

Bristol Hospital Education Service

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133689
Local Authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	360567
Inspection dates	31 January 2011–1 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Stuart Charlton

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	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Jim Bowyer
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspection team observed the 12 full-time teachers across the provision and monitored performance in 14 lessons. Discussions were held with the chair of the management committee and with staff, parents and carers and students. The work of the service was observed and the inspection team scrutinised the improvement plan, the minutes of the leadership team and management committee meetings, a range of other documentation and 42 completed questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- The effectiveness of the procedures for safeguarding and child protection across the various aspects of the provision.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers in ensuring quality provision for all pupils throughout the service.
- The systems to judge attainment on entry, set challenging targets and track pupils' progress across all aspects of the provision.
- The outcomes for pupils in relation to their personal development, particularly in terms of behaviour and attendance.

Information about the school

Bristol Hospital Education Service (BHES) caters for pupils who are unable to attend school because of their medical needs. They have a range of health problems, including physical and complex mental health difficulties alongside severe anxiety and/or social phobia. Pupils can be on the roll of the service full-time or part-time while dual rolled with a mainstream school. The service consists of five centres located on four different sites across Bristol, including home tuition provision. The Hospital School is based in the Bristol Royal Hospital for Children and caters for pupils aged 5 to 16 who are long stay, short stay or outpatients in the Children's Wards. The Riverside Unit provides education for pupils aged 11 to 16 whose education has been disrupted by mental health difficulties, while the main Fairfield Site provides for pupils aged 5 to 16 in two units. The main provision caters for pupils aged 11 to 16 and the Lumsden Walker Unit works with pupils aged 5 to 11 on the basis of six-week placements. Pupils in the Lumsden Walker Unit are dual registered with their mainstream school. Across the service, the majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with small minorities of Black British or Black Caribbean origin. The nature of the provision means that the ethnic mix of the cohort varies on an almost daily basis. In September 2010 a new management structure was implemented. Since the last inspection, the management committee has undergone changes in personnel, including the appointment of a new chair.

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 Bristol Hospital Education Service provides good education for its students. There are outstanding features in the guidance and support provided by all staff across the service which ensure that students make excellent progress in developing their confidence and self-esteem from a very low base. Students' progress in their academic learning is good and they gain qualifications in a range of GCSE subjects and all are able to move successfully into further education, training or the world of work. The service uses very effective strategies to re-engage students in education and enable them to address their anxieties about school and education, so that attendance overall is average. Behaviour is excellent and parents and carers are very pleased with the provision and the positive effect it has on their children.

The curriculum is well balanced, giving a clear focus to the development of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Teachers establish excellent relationships with the students and these are the basis of the exemplary guidance and support for students' personal development. The staff know each student extremely well and use this knowledge effectively to address students' personal needs. Initially this involves one-to-one teaching, which moves to small-group teaching if and when students develop the resilience and strategies to cope with this change. In a few lessons, teachers do not make best use of the learning support staff because these staff are allocated to individual students and do not have the range of skills needed to work with other students. The service has initiated training to develop these skills so that staff are more effective in supporting the learning needs of all students.

The headteacher provides a very clear vision about how the provision should develop. In communicating this to staff, he is very well supported by his senior leadership team. Together they have established effective team work across the teaching, support and administrative staff and mapped out a clear path for improvement based on accurate and honest self-evaluation. Effective systems to monitor and evaluate the separate aspects of the provision have been developed and these now provide good-quality information which gives a clear picture of strengths and areas for improvement. However, the school does not make best use of its data about students' progress to show clearly how well they are performing. The revised management committee have refined its skills so that it can act more effectively to support and challenge the leadership of the service. The work with parents and carers to help them to understand and support the needs of their children is exemplary. Partnerships with other professionals are used extremely well to promote students' needs and their well-being. The service takes every opportunity to ensure that students have high quality opportunities for a 'second chance' in education and it works tirelessly to address discrimination. The improvements which the service has effected on students' achievements, their attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning, coupled

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with the effectiveness of its self-evaluation, show that the capacity for further sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure learning support staff develop the range of skills they need to fully engage with all students.
- Make the best use of monitoring information about students' progress to clearly demonstrate how well they are performing and be fully accountable to all involved in the work of the service, particularly the local authority.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In the last two years, the proportion of students gaining five or more good GCSE passes has risen and is now close to average, as is the proportion attaining passes at grades A* to G. Given their low starting points on entry, this represents good progress and achievement. There are no differences in the progress made by different gender or ethnic groups or between those with physical and mental health needs. Most students have disengaged from education and the service is highly effective in helping them to take the first steps to return to learning. Particularly good examples of this were seen in the one-to-one teaching sessions at the Fairfield site. In all the lessons seen, the excellent relationships between staff and students were used extremely well to engage and motivate students whose previous experience of education had often been negative. In an excellent food technology lesson for Key Stage 2 pupils in the Lumsden Walker Unit, the teacher used a very wide range of strategies to engage and motivate boys who had only been in the unit for a few weeks. The learning support staff had the skills and confidence to promote the learning of each pupil and the teacher used these to very good effect. Such excellent practice is not consistent in all lessons, because of the limited role of the support staff in some.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is based on the high expectations established by all staff and the role models they present to students. This enables students to overcome their disaffection for education and make significant changes in their attitudes and in their lives at home. Students develop a good awareness of the need for a healthy lifestyle and this is recognised through the centre's Healthy School status. Students whose medical needs do not preclude them from taking part in timetabled physical education lessons explained the importance of these sessions to their development. In both the Riverside Unit and in the Children's Hospital, students explained how dietary issues influenced their recovery plans. In discussions, students acknowledged how they have used information about sexual health, tobacco and drug abuse to change their lifestyle. All feel safe and many explained how the service provides a safer environment than they have experienced previously.

The first-day absence procedures are operated with rigour but sympathetically by the very dedicated administrative staff in each aspect of the provision. These have enabled attendance rates to be considerably improved and are a major factor in enabling disaffected students to re-engage with education. A strong feature of the provision is the way in which students are challenged to manage their difficulties, and most admit that coming to school is an important factor in coming to terms with and addressing these. Students make a positive contribution to their immediate community through mentoring

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others with similar difficulties to themselves and through recognising and starting to address their anxieties and social phobias. The literacy, numeracy and ICT qualifications they attain, together with the gains in their personal skills, prepare them well for life when they move to college, into work or training, or return to mainstream education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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?

The very positive relationships established by staff with their students are strengthened through one-to-one teaching and individual mentoring and tutorial sessions. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and in their planning they identify the needs of individual students and how these will be met, so that the range of activities is very well matched to students' needs. However, in a few lessons, the learning support staff do not have the skills they need to fully contribute to students' learning. In these lessons, although progress is good, it is not maximised for every student.

For pupils in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, the curriculum includes very good links with mainstream schools to effectively support pupils whose main focus is re-integration. For students in Key Stage 4, there is a good balance between academic, vocational and work-related opportunities. Although these developments are relatively recent, the links established with local colleges and work-based providers are enabling students to prepare effectively for work or college-based provision when they leave.

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Staff make sure that all students, including those who arrive at different times, settle quickly and happily into life in the various aspects of the service provision. Transition arrangements for those moving into the provision and for those who move to other schools and colleges are excellent and contribute extremely well to reducing students' anxieties. The care, guidance and support provided by all staff are second to none. Staff spend a great deal of time listening to students, giving them advice and promoting their well-being to overcome difficulties in their personal circumstances. They are given excellent guidance about careers and opportunities available when they leave the service.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads by example and gives a clear sense of direction to the work of the service. Together with his new senior leadership team and between them they have ensured that improvements have taken place in using information to judge attainment on entry, set challenging targets and track pupils' progress. Everyone is clear about what needs to be done for the service to improve further and staff approach key developments enthusiastically. A good example is the development of opportunities for students to experience working in group situations once they are able to cope with one-to-one teaching. The changes in personnel on the management committee have enabled it to include a wider range of skills, particularly in terms of financial management. Streamlining its operational systems and structures has enabled it to support and challenge the leadership of the service. The service has the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of all its work. Its campaigns very effectively to eliminate discrimination and the differences it makes to the lives of its students are a testament to this.

The service's partnership with parents and carers is excellent. The work that all staff undertake to help parents and carers to understand and support their children's needs is particularly impressive. Excellent links are established through regular review meetings, first-day absence calls and regular contact by phone or visit if there are issues. The needs of many students are such that staff collect them from home and accompany them to school, enabling them to take the first steps to becoming independent travellers. The quality of this work was seen very clearly in the Children's Hospital. One parent explained that although 'my daughter missed nearly half her time in school last year, the Hospital School made sure that she did not fall behind the others in her class'.

Safeguarding and child protection are high on everyone's agenda and fully meet national requirements and guidelines. There are effective safeguarding policies, with good staff training on child protection. All staff are fully vetted and checked before working in the

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service. Risk assessments are a particular strength, being thorough and detailed. The service is recognised by all the medical professionals with which it works as playing a crucial role in students' recovery, this is particularly so in the Riverside Unit and the Children's Hospital. The service uses excellent links with Social Services, the Youth Offending Teams and the National Health Service across a wide geographic area to effectively promote community cohesion. The diversity of students' backgrounds ensures their understanding of communities in regional and national contexts is very strong. The school's own audit of provision shows that, as yet, there are few opportunities for students to learn about life for those who live in other countries.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

About one quarter of parents and carers returned their questionnaires, which is about average for pupil referral units. The school's own data were used to provide a clearer picture of their opinions. An overwhelming majority are very supportive of the centre and how it helps both themselves and their children. As one said, 'Even though he is in hospital my son really enjoys school and asks when the teacher is coming next.' Another stated, 'We have always found the teaching at Fairfield to be excellent and we are particularly impressed with the liaison between the service and our child's school at home.' The inspection findings clearly show that the very few negative comments do not accord with the overall good education and excellent care support and guidance that all students receive at Bristol Hospital Education Service.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bristol Hospital Education Service 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 inspection team received 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 200 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	50	18	43	2	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	67	10	24	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	31	74	6	14	0	0	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	62	9	21	3	7	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	33	79	7	17	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	74	9	21	1	2	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	3	7	0	0	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)	2	5	1	2	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	67	11	26	2	5	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	60	8	19	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	74	9	21	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	79	7	17	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	79	6	14	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).

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



2 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bristol Hospital Education Service, Bristol BS6 5JL

Thank you for all the help you gave the inspectors when we inspected the Education Service. We particularly enjoyed being able to talk to a good number of you. The range of the provision means that you only have experience of the specific aspect with which you are involved, the Children's Hospital, Riverside, Fairfield or Lumsden Walker, but you explained clearly to us that each gave you a good education. We agree and judge every aspect of Bristol Hospital Education Service to be good. In each and every section, staff provide exemplary care, guidance and support so that you are able to come to terms with your difficulties in a safe and secure environment. We were able to see how the service enables you to have a 'second chance' in education and how you are helped and supported to gain qualifications which prepare you very well for life after school or when you re-integrate into a mainstream school. The small group sizes are a real help and, as one of you said, 'lessons are fun and help me to forget I am in hospital'. Similar things were said about each aspect of the service we visited.

In many of your lessons, particularly those in Fairfield and Lumsden Walker, support staff help some of you with your learning. We want these staff to gain a wider range of skills so that they are able to help everyone in the session, not just certain individuals. The service has good information about the progress that each of you is making and we want the senior managers to make better use of this to show clearly to everyone in Bristol and beyond how well it is performing.

I know that you will try your very best at all times to help the staff to make Bristol Hospital education Service even better.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Charlton

Lead inspector

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