

Stratton Education Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126171
Local Authority	Swindon
Inspection number	362831
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Robert Ellis HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	148
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Tridgell
Headteacher	Krysia Butwilowska
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2009
School address	St Phillips Road Upper Stratton Swindon SN2 7QP
Telephone number	01793 828941
Fax number	01793 820627
Email address	jrutherford@swindon.gov.uk

Age group	11–16
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2011
Inspection number	362831

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 123 4234, 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 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They visited 29 lessons or activities, observed 23 teachers, and held meetings with groups of students, the staff, the chair of the management committee and local authority representatives. Inspectors visited the various centres and looked at the development plan, curriculum plans, tracking data showing students progress, teachers lesson plans, students work and the displays around the centres. Evidence from the three previous monitoring inspections was also taken into account.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the centres work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

The extent to which teachers make effective use of assessment to support learning.

The effectiveness of leadership at all levels in terms of the monitoring of teaching and learning and the accuracy of self-evaluation.

The extent to which students engage in decision making that affects their learning and development.

Information about the school

Stratton Education Centre consists of seven centres across the borough of Swindon that support a range of different special educational needs. The service is undergoing restructuring. Students and staff refer to the provision as Education Other Than At School (EOTAS).

The Riverside Centre provides full-time education for students with anxiety difficulties about school attendance. The majority of students who attend this particular provision are successfully reintegrated back into mainstream schools.

The Hillside Unit provides full-time education for pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers who are unable to attend mainstream school. A successful reduction in the number of teenage pregnancies in Swindon has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of students requiring access to this provision.

The Stratton Centre caters for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) who are excluded permanently from Swindon schools.

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Education Provision (CAMHS) consists of classes based at Marlborough House. These support children who are attending provision for children and adolescents with mental health difficulties. The Adolescent Unit class caters for up to 18 students.

The Hospital and Home Tuition Education Service is based at The Great Western Hospital. It ensures continuity of education for students unable to attend full-time, mainstream school for medical reasons, and coordinates a home-tuition service for students with medical needs.

The Youth Education Project (YEP) supports students who are at risk of exclusion and operates from two centres. YEP Oakfield caters for up to 36 Key Stage 4 students and YEP Cheney caters for up to 25 Year 11 students.

Most students are White British and around one in four are known to be eligible for free school meals. Around one in seven students has a statement of special educational needs, and around one in ten students is a looked after child. Most students are aged 11 to 16

but occasionally, because of their particular needs, pupils of primary school age and those above compulsory school age are catered for.

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

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the centre no longer requires special measures.

Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. The centre now meets the needs of its students appropriately, and its leaders and managers demonstrate good capacity for further improvement.

Senior leaders are not complacent and they are sharply focused on improving the learning and development of students.

Appropriate systems and procedures ensure that those responsible for leading and managing the centre have a clear and accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development.

Robust systems and procedures are used to track students progress and provide support for those who are falling behind or who need extra help. Consequently, students make satisfactory progress from their various different starting points.

The centres draw on the expertise and cooperation of a range of partner agencies and organisations to provide opportunities for students that it would not otherwise be able to offer.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and it is improving because of the improved leadership and management of teaching and learning.

The use of assessment to support learning is not fully embedded and consequently some students do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Students attendance has improved and their behaviour is good.

Students feel safe and the schools arrangements to ensure their safety are effective. They are very well cared for and given good advice and guidance that enable them to make informed choices about their future lives.

Students do not yet have a voice in order to influence decisions across the different centres. They are not routinely consulted or sufficiently involved in decision making.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on improvements to teaching by:

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

- ensuring greater consistency in how teachers use assessment information to support learning
- providing better opportunities for students to be involved in evaluating their own progress.
- Ensure that there are appropriate arrangements that enable students to influence decisions made about life in the centre.
- Provide better opportunities for students to work with teachers and other staff to plan and make decisions about their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Most students have previously experienced disruption to their learning, but while at EOTAS they make satisfactory progress in relation to their various different starting points. Standards are rising and are broadly average. Evidence from lessons observed and scrutiny of assessment data show that an increasing proportion of students achieve their challenging targets. However, there continue to be some differences in achievement across different centres and subjects. Most students show a significant improvement in attendance while placed at EOTAS. They demonstrate that they understand the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and know about the main threats to their health and how to avoid them. Students say that they feel very safe and valued and behaviour in lessons and around the various centres is generally good.

There are good opportunities for students to practise their speaking, numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology skills and this ensures that they are adequately prepared for the next steps in their education or employment. The social and emotional aspects to learning (SEAL) programme enables students to reflect on their own experiences, and students demonstrate a clear understanding of some of the moral and social issues that affect them. Students respond positively to the increasing opportunities to take responsibility and contribute to their own community. For example, during the inspection students at YEP Oakfield confidently prepared a meal and entertained invited guests at a Come dine with me event that raised money for a local charity.

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	3
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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?

Teaching has improved since the last inspection and although it is now satisfactory overall there are some examples of good and outstanding practice. Good assessment systems and procedures ensure that leaders and managers have an accurate picture of progress and attainment. However, although most lessons are planned well to take account of the different needs and interests of students, occasionally the needs of individual students are not met fully enough to enable them to make rapid progress. Teachers do not consistently identify the next small steps that will help students to progress, and students are not routinely involved in evaluating their own progress towards their individual targets.

Because of the nature of the centres, the curriculum is personalised to individual students. Where possible it is matched closely to the curriculum of the mainstream school that the student is expected to return to. Students who are unlikely to return to mainstream schools receive full-time education in a range of subjects up to, and including, GCSE level. Teachers are deployed across the centres to ensure that, wherever possible, older students receive specialist teaching in the subjects that they study. There are opportunities for the accreditation of academic, vocational and personal development achievements. An increasing range of good enrichment activities extends the curriculum. For example, students have had opportunities to take part in activities with the police, the fire service and the local football team.

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

Students are well cared for and procedures for safeguarding them are rigorous and effective. The school works with families and outside agencies, as appropriate, to provide good support for students whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. For example, the parents and carers SEAL programme helps parents and carers support their children in managing their own behaviour and improve their attitudes to learning. Appropriate advice and guidance, including input from the Connexions service, ensure that students can make informed choices about the future. Attendance is closely monitored and students get a good balance of challenge and support to help them improve their attendance. Regular reviews ensure that students are well supported, and close attention is given to preparing students for reintegration or moving on to other provision.

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?

The senior leadership team is focused on improvement. Accurate self-evaluation and clear priorities are founded on rigorous monitoring and effective evaluation of teaching and learning. All of the weaknesses identified by the previous inspection have been eradicated and this demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement. The management committee is well organised; it knows the strengths and weaknesses of EOTAS and is involved in setting appropriate priorities for improvement. Arrangements for safeguarding students are good. Middle leaders are being empowered and encouraged to take greater responsibility for progress and achievement in their areas of responsibility. However, leadership at this level is not fully embedded and, although improving rapidly, there remains some variation in the effectiveness of leaders and managers across the different centres.

Effective partnerships with a range of schools, voluntary organisations and health and education professionals make a significant contribution to students progress, enjoyment and personal development. Excellent links with local employers enable students to have valuable work-experience placements. The centre has appropriate procedures for communicating with parents and carers, and they are encouraged to work in partnership with teachers to support and challenge their children. A recent survey conducted by EOTAS, using the Ofsted inspection questionnaire, showed that most parents and carers who responded were happy with their child's experiences at the centre they attended and many felt that the staff are friendly, reassuring and helpful. Staff at EOTAS know its community well and there are suitable plans to promote community cohesion further. The positive impact of the actions taken is most evident within the EOTAS community. EOTAS has a very inclusive ethos and all students are valued regardless of their background or ability.

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

Students are not routinely consulted about issues that affect their learning and well-being. There is no consistent mechanism for students from the different centres to engage in decision making or to have a collective voice.

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	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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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	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.



24 March 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Stratton Education Centre, Swindon SN2 7QP

Thank you for making us feel so welcome and for helping us with the inspection. I would particularly like to thank those of you who took time show us your work or to speak to the inspection team about your experiences at EOTAS. I particularly enjoyed observing the SEAL session at Stratton and lunch and other activities at YEP Oakfield.

This was my fourth visit since EOTAS was placed in special measures. I am pleased to be able to tell you that it has improved to the point where it provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. Consequently, it no longer requires special measures.

Most of you told us that you feel very safe and extremely well cared for. We saw that you get on well together. We were pleased to see that most of you have improved your attendance and are suitably prepared for the next steps in your education.

These are the key things that we would like EOTAS to do to improve further.

Make sure that the work and activities that teachers give you are always set at just the right level, and get you more involved in working out how well you are doing so that you can be more independent.

Give you more opportunities to have a say in how things can be improved, so that you influence decisions about what happens at EOTAS.

I am sure that you will want to play your part by working hard and helping to make EOTAS even better.

Yours sincerely

Robert Ellis

Her Majestys 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 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.