

Ethos Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133673
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	360562
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Jim Alexander

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	53
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Carol McDermott
Headteacher	Mr Ritch Barras
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2008
School address	Kess Centre Off Rawthorpe Terrace, Rawthorpe Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD5 9NY
Telephone number	01484 226513
Fax number	01484 226515
Email address	ethos@kirklees.gov.uk

Age group	11–16
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2010
Inspection number	360562

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited nine lessons and off-site tuition taught by nine teachers. They held meetings with the chair of the management committee, a local authority senior manager, the School Improvement Partner, staff and students. They observed the unit's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the assessment records, reports to the management committee, development plans and those relating to safeguarding. Staff and students completed questionnaires and one parent and carer questionnaire was returned.

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

- The rigour with which leaders track the progress and attainment of all students.
- Whether attendance is rapidly improving overall and if patterns of attendance for individual students improve significantly during their time at the unit.
- The way teachers use assessment to boost learning in a sustained way.
- The impact of the newly-formed leadership team, at all levels, to ensure outcomes for students are improving quickly.

Information about the school

The unit provides education for students who for a wide range of reasons are not in school. Most students are now referred as a result of their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Provision is made for a small minority of pupils with mental-health difficulties. The unit is also responsible for teaching students with medical conditions which prevent them from attending mainstream schools. Almost all come from White British backgrounds and those from minority-ethnic groups represent a very small part of the unit's population. The number known to be eligible for free school meals is well-above average. All students have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is well-above average. A small minority of students are looked after by the local authority. The unit has gained Healthy School status and the BECTA ICT Mark.

Following reorganisation of local authority provision, the remit of Ethos changed significantly in September 2009. There have also been considerable changes to the senior leadership team within this period. Currently, the unit is lead by an acting headteacher. A new chair of the management committee was elected in October 2010, and a number of new members have also been recently appointed.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Ethos is a satisfactory pupil referral unit. Many students initially display little interest in their education when starting at the unit. The good care, guidance and support they receive, however, soon ensure that students start to engage more positively. As a result attendance is broadly average. A very small minority of students, however, are difficult to re-engage, their attendance is poor and, consequently, their academic progress is much more limited.

Students start Ethos with a wide range of attainment and previous educational experiences that have been mostly negative. Almost all lack confidence and most have missed time at previous schools. As a result attainment on entry is exceptionally low. Teaching is satisfactory and improving rapidly, as staff no longer feel they are working outside their area of expertise. Consequently, students' satisfactory progress is also rapidly improving. Those taught at home or at other community venues receive high-quality input and, as a result, make good progress. In the short time many students have been at Ethos, their attainment has risen, although it remains low by the end of Year 11. The curriculum has been adapted during the last year to meet the changing needs of students, however, there is still more to do if it is to fully capture the interests and imagination of all. The provision of information and communication technology (ICT) is a strength and particularly successful in supporting those taught away from the centre due to medical needs.

Since September 2009 there have been significant changes, challenges and staffing difficulties for senior leaders to manage. The changing remit of the unit and the speed of reorganisation have also proved a challenge. During this period a very large majority of senior leaders have also been new to post. With the appointments of the assistant headteacher and acting headteacher, morale within the staff team is high and there is a shared desire to improve. The newly-formed senior leadership team brings much expertise and have quickly identified the right priorities and developed plans to ensure these are addressed. They have, for example, introduced a rigorous system to monitor progress and attainment. This has been founded on accurate baseline assessments. The system has also been used to set ambitious targets for students to achieve. The next step is for leaders to monitor carefully its implementation to ensure students' progress continues to improve and attainment quickly rises. These recent actions demonstrate the unit's satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In liaison with parents and carers, improve outcomes for the minority of students who remain difficult to engage and fail to attend regularly, by emphasising the relationship between attendance and achievement.

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

- Develop further the curriculum by providing age-appropriate, memorable experiences and rich opportunities to increase students' desire to be actively involved.
- Monitor carefully the progress students make and the attainment they achieve by ensuring that the new tracking system is fully established.
- Up to 40% of schools whose effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Staff are successful in welcoming students to lessons and helping them to overcome significant barriers to learning. As a result all students begin to feel valued and take increasing pride in their achievements. The presentation of their work has also improved. Students particularly enjoy activities that are age-appropriate but say some lessons 'can be a bit patronising'. All students cooperate with staff and one another in lessons and show good skills and independence when using ICT. Attainment by the end of Year 11 last year remained low but students' progress, which was satisfactory overall, accelerated quickly. So much so that almost half gained one pass at GCSE grade A* to C and a small number achieved five GCSEs graded A* to C. Progress in ICT is particularly good and students attain broadly in-line with the level expected for their age. A small number of students have benefitted from provision at Ethos for a longer period of time and there is clear evidence to show that they are making good progress.

Behaviour is satisfactory and it too is improving quickly because staff are more skilled at defusing situations before difficulties arise. As a result short term exclusions are now used as a last resort. Students generally adopt a healthy lifestyle. Smoking, for example, is not permitted on one of the sites; however, it is not challenged robustly enough at the other site. Newly-appointed senior leaders are aware that uptake on the smoking-cessation course needs to be more proactively reinforced. Attendance, broadly average overall, represents a significant improvement for most students when compared with time spent at their previous school. Leaders are not content with this and the drive to raise achievement is also evident in improving attendance levels. Nevertheless, a small number of students, despite the unit's best efforts, fail to attend often enough to take full advantage of all the unit has to offer. Students feel safe and secure when they arrive, but some dislike their journey as, 'We have to change buses three times before we get here.' This explains why some find punctuality difficult.

Students greatly benefit from the many work experience opportunities provided. For example, they find their time at a local garage engaging and rewarding. As a result they never miss a day. Students are good ambassadors for Ethos.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

Underpinning the quality of teaching are the good relationships that exist between students and staff. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with calmly and sensitively so that learning is not interrupted. Teachers work hard to tailor their approach to cater for the differing needs of students that are now attending the unit. As a result, work is generally pitched at the right level. In the best lessons teachers are well aware of students preferred learning styles and interests. This was observed, for example, when Midge the dog was brought in to be a 'learning resource' for a one-to-one session. This sparked off excellent conversation and challenging questions and as a result, promoted high-quality written work. On other occasions, learning for some can become more passive as either teaching input is too long or attention is given to others in the class.

The curriculum is being developed to meet the unit's changing requirements. A programme of activities is improving pupils' personal and social skills as well as providing more opportunities to follow a range of accredited courses. Workplace skills and those required for economic well-being are promoted successfully. The well-developed virtual learning environment also enables all students to access meaningful learning activities through the internet. This particularly supports those who, for medical reasons, are taught away from the unit. Students appreciate what staff do for them, but explained how they would like the curriculum to be more relevant to their interests and that, 'We'd like more

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

practical activities.' They explain that some activities are fun and exciting but others 'are just dull'.

Care, guidance and support offered to students are good. A real strength is the support from outreach teachers who provide outstanding care for the well-being of the students who are vulnerable due to their circumstances, those who are school-phobic or teenage mothers. Whilst the unit staff provide well for students' life-skills, opportunities to find out more about future options are more varied. As a result, some students feel well informed whilst others lack enough direction.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have ensured that there is a shared vision and strong determination within the staff to further improve. Staff have recognised the 'immediate impact' the acting headteacher is having. Students also appreciate that the acting headteacher, 'is always around and you can pop in for a chat whenever'. The experience that the senior leadership team brings has ensured that they clearly know what is working well and what still needs to improve. As a result self-evaluation is extremely accurate. New arrangements have been developed to make baseline assessments and then set targets for students to attain. This system includes all students across both sites as well as those taught off-site. It is too soon, however, to judge its effectiveness. This affects the promotion of equal opportunities. Although it is satisfactory overall because the unit is inclusive until systems are embedded leaders do not have a clear overview that all students make as much progress as possible. The unit has evaluated its provision for community cohesion and recognises the need to extend the diversity of the students' experiences beyond their mainly White British background.

The management committee provides satisfactory leadership. A number of new members have recently been appointed and have elected a chairperson, who has experience of working in a pupil referral unit. Members have been quick to get to know the school and wasted no time ensuring that their support is both encouraging and challenging. The senior leaders welcome this approach. Safeguarding practices meet requirements and have been reviewed by the acting headteacher and management committee. Designated child protection staff have up-to-date training and robust arrangements ensure the safety of all who work in the unit.

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Views of parents and carers

Ofsted invited all the parents and carers of pupils registered at Ethos to complete a questionnaire about their views of the unit. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agree with 13 statements about the school. The inspectors received one completed questionnaire by the end of the on-site inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ethos Pupil Referral Unit 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 1 completed questionnaire by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 53 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100
The school keeps my child safe	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	0	0	0	0	1	100	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	0	0	1	100	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	100	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	0	0	1	100	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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). 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">■ 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.



13 December 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Ethos Pupil Referral Unit, Huddersfield HD5 9NY

On behalf of the inspection team I am writing to let you know the outcome of the inspection of Ethos Pupil Referral Unit. We enjoyed our visit very much. The overall effectiveness of Ethos is satisfactory and it has faced significant changes since September 2009. It provides a satisfactory education. Due to the good care, guidance and support provided you are growing in confidence and, as a result, the progress you are making is improving quickly. We were impressed with your behaviour and heard from those who offer you work experience that you are good ambassadors of Ethos. We noticed how you are able to make healthy choices about the food you eat, but some of you are still smoking. I know a smoking-cessation course is going to run soon and I would encourage you to attend.

Talking to you and reading the comments from the questionnaires you filled in, we can see that you appreciate what the staff are doing for you. Part of my job is to make suggestions about how Ethos can improve. These are the important things I have asked the staff to do and you can help with the first one.

- Make sure they do all they can to encourage all of you to attend regularly because it is very important if you are to make the most of what Ethos has to offer.
- To bring the curriculum to life so that lessons are so relevant you will not want to miss them.???
- To keep a close eye on the progress you make so that it can be as good as possible.

May I take this opportunity to wish you the very best. Please make the most of the opportunities offered at Ethos as they will help you a great deal in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Jim Alexander

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.