

Maple Medical PRU

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135502
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	381899
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Marian Thomas

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	34
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Mike Gallafent
Headteacher	Kath Formby
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed nine lessons taught by nine teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the chair of the management committee, school leaders, a member of the children and adolescents mental health team (CAMHS) and a midwife. The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at teachers' planning for lessons, school leaders' health and safety documentation and samples of children's work. They also took into account the views of the 21 parents and carers who returned questionnaires to the inspection team.

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

- How well pupils attain across the four key stages.
- Whether the attendance of pupils is good enough.
- The quality of the health, safety and welfare documentation and the associated systems.
- Whether the management committee is effective in supporting the headteacher.

Information about the school

Maple Medical Pupil Referral Unit provides education for pupils with a broad range of medical needs which prevent them from attending mainstream school. The majority of pupils are in Key Stages 3 and 4. The provision is made up of four units spread across the three sites: the Young Parents' Centre for school-age mothers or mothers-to-be; an education centre for children and adolescents with mental health needs and a unit for children who are too ill for school but not requiring hospitalisation; the hospital teaching school for children who are in hospital and a home tuition service which meets the needs of pupils too ill to attend school. Pupils come from across the borough of Doncaster, and from a range of social and economic backgrounds. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and an average proportion is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs is below average, but a significant number are coping with both short and long-term disabilities.

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 Maple pupil referral unit is a good unit that provides an excellent quality of care and guidance for all pupils. As a result, pupils make good social, emotional and academic progress. The views of parents and carers are reflected well in the comment: 'My child now loves school.'

The headteacher and senior leaders on all sites have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and deliver the quality of provision necessary for them to do so. Self-evaluation of the unit's effectiveness is accurate and rigorous and findings are acted upon to good effect. Because unit staff excel at supporting the complex medical needs of pupils, barriers to learning are minimised and pupils achieve well and make significant progress. Since the last inspection, the service has sustained its good levels of provision and has improved in several areas. For example, by introducing an effective system for tracking pupils' work, this has enabled the majority of teachers to set more effective learning targets. As a result, pupils are now challenged more successfully by their work and make good progress and achieve well. This, coupled with the development of excellent partnerships with outside agencies, which support pupils' learning and well-being, has shown that the unit has a good capacity to improve further.

Attainment is low for some pupils arriving at the unit, often because of gaps in their learning due to their medical and or social difficulties. As they engage with learning within the unit's highly nurturing environment, their confidence grows and they make good progress both personally and academically. Pupils say they enjoy school, sometimes for the first time, and are clear about how to stay healthy and safe. Behaviour is good overall and is outstanding in some lessons as the majority of pupils learn how to improve their emotional control and make the right choices. Effective transition arrangements ensure the majority of pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education or return to mainstream school. As a result, the number of pupils not in education or employment after leaving the unit is low, with the exception of a small number of new mums whose babies are very young. Attendance is average for the majority of pupils and improves significantly for many during their time at the unit.

The majority of teaching is good and is based on a thorough assessment of pupils' learning needs and as a result, all groups of pupils make equally good progress. However, in a minority of lessons assessment data is not used well enough. As a

result, learning does not match the needs of all pupils and less progress is made. The curriculum is good and closely tailored to meet the needs of each pupil and offers a wide range of accreditation. While science is now available across the unit, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to access some of the practical elements of the subject which hinders overall progress within the subject.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers' planning for learning is securely based on assessment of the needs of individual pupils.
- Improve pupils' access to the science curriculum across the provision by developing more effective opportunities for delivery of the practical elements of the subject.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The majority of pupils attend the pupil referral unit for a short period of time. The levels at which they are working when they arrive are generally lower than those expected for their age. This is often because of previous low patterns of attendance due to their medical or social needs. Attainment for those that attend for a significant period of time is broadly average by the end of Key Stage 4. This, taking into account their complex needs, represents good progress and achievement for many pupils.

Behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding both in and outside lessons, largely because pupils respond positively to their individual learning programmes and the high expectations of staff. These enable pupils to work consistently in lessons and achieve well across the curriculum. This was demonstrated well in an exceptionally good health and social care lesson observed in the young parents unit. Pupils showed exceptionally perceptive and mature attitudes to the challenges set by the teacher which included describing their own feelings about developing a relationship with their babies. This, coupled with their enthusiasm and respect for the views of others, confirmed how much progress in personal development and attitudes to learning many of these pupils had made in a relatively short time. Overall, pupils in all key stages and across all areas of the provision make equally good progress across the curriculum.

Staff ensure pupils attending the unit use every opportunity to gain accreditation. As a result at the end of Year 11, the vast majority of pupils leave with a wide range of qualifications and accreditations despite often only having attended the unit for a short time. Last year's school leavers successfully gained accreditations in English language and literature, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), science, business studies, first aid, and food hygiene. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are looked after by the local authority, make equally good progress.

Through the work of highly effective partnerships with health care professionals pupils learn to feel safe. They know that staff are always there to support and guide them to make safe choices. They say they enjoy their time at the unit. As one pupil commented, 'I've found it much easier moving back to my mainstream school because staff here have helped so much.' Through participating in a range of sporting opportunities and take up of healthy eating options offered, pupils develop a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Pupils make a contribution to the community within and outside school by listening to and appreciating the needs of others. For example, pupils in one unit identified that for prospective pupils, visiting the unit can be a difficult experience. In order to help this they have produced a booklet explaining how the unit works and welcoming prospective classmates. Pupils' good overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seen in the way in which they react to each other and take care of the environment. Through outside visits and links with other schools, pupils develop an awareness of communities beyond those represented in the immediate locality.

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	2
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

How effective is the provision?

The majority of teachers use assessment information effectively to set achievable targets for pupils. In the majority of lessons good attention is given to ensuring work is modified to meet the different needs of pupils within the class. However, in a small number of lessons assessment information is not used well and the teaching is not focused enough on the needs of all learners. In these lessons progress slows. The majority of teachers regularly mark pupils' work and give good guidance on how improvements can be made. As a result, pupils are clear about how to improve their work, which helps to ensure pupils make good progress. Support staff are well deployed and work closely and effectively with teachers to meet pupils' needs. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and this, coupled with strong relationships, ensures pupils engage well with learning.

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

The curriculum is well organised and imaginatively enhanced by many visits and activities away from the classroom which develop pupils’ independence and self-esteem. Activities meet the needs of individual pupils well. Those pupils who wish to study science do not have access to extensive laboratory facilities and this limits their progress with some of the practical aspects of the subject. Despite the vulnerability of many of the pupils, staff are adept at developing partnerships with a wide range of organisations which help to promote learners’ understanding of the world of work through work experience placements. This, coupled with a strong focus on outlining career opportunities ensures the majority of pupils are well prepared to make informed choices about their future.

As a result of excellent care, guidance and support, pupils feel there is always someone who will listen and help. Exceptionally strong links between staff and the CAMHS team support pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable to make good progress. A thorough assessment is undertaken when pupils arrive at the unit, which is used to target support effectively. Attendance has been low in the past. It is currently rising rapidly as a result of an imaginative array of actions. For example, on-line learning has been piloted for both home tuition pupils and those whose medical condition stops them attending. Transition arrangements are securely in place and are supported by good partnerships with Connexions advisors and colleges. The majority of last year’s leavers remain in education or are in employment.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The strong and visionary leadership of the headteacher and other senior leaders has moved the unit forward well, ensuring good outcomes for pupils on a well-controlled budget. This, coupled with exceptionally strong partnerships forged with outside agencies, is driving improvement further. Members of the management committee have a wide range of skills and offer good support and challenge to senior leaders. Policies and procedures ensure all safeguarding requirements are met and that practice is of a good standard. As a result, safeguarding issues are dealt with effectively by unit leaders. The senior leadership team and staff have ensured that the unit is an inclusive community. Systems to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination within the unit are good. The unit leaders work successfully to eliminate any gaps in the performance of different groups of pupils.

Leaders have built very successful partnerships with a wide range of organisations which benefit pupils and the local community, including participation in local events. For example, pupils from all areas of the provision are currently preparing their own art exhibition which is to be displayed in a public gallery. Links with other schools and communities to promote community cohesion have developed pupils’

understanding of life in a multi-ethnic society well. Staff make much effort to engage all parents and carers and ensure they are kept well informed about their child’s successes. Parent education programmes and attendance diary links with home are in place and as a result, parents and carers appreciate the ongoing work of the pupil referral unit in supporting their children.

These are the grades for the 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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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

Views of parents and carers

Twenty-one responses were received by the inspection team from parents and carers. This represented approximately two-thirds of the pupils who are on the unit’s roll. Taking into account the diverse nature of the unit’s population this represented a good response rate. The vast majority of questionnaires were positive and supported the work of the pupil referral unit.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Maple Medical PRU 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 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 34 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	57	7	33	1	5	1	5
The school keeps my child safe	14	67	7	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	52	10	48	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	57	8	38	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	62	8	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	67	6	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	48	11	52	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)	11	52	10	48	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	62	8	38	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	43	11	52	1	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	48	10	48	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	57	9	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	81	4	19	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



19 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Maple Medical PRU, Doncaster, DN4 9HT

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we inspected your school. It was lovely to meet you all. For those of you who have them, it was lovely to meet your babies, who are a credit to you. It was very good to hear how much many of you enjoy coming to school. We send a special 'thank you' to those of you who gave up your break to talk to us.

We agree with those of you that told us that you think your school is good. These are some of main the things we judged to be good or better:

- the friendly and polite welcome you all give to visitors
- the very good way in which staff care for you and help you to make future choices
- the way in which you work hard and achieve a good range of qualifications.

In order to make your school even better we have asked your teachers to:

- ensure that the work you are asked to do in lessons matches your ability and helps you to make progress
- ensure that when you study science you can undertake practical work when you need to.

We wish you all good luck in the future and every success in your examinations next summer.

Yours sincerely,

Marian Thomas
Lead Inspector

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