

# Oakfield 5–14 Short Stay School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	136754
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	385887
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Andrew Cook HMI

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>	5–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	50
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Chair</b>	Not applicable
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Bishton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	N/A
<b>School address</b>	Hospital Lane Blaby Leicester LE8 4FE
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<b>Age group</b>	5–14
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	9–10 May 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	385887



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Cook

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out with one day's notice. The inspector observed 11 lessons. Teaching was observed for just under four and a half hours and eight teachers were seen. Meetings were held with representatives from the local authority, the chair of the management committee, the headteacher and the two deputy headteachers. The inspector spoke with a number of pupils over the course of the two days. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at its self-evaluation, improvement plan and recent data on pupils' behaviour and achievement. Inspection questionnaires completed by five parents, 12 pupils and six staff were also scrutinised.

## Information about the school

The school was formed in April 2011 as a result of the amalgamation of two pupil referral units. Prior to the amalgamation, one of the units had been removed from special measures in the autumn term 2010 and had frequent changes of leadership. Building work to accommodate the amalgamation was not finished until November 2011. At the end of summer 2011, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and eight other staff left. An acting headteacher led the school in the autumn of 2011.

The current headteacher and deputy headteacher began working at the school in January 2012. A second deputy headteacher will take up her post in June 2012. She is currently seconded from the local authority to work at the school for approximately three days per week.

The majority of pupils are dual registered with their mainstream school; others have been permanently excluded. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. All pupils are at the school because of behavioural and emotional needs. There is a much higher proportion of boys than girls. Around one fifth of pupils have statements of special educational needs. The expectation is that pupils will spend around two terms in the school but longer for those who are undergoing statutory assessment in order to have their needs evaluated.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>4</b>

## Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- This is not a satisfactory school because serious weaknesses in the quality of teaching result in pupils’ inadequate achievement and poor behaviour. These are not being tackled quickly enough. The school’s capacity to improve remains extremely fragile and inadequate overall.
- Pupils’ learning and progress are inadequate. While some of the youngest pupils make satisfactory progress, most pupils’ learning is severely interrupted by their poor behaviour and non-attendance to lessons. Pupils’ attainment is well below that which is expected for their age. The gap between their attainment and what is expected is not closing fast enough.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate. Pupils’ poor and sometimes aggressive behaviour, mostly from older pupils, result in lessons that are extremely disorderly. Attendance to school has improved but pupils’ attendance to lessons is poor. Pupils who present extremely challenging behaviour have to be removed from lessons.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate because it fails to secure the attention of pupils. As a result, pupils rarely complete the amount of work they are capable of. In a few lessons, teaching is satisfactory and even good especially in classes with the youngest pupils.
- The new headteacher has an ambitious vision for the school and has gained the support and confidence of staff. Working with the new deputy headteachers, some early action has resulted in improvements in the collation of data on

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pupils' behaviour and academic progress. However, these improvements have not had any significant impact on the management of performance, including the quality of teaching or pupils' behaviour, which remain inadequate. The curriculum does not meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also inadequate primarily because of the issues around poor behaviour.

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

- Increase the rate of progress pupils make in improving their behaviour so that they learn effectively in all lessons and behave with respect and courtesy towards each other and adults by:
  - ensuring attendance to lessons dramatically improves by the end of the summer term 2012
  - ensuring all staff consistently follow school policies in managing behaviour
  - developing ways for pupils to reflect on their own behaviour and identify how they can improve it.
- Improve the quality of lessons so that all teaching is mostly good or better by:
  - focusing on what pupils should learn in lessons based on what they already know and their interests
  - ensuring teachers check pupils' progress throughout lessons and adapt their teaching if necessary
  - effectively tackling low literacy skills
  - ensuring managers take decisive action when teaching is inadequate
  - developing the role of the teaching assistants so that they support pupils' learning effectively.
- Ensure senior staff use achievement and behaviour data more effectively to direct the work for improvement by:
  - analysing data and using it to accurately inform evaluations
  - checking that achievement data is accurate
  - using the analysis of data to produce perceptive action plans that reflect realistic aspirational targets.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils' attainment is well below that which is expected when they join the short stay school often because of a disrupted educational history. Low attainment and inadequate progress are common for all groups of pupils including those who have a statement of special educational needs. Literacy skills are not taught well. Pupils' reading skills are weak and they are not confident in using them. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading is well below average. All of these factors

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mean pupils' achievement is inadequate.

Almost all of the lessons observed during this inspection were severely disrupted by pupils' poor behaviour which prevented them from making satisfactory progress. In most of the lessons observed, attendance was less than half of what it should have been. Most pupils did not enjoy learning because the activities were not well matched to their interests or abilities. For example, in one lesson pupils were asked to do research about the British Empire. Pupils made inadequate progress in this lesson because some did not settle quickly and their behaviour was poor, pupils were unclear about the activity, and some refused to work. All of the pupils in this lesson presented poor attitudes to learning.

In a small number of lessons observed, pupils made good progress. For example, in one lesson some of the youngest pupils made good progress in mathematics. In this lesson, pupils researched the cost of joints of meat using the internet which helped them to reinforce their understanding of money. Pupils made good progress because they were interested in what they were doing and the activity provided just the right amount of challenge. In another lesson, pupils learnt a new way to multiply two and three-digit numbers while others developed their knowledge of number sequencing. Excellent relationships and a calm and purposeful classroom environment contributed well to pupils' keenness to achieve.

A small number of parents completed the Ofsted questionnaire. Views were mixed about how well they thought their children were achieving. Inspection evidence supports the concerns some parents raised.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is inadequate. There are two main causes: ineffective behaviour management and a lack of focus on what teachers want pupils to learn. Teaching for those pupils who are dual registered is not always effective because it does not take account of pupils' learning at their other school.

Teachers and teaching assistants constantly try to placate pupils and this consumes their time and efforts. In most of the lessons observed, ineffective behaviour management and a constant concern that pupils' behaviour would be poor or aggressive created high levels of tension. Most of the pupils who completed questionnaires believe that teaching is good. Inspection findings do not support this positive view.

In the lessons observed, teachers attempted to explain to pupils what they wanted them to learn. While this was a good strategy, it was not always used successfully because pupils did not understand the teachers' explanations. In some lessons, the teaching was ineffective because it did not take into account what the pupils already knew. Throughout lessons teachers missed opportunities to check on pupils' understanding and progress; this was often because they were distracted by having to deal with poor behaviour. Pupils were often given mundane activities to complete

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or tasks which failed to accelerate learning. For example, in one lesson pupils made a papier-mâché crown to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. This became a gluing exercise missing the potential for learning in literacy, numeracy and for finding out about the cultural heritage of the country. In another lesson, the pupils spent time cutting out a grid about invertebrates and non-invertebrates but showed little understanding or interest in what it was they were supposed to be learning.

In those lessons observed when teaching was satisfactory or good, the key characteristics were:

- good or better relationships between staff and pupils
- high teacher expectations of pupils' behaviour and the amount of work they should produce
- effective behaviour management
- activities that were well matched to pupils' interests and abilities
- a mix of practical and written tasks
- good use of praise and constant reminders about what pupils were expected to learn
- constant checking on pupils' progress and good feedback, both orally and in teachers' marking, about how well they were doing and what they needed to do next
- effective teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) and other reading skills.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Poor behaviour prevents pupils from learning and creates a disorderly environment in most of the classrooms and around the site. The attitudes to learning and behaviour of the youngest pupils in lessons are generally good. During the inspection, a significant number of older pupils were not in lessons; many of them were wandering around the school site causing disruption.

The use of short-term exclusions has had little impact on pupils' behaviour with no reduction in exclusions over the last two school terms. Incidents of poor behaviour and occasions when staff have had to restrain pupils are recorded but there has been no analysis of this data. The views of 12 pupils who completed a questionnaire were mixed as to how well the school deals with bullying. Parents' views on how well bullying is dealt with were also mixed. Inspection evidence shows that efforts to prevent bullying and poor behaviour are not effective enough. Pupils' anti-social and disruptive behaviour is indiscriminate and not specifically directed to any one individual.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are often poor. The older pupils show little respect for their peers or for staff. There are times when good relationships between staff and pupils are evident so that pupils' behaviour settles and they make an effort to complete their work. These times are intermittent which reflects the fragility of the situation.

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The views of parents expressed in the questionnaires are mixed on how well behaviour is managed. Most pupils who completed their questionnaires said behaviour was sometimes good. Inspection evidence does not support their views. Both parents and pupils are generally more positive about behaviour and safety.

## **Leadership and management**

In the short time the new senior leadership team has been in existence the impact of their work has not led to any significant improvement in pupils' achievement and behaviour or the quality of teaching. The magnitude of the task to improve the school has been overwhelming. Any inroads to tackle weaknesses have been thwarted by a constant need to tackle pupils' poor behaviour. Leaders recognise that teaching needs to be more effective so that pupils enjoy learning and, as a consequence, their behaviour and achievement improve. However, they have not been able to achieve this. The evaluations of pupils' achievement, behaviour and the quality of teaching made by the senior staff with local authority advisers have been too generous. Electronic records of achievement and behaviour data have just been produced but no analysis has been made. This has restricted leaders' ability to make accurate evaluations of the school's effectiveness.

The management committee and the local authority have overseen the changes to leadership, the amalgamation of two pupil referral units and building work but have been unable to tackle the serious inadequacies related to pupils' achievement and behaviour and the quality of teaching. Many pupils are on the roll of the short stay school for much longer than the anticipated two terms. A lack of focus on meeting the needs of individual pupils demonstrates the school's inadequacies in promoting equality and tackling discrimination. Since opening, the school has suffered from a period of turbulence that leaves it fragile. Deep-seated weaknesses have prevented leaders from effectively using professional development opportunities and performance management to drive up standards.

The curriculum for the oldest pupils aims to be flexible in meeting their needs and interests but there is little evidence that this is leading to improvements. The primary curriculum is more closely linked to pupils' needs, and for the youngest pupils it is adapted appropriately. The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is inadequate overall. For the youngest pupils it is satisfactory. The poor behaviour of many of the pupils prevents them from reflecting on their own behaviour, its impact on others and curtails their understanding and appreciation of different cultures. Safeguarding requirements are met.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



11 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Oakfield 5–14 Short Stay School, Leicester, LE8 4FE**

I am writing to tell you about the inspection judgements that I made when I visited your school recently. First of all, I would like to thank those of you who spoke to me about your work and those that read to me. I enjoyed seeing some of you working hard especially the youngest pupils in the school.

The inspection showed that lots of things need to improve. As a result, your school has been put into special measures. This means that other inspectors will visit your school regularly to check how things are improving.

I know that some of you need lots of support and encouragement to behave well. Unfortunately, the behaviour of many of you is not helping you to learn. Some of you are missing lots of lessons and because of this you are not learning as much as you should be.

I have asked the school to make sure:

- staff help you to improve your attendance and behaviour so that you learn as much as you can in lessons
- the teaching is better so that the work you are given is always exactly right for you and not too easy or too difficult
- senior leaders use the information they have on your achievement and behaviour to help them to improve the school.

You must make every effort to work with staff so that your behaviour improves and so that you do well in your work.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Cook  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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