting to go on to another school more suited to their needs are not moved on quickly enough.

Teaching is effective because staff know each student, including their needs and backgrounds, extremely well and use information to help with planning. However, some planning is not precise enough in identifying exactly what the students will learn and this makes it difficult to measure their progress within some lessons. The flexible curriculum, which is relevant and meaningful, is well suited to the different needs of students at the two centres. Underpinned by a comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE), students benefit from a very well-constructed personalised learning programme. However, not always enough attention is given to the development of literacy skills.

Leaders want the best for the students and as a result of their accurate self-evaluation the school has a good capacity to improve. This is reflected in the comprehensive systems

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that monitor the progress of students and the school's realistic expectations of where it wants the students to be.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Senior leaders and the management committee should ensure that those students designated for special schools are transferred as soon as possible in order that they receive long-term support.
- Improve the consistency in lesson planning by ensuring staff always:
  - include clear and specific learning intentions, using words that students understand
  - give more attention to literacy, especially highlighting the use of key vocabulary in all subjects to develop students' reading and writing skills.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The school's unremitting efforts and well-informed support are making a substantial difference to students' good progress and their effective personal development. Students considerably improve their attitudes and motivation and learn to interact positively with each other and the adults with whom they meet and work. These positive characteristics successfully increase students' interest in, and enjoyment of, education. Students' confidence develops especially well. Students' willingness to participate in learning, as seen in English when students were preparing a brochure, for example, reflects good learning. Students also show great satisfaction in completing practical tasks and talking about what they are doing in lessons that engage them and draw upon their interests. In food technology, for example, students enjoyed preparing lunch for their peers and staff. Overall, students develop well in most respects. However, opportunities are missed to develop literacy skills to very best effect and this is why their overall economic well-being is judged to be satisfactory rather than good.

Students typically demonstrate high levels of emotional and/or social needs, which have resulted in lengthy periods of absence from mainstream school. As a result, students enter the school with significant gaps in their skills and knowledge, and with a negative view about themselves and towards education. The amount of time students spend at the school varies, but the rate of progress is such that the large majority of students are successful in making up for some of the lost time and overcoming several of the substantial barriers they faced when they started. As a result of this good progress, the very small number of students in Year 11 are on course to gain GCSE passes, or equivalent, that are broadly similar to the national average for mainstream schools. In addition, students are on track to gain other accreditation in English and mathematics and a number of vocational courses.

Students make particularly good progress in learning about themselves and improving their self-esteem because of the sensitive and individualised support provided by staff and other professionals. For all students, this represents a marked difference to the personal challenges they have had in the past and which they continue to face. Students respect the boundaries in an environment that has clear expectations that are consistently applied. Relationships are often fragile, but students are usually polite and talk with staff and visitors in a respectful manner. A particular strength is the way older students reflect on

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the way they have behaved and show a good understanding of what is right and wrong. Students are respectful and value each other's views, and overall, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff are working to increase students' knowledge of communities in other parts of the United Kingdom and beyond. Behaviour is good and students like the fact that their views are valued and they are treated fairly. Students see their time within the school as an opportunity to turn their lives around. Parents reported that their children's attitudes have improved at home and substantially improved attendance reflects this. For most, it is the first time they have attended school on a regular basis.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Strengths of teaching lie in a thorough knowledge of each student and the collaborative approach taken by teachers and other adults, who provide closely tailored support. Strong relationships with students help staff to manage behaviour and encourage them into doing their best. Questioning is often used effectively to probe students' understanding and help adjust the pace of learning. Students' contributions are shared with sensitivity and used effectively to raise expectations for others. The pace of learning is well matched to the students' stages of learning. Some teachers are more successful than others at ensuring that students know exactly what they are expected to learn. Some planning is very detailed and makes reference to key literacy skills and National Curriculum levels, although

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this is not consistent and largely only evident in the very best lessons. Assessment is closely linked to individual behaviour and academic targets.

A key strength of the curriculum lies in its flexibility. It offers students individualised support and learning experiences that reflect their interests and match their needs. Particular attention is given to addressing students' emotional and/or social needs in the first instance. The PSHE programme underpins the curriculum and forms a significant part of each student's personalised learning programme. At the Pyrford Centre, students' learning experiences include a carefully constructed range of activities as an alternative to the curriculum they follow in their mainstream schools. These include the development of creative and performing skills in subjects such as art, drama and outdoor adventurous activities. At the Kingsway Centre, there is a balanced and realistic approach towards students following courses leading to GCSEs. There are a number of opportunities for students to achieve external accreditation in, for example, skills related to the building industry, car mechanics and hair and beauty. The breadth of the curriculum is made possible by the different range of activities offered at college, outdoor activity centres, and by local businesses.

Strengths in pastoral care are recognised and valued by parents and carers. One parent's comment represents the positive response made by others: 'My son would have been in real trouble if it was not for the outstanding care and support given by the school...he looks forward to attending each day.' Students have a good understanding of their targets for personal development and appreciate how the consistent and sensitive support has a positive effect on their self-esteem. Staff show great resolve in ensuring that students are exceptionally well cared for and supported. They are extremely alert to the fact that no two days are alike and students can arrive on any day with varying levels of interest and willingness to engage. Attention to students' health and well-being is reflected, not just in opportunities for physical activity, but also in the provision of healthy food and health-related courses. Progress, both academic and personal, is closely tracked and monitored.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

Strong leadership, underpinned by a resolute headteacher, has established a school that places a high priority on developing students' confidence and lifting levels of achievement. The school promotes equality and tackles any form of discrimination exceptionally well. The headteacher, with strong support from the senior leadership team, committed staff and the management committee, has ensured that the school has placed a high priority

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on establishing a consistent approach to its work. She has also made certain that there is a strong focus on working collaboratively and efficiently towards a common goal.

The effectiveness of the management committee is good. It is supportive and the chair works closely with the headteacher, giving well-considered guidance and advice. Knowledgeable and experienced committee members challenge the effectiveness of the school's development. Attention to students' safety is integral to its work and safeguarding procedures are extremely systematic, continually reviewed and very firmly established. The local authority has placed a significant number of students with a statement of special educational needs at the school, pending placement at a special school. While the school meets the needs of these students well in the short term, it does not have the specialist staff or facilities to cater for them for an extended period.

Community cohesion is promoted well within the school and in the local areas where the two centres are located. Links and partnerships with outside agencies and local businesses are very well established. The school also supports the work of national and international charities. However, it knows that students do not have a wide understanding of people's backgrounds and communities in other parts of the United Kingdom and globally. Parents and carers are given exceptionally good opportunities to give views on the provision and they benefit from regular contact.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Only two parents and carers returned questionnaires for this inspection. However, a greater number completed a survey, sent out by the school earlier in the year, which included similar questions. The responses to almost all these questions were extremely positive. A number of parents made written comments and almost all of these expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. These included positive remarks about the caring



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and supportive environment, the quality of the staff, the impact of the school on their children's attitudes, and the way the school engages parents in its work.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at the North West Secondary Short Stay School 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 inspector received two completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 47 students registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	1	50	0	0	1	50	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	0	0	2	100	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	1	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	1	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	1	50	1	50	0	0	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)	0	0	1	50	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	2	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	1	50	0	0	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 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



28 January 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of North West Secondary Short Stay School, Pyrford GU22 8SU**

Thank you for all the help you gave me when I visited your centres. I enjoyed talking to you, sitting in your lessons and listening to your interesting views. You told me that the school makes a significant difference to your behaviour and attitudes to learning. It is clear that you value the life-changing opportunities that the school offers you.

This letter is to tell you about some of the things I found while I was with you. It is a good school, where you feel safe and secure and enjoy taking part in the wide range of interesting and meaningful activities. Staff have clear expectations of you and provide clear guidelines for you to follow. Almost all your parents and carers expressed considerable satisfaction with the school.

Here are some other important things about your school.

- The school is well led and managed.
- Effective teaching helps you to make good progress.
- You achieve well when account is taken of your starting points when you join.
- Those of you in Years 7 to 9 are on course to make a successful return to your mainstream school.
- Those of you in Years 10 and 11 are on track to reach standards in the external examinations and assessments that are similar to those found in mainstream schools.
- All staff take extremely good care of you, and make sure you have a good understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle and a healthy diet.

To make things even better for you, your school has been asked to:

- ensure that those of you who are waiting to go on to another school, more suited to your needs, do so as quickly as possible
- give you clearer guidance at the beginning of lessons so that you understand what you are going to learn
- ensure that more attention is given to improving your English skills in all lessons.

I wish each one of you every success in your future and hope that you continue to help yourselves to make things better.

Yours sincerely

Paul Canham

Lead inspector

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