

# North East Derbyshire Support Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133947
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	360596
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Trevor Watts

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>	7–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	40
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Val Fisher (Senior Head of Centre)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	The Hasland Centre The Green Hasland, Chesterfield S41 0LN
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Five lessons were seen, involving five different teachers across the three units. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and members of the local authority's management committee. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation concerned with health and safety, assessment of pupils' progress, pupils' work books, curriculum and lesson plans and whole-school planning documents. Four questionnaires were returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- Pupils' progress and the effectiveness of how it is assessed.
- The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation.
- Planning for how the three units will become more cohesive.

## Information about the school

The North East Derbyshire Support Centre was established in September 2010. Led by a newly appointed senior head of centre, it combines three former pupil referral units (PRUs). They are:

Deincourt, at North Wingfield, which takes seven Key Stage 2 pupils for four afternoons each week for a 'nurture' curriculum. For the rest of each week they remain at their own mainstream primary school.

Hasland at Chesterfield which is attended full time by nine Key Stage 3 pupils.

Barrow Hill which currently admits 24 pupils in three groups. Pupils attend for one or two days each week, depending on the level and type of courses that are appropriate to their needs. They attend college and work placements for the rest of each week.

All were previously inspected as separate units. This is the first inspection of the Centre as a unified district service.

Pupils, who are from Chesterfield and surrounding areas, have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools or were at serious risk of exclusion because of their severe emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Many have specific learning difficulties, although very few have a statement of special educational needs. About a third attend the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). Most come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Two-thirds of the pupils are boys. None is in the care of their local authority, and all pupils are White British.

The centre's core aims are to improve pupils' personal and academic skills, improve their behaviour and attitude to learning and enable their successful move to appropriate provision such as a mainstream or special school, college or employment. This centre is smaller than average for this type of provision.

**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

This new centre provides a good education for its pupils. Although pupils generally attain low standards compared with their mainstream peers, they make good progress and achieve well. Leaders and managers have made a strong start in setting up this service. They have made appropriate and extensive staffing appointments, including a pool of specialist teaching staff to work at several sites alongside the regular staff in each unit. Premises have been upgraded, and resources and facilities have been improved. There are still things to be done to enhance links between the sites, such as integrating the provision for a small but increasing number of permanently excluded pupils in Key Stage 2, developing curriculum links through the key stages and appointing more staff, particularly to give the senior head of centre more time to pursue her management role. The management committee itself is becoming a single-centre body, rather than being a body for the whole county.

Within the centre, the Senior Head of Centre has inspired and supported staff in their teaching roles, and is increasingly strengthening links between the three sites. Development planning is based on clear and accurate assessment of the centre's strengths and areas that need to be developed. Observation of teaching and learning, analysis of academic and personal successes and scrutiny of the curriculum have contributed positively to leaders' and managers' views. Subsequent planning focuses well on increasing links between the units, transition arrangements, sharing staff and resources and raising standards further. This positive start, well based on early but accurate self-evaluation, builds well on the existing strengths in each unit and indicates a good capacity to improve further.

The three units are different in character, but each is succeeding well in its role. Pupils generally have very disturbed backgrounds when they enter their assigned unit, but in each case, they tend to settle quickly and begin to interact with other pupils and with staff more positively than they have done previously. Their attitudes to learning and their behaviour improve significantly, and so does their attendance. Each unit can rightly claim success for its pupils.

The nurture group for Key Stage 2 pupils sees rapid improvements in social skills, behaviour and attitude to adults and other pupils. Their mainstream schools have reported dramatic improvements in these elements. The Key Stage 3 unit provides a very broad curriculum that motivates these pupils well, with sports and information and communication technology (ICT) being particular strengths in addition to science and mathematics. The Key Stage 4 unit has a strong leaning to the future beyond school, with at least half of each week being spent in work-related placements, complemented with in-school courses that can all lead to external qualifications. Pupils succeed well. Many return

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to mainstream schools or to colleges and very few do not gain employment or further training.

Pupils' success owes much to the good quality of the teaching combined with well-chosen activities and courses. The centre's success is strongly supported by parents and carers, and especially by the outstandingly effective partnerships with a host of agencies and support groups for different aspects of pupils' well-being and learning. Pupils make good progress in the academic subjects as well as in their personal development. Their skills in English develop more slowly than their mathematics or science skills. Pupils feel secure and are safe and well cared for. They have a good understanding of how to lead a safe and healthy lifestyle. Many help each other and are involved in a school council. They are enthusiastic in raising money for a range of charities. They cooperate with others, arrive on time at their school, work or college placement, and look after their personal appearance and hygiene. Although many in Key Stage 3 have only been in the centre for a few weeks, they are mainly very positive about what it is doing for them. They are beginning to look to the future with the greater confidence that is evident in Key Stage 4, where most pupils are more established.

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

- Consolidate the links and continuity between the sites in order to strengthen the 'one-centre' ethos and practice by:
  - commencing regular and purposeful meetings for leaders and managers from the different sites
  - integrating the approach to the curriculum
  - sharing staff expertise and resources.
- Improve writing, reading and speaking standards by providing better opportunities in specific English lessons, and in other lessons throughout the curriculum.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

When pupils are admitted they generally have skills that are, on average, three years below what would be expected nationally for pupils their age. This is because they have often not attended any school for a considerable period. Within weeks they become increasingly settled, cooperative and well behaved. Pupils learn to work and socialise together cooperatively. They pay attention and become much more willing learners. Extremes of behaviour become less frequent and less severe. Very few pupils do not attend regularly. Staff in each unit, often working closely with outside agencies, make great efforts to ensure all pupils attend regularly, but the progress of absentees is, consequently, not as good as it might be. All groups of pupils achieve equally well: girls achieve equally as well as boys. Pupils who have particularly severe emotional difficulties, or a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, or who attend mental health programmes are all given the support necessary to maintain a good level of achievement. All pupils have equal access to the whole curriculum and have good support to do well in all of their activities.

Younger pupils learn to work and play together in their nurture sessions and generally successfully return to their mainstream school full-time after two terms. Key Stage 3 pupils

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take an increasing interest in the range of activities offered, with particular eagerness for science, sports and ICT. They mostly enjoy their lessons and they make good progress across the curriculum. Pupils' outstanding results in science reflect the teaching of this subject. This was demonstrated in a spectacular lesson that was observed during the inspection. The lesson was about 'changes in states of matter' and involved real fireballs floating around the laboratory in front of the pupils' amazed eyes. In English lessons, pupils are often reluctant to speak in front of their classmates or read aloud, and they have too few opportunities to write freely. As a result, their progress in English is slower than in mathematics or science. They are often not given a lot of encouragement or opportunity to write freely. Too often pupils are expected to write one word or a short phrase, rather than a passage of text.

In Key Stage 4, many pupils achieve national academic and vocational qualifications, including National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ). In summer 2010, before the amalgamation, 15 pupils gained a variety of passes at the end of Year 10. They transferred successfully to college placements to pursue specialised courses. All older pupils attend college and/or work placements for part of each week, and are very successful in their courses and work and in gaining paid employment later.

*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>	4
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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</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

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## How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good because teachers are enthusiastic, very well prepared and are able to develop positive and amicable relationships with their pupils. They know their subjects well, make effective use of a wide range of resources, and deploy their classroom assistants successfully in supporting individuals. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully, often through published schemes of assessment, or through the requirements of courses that are taught in modules. Lessons are very well based on teachers' views of pupils' progress. Activities generally provide a suitable challenge for the most-able pupils, while still providing support to pupils who find the activities more difficult. Pupils know what their targets are, both for their personal development and for their work in essential subjects, such as English. Normally, they are involved in setting their targets and are keen to earn points and credits for their success, effort and behaviour.

The curriculum is good because it is so well designed for each stage of pupils' development and needs. The nurture activities are a basic routine that gives security and confidence, growing self-esteem and cooperation with adults and each other. Key Stage 3 activities are very varied. Personal, social and health lessons are well supported by the citizenship programme, local agencies - such as police and fire departments - and visits to places of interest such as a theatre, sports centres, garden centres and restaurants. All pupils understand how to remain fit and healthy, and many choose to eat and take exercise in healthy ways. Pupils are well motivated and this carries over into their more academic lessons, which are often presented in practical activities. Opportunities for pupils to write freely, in English and other subjects, are limited. Too often they are expected to write one word or a short phrase, rather than a passage of text. The Key Stage 4 curriculum is very motivating for almost all pupils, whether in the academic courses that lead to external qualifications or in the work-related sessions that take place in many different colleges and working establishments.

Good pastoral support is based on thorough systems and procedures in each unit. Staff understand them well, and all pupils have a 'key worker' responsible for their well-being. Pupils are confident that their key person is reliable and a good person to discuss difficulties with. Currently, there are no transition arrangements between Key Stages 2 and 3 because the younger pupils return to their mainstream schools and do not stay within the centre. Good transition arrangements between Key Stages 3 and 4 have been in place for a considerable time, and are being actively strengthened through the plans developed by the senior head of centre with the head of each unit. Careers programmes have been applied very well in Key Stage 4. This approach is being actively extended into Key Stage 3.

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*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>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Good leadership and management are seen throughout the centre and in the organisation by the management committee and the local authority. Stemming from accurate self-evaluation, staff and officers have a good understanding of the strengths of the existing provision. They have a shared vision, enthusiasm and plans for how the centre will develop. These concern current matters to do with standards or aspects of teaching, and longer-term arrangements for the evolution of the centre. Staff throughout the three units are keen to work together more as a single service, and are dedicated to ensuring that all pupils are supported fully in their learning. Regular planning meetings are not yet in place to ensure closer coordination of curriculum and resources.

Safeguarding procedures are fully compliant with the latest requirements and all staff are checked to ensure their suitability to be working in this setting. All staff have very good awareness of the robust systems and policies that are in place. They go to great efforts to ensure that pupils feel secure and unthreatened in each unit, and that pupils are aware of possible risks around them. By their clear policies and monitoring of practice, and by the example that they set, leaders ensure that all pupils have good and equal access to the curriculum and that there is no kind of discrimination in any part of the centre's provision. The monitoring of complaints, absences, incidents and exclusions is detailed, very well recorded, and matters are always followed through thoroughly.

The senior head of centre is purposeful and active in planning and promoting the concept of community cohesion. There is good understanding of community needs. Many links are established in each unit which bring the community into the centre, or take pupils out. These are designed to develop pupils' understanding of their own and others' cultures, and how they can help in the community themselves. A police officer from an ethnic minority background, for instance, visits regularly to talk with pupils. Pupils raise money for an African 'sponsor a goat' charity, several national and international charities and a local cancer charity. Pupils have regular contact around the local community, such as by helping at a nearby SureStart facility, acting as sports leaders at several primary schools or clearing snow from nearby pavements and a home for elderly residents. Many such efforts have been proposed and organised by the pupils themselves. All pupils belong to the school council, and take turns to keep the minutes of meetings. Close links with other institutions are effective and manifold, as seen in the great range of other schools that pupils come from and return to, the wide variety of colleges and work placements that provide for many older pupils, the Connexions partnership, and the many agencies that support pupils who have particular needs and difficulties. The many positive steps taken so far can go even further in national and international contexts.



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*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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers have a positive view of the centre, although few are fully aware of its new nature as a combined service. All the returned questionnaires were from the Key Stage 3 unit, where pupils have only been in place for three weeks. Previous questionnaires have shown a high level of confidence and support from parents and carers, with frequent comments about their appreciation of how well their children have developed and 'turned around'.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hasland Support Centre 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 4 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 40 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	1	25	1	25	0	0	2	50
The school keeps my child safe	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	1	25	1	25	2	50	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	0	0	3	75	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	0	0	3	75	1	25	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	1	25	2	50	0	0	1	25
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	1	25	3	75	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)	1	25	2	50	0	0	1	25
The school meets my child's particular needs	0	0	4	100	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	50	2	50	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	1	25	2	50	1	25	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	2	50	1	25	1	25	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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.**



23 September 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of North East Derbyshire Support Centre, Chesterfield, S41 0LN**

I am sure you will remember when I visited your centre to see how you were getting on and if there were things I could suggest to make things better. Thank you for making me welcome in each unit and for speaking with me.

I found that you go to a good centre that is quickly getting the three units to work together. You are looked after well and feel safe in each unit. It was very clear that your behaviour is much improved from how it has been in the past. You also attend school much more often that you used to. You enjoy your lessons and learn well in many different subjects. This is because your teachers are good at their jobs, are keen for you to do well, and prepare their lessons well. Each unit has chosen a good range of activities for you to take part in, whether it is a nurture group for the younger pupils, or sports, ICT and science for older pupils, or the mixture of GCSE and work courses for the oldest pupils. You are well prepared for when you go on to further education, training or work when you leave school.

The people who lead and manage your centre do a good job and they have made many valuable changes already. I have suggested two ways in which the centre could make further changes.

Make more opportunities for you to improve your writing, reading and speaking skills in different lessons

Speed up the 'joining together' process for the three units, so they work together more closely in the future.

Yours sincerely

Trevor Watts

Lead inspector

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