

Golden Hill Short Stay School

Earnshaw Drive, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 1QS

Inspection dates

20–21 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils arrive at the unit having experienced considerable disruption to the early part of their education. Their standards in English and mathematics are generally well below national expectations. Nevertheless, they make excellent progress in their classes throughout their time here.
- They begin to catch up through gaining the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They start to fill in the gaps in their learning.
- Teachers and other adults are highly skilled in recognising the difficulties pupils experience in their learning. Excellent systems help pupils overcome these difficulties. Consequently, pupils settle very quickly and take part in learning.
- Pupils increase the time they spend in classes. Fewer behavioural incidents get in the way of lessons. This is because pupils are helped by the extremely effective behaviour management systems operated by the adults.
- Pupils very much enjoy their learning because teachers provide exciting lessons. Teachers meet the individual needs and interests of pupils through planning outstanding lessons. High quality support is provided by teaching assistants so that pupils receive just the right amount of help.
- The adults work superbly as a team so there is great consistency in managing behaviour and developing outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Consequently, behaviour in classes and around the unit is outstanding.
- Similarly, much time is given by staff to helping pupils develop their social skills and to have a better understanding about right and wrong. Consequently, pupils self esteem grows because they take part in school life much more effectively.
- Pupils report that they feel very safe and this is confirmed by parents and carers. There is no evident bullying, and through the high levels of staff supervision any incidents are managed quickly and effectively.
- The attendance of pupils improves dramatically and is maintained at a high level throughout their stay at Golden Hill.
- Leaders and managers make excellent use of the resources available. They have maintained the outstanding quality of the service, including through the highly effective outreach provision given to other local schools. They are never complacent and intend to improve the quality of teaching, assessment procedures and the role of subject coordinators even further.
- The local authority and management committee are sharply focused on ensuring that the unit operates in the best interest of pupils. They ensure that it fully serves the needs of the local primary school community.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five lessons and a whole-school gathering, made a number of short visits to classrooms and watched pupils during playtimes and lunch.
- Pupils' work and their records of achievement were studied. The inspector heard pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other members of the senior team, teachers, other workers, a member of the local authority and the chairman of the management committee.
- The inspector spoke with students during lessons and in other places in the unit to gain their views and opinions.
- The inspector took account of one completed questionnaire in the on-line Parent View together with staff questionnaires and the views of other local schools with which the unit works.
- The work of the unit was observed and important documents concerning planning, self-evaluation, safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and the progress of students were looked at.

Inspection team

Terry McKenzie, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Golden Hill Short Stay School is located in a building previously used by a primary school in a quiet district of Leyland.
- The unit provides education designed to be a short-term as is possible while assessing the longer term needs of the pupils who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from their primary schools.
- Most pupils stay for around two to three terms and then return to mainstream education. Some go on to be educated in the more specialist provision of a special school.
- All pupils are considered to have special educational needs during their stay here. Some have a statement of special educational needs.
- There is no useful comparison with government floor standards in the work of this unit.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium varies with the different groups at different times. At the time of the inspection around half of the 30 registered pupils were eligible. The local authority provides a proportion of any eligible pupil premium according to the length of stay at the unit.
- Golden Hill is not part of a formal federation but the local authority managers oversee the work of all of the primary pupil referral units within the authority.
- Outreach staff from the unit support pupils in mainstream schools who are at risk of exclusion or who are in transitional return to mainstream schools.
- The present headteacher and other members of the senior team have been appointed since the last inspection with the previous headteacher moving on to work as the local authority line manager of all primary units.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the outstanding progress of pupils is sustained through:
 - further defining the roles of subject coordinators
 - designing and implementing new systems for assessment that focus the attention of teachers on even smaller steps of achievement by pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Upon arrival, almost all pupils are disaffected. Their attendance and attainments are generally well below national expectations and they will have been slipping steadily behind their peers in their mainstream schools. Almost all exhibit weak skills in English and mathematics. Their behaviour and social skills are often poor. This has previously led to low levels of useful school activity and reduced amounts of productive learning.
- Nevertheless, they receive outstanding support to help them overcome their difficulties. They become very motivated about their learning and they achieve exceptionally well.
- The highly coordinated behaviour management system is extremely effective in helping pupils to begin to understand and control their social, emotional and behaviour difficulties. Therefore, they take part in lessons to a much greater degree. They become more self-confident. Their self-esteem grows. Their developments in spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are outstanding.
- Pupils begin to cooperate with others. They quickly learn to trust the adults with whom they work and to follow their rules. This enables them to be active in lessons and to make contributions when previously this would have been impossible.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about the whole-school sessions that concentrate on spiritual, cultural and community issues. For example, during the inspection, pupils were observed confidently working with numbers in Japanese while excitedly exploring ideas about helping others. Through these outstanding curriculum enhancements pupils widen their views of the world and begin to respect others.
- Lessons are highly focused on helping pupils develop the missing skills they need to learn in all subjects. Consequently, they make the very rapid gains in English and mathematics that help them to get the most from all aspects of the curriculum.
- Through coordinated approaches to the teaching of phonics many learn to read, and all quickly improve their reading skills.
- School records indicate that the great majority make excellent and rapid progress in all areas of learning from their low starting points. Pupils are aware of this and they take great pride in their achievements.
- All, including those with a statement of special educational needs, are fully catered for by the outstanding curriculum, so all have opportunities to learn and achieve.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- All adults have very high aspirations for the pupils. They successfully encourage them to achieve very well.
- Lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work confirm pupils' outstanding progress in class and that this is due to outstanding teaching.
- The initial assessments undertaken are highly effective in providing accurate information about the social, emotional and behavioural difficulties of pupils; managers devise extremely effective strategies to overcome them.
- Teachers devise memorable lessons that capture the imagination of pupils.
- Teachers organise regular reviews for pupils throughout each day so that they know how well they are doing in relation to their work and behaviour.
- Behaviour management is so effective that, even when pupils arrived at a lesson during the inspection in an excited state the teacher quickly refocused them.
- Teachers map the progress of each pupil intimately so that each stage of learning is matched exactly to their individual needs and requirements. Short term targets are employed to help pupils know how to be successful. Targets concentrate on developing the basic skills of literacy and numeracy so that pupils can gain quickly in all areas of learning.
- During lessons, teachers concisely use specialist language so that pupils know how to employ key words correctly.

- Teachers plan the work of teaching assistants in detail so that pupils receive the highest quality of support.
- Classrooms are extremely well organised with different learning zones for different purposes. Consequently, there is a great deal of structure to the way that pupils are taught and this is instrumental in aiding their concentration.
- Teachers devise high quality resources. For example, in a literacy lesson the class were able to use spaces inside and outside the building including a large home-made rocket that helped to stimulate their discussions.
- The common purpose of the unit is aided by the very high morale of the staff.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils in classes is outstanding because lessons thoroughly engage pupils in learning.
- It is outstanding throughout the unit because of the high levels of supervision and the skills of adults in defusing potentially difficult situations.
- Behaviour management strategies are consistently applied by all staff. One pupil reported: 'You can't play the staff off against each other!'
- Records indicate that behaviour improves dramatically throughout pupils' time at the unit because much effort is provided by staff to teaching pupils how to behave. They learn what good behaviour actually means.
- Mainstream schools report that these positive changes in behaviour are long-lasting. Further statements from schools praise the efforts of the outreach team in helping them to devise strategies to manage difficult behaviour. The local authority greatly appreciates this and all other aspects of the work of the unit because of the impact it has on reducing exclusions.
- Pupils say they feel very safe here. When spats between pupils occur on the playground they are quickly dealt with by adults who are skilled in defusing potentially difficult situations. Pupils are taught to use one of the 'safe spaces' to contemplate their difficulties. They also learn how to stay safe through aspects of the curriculum for personal, social and health education.
- Pupils look forward to lunchtime and other whole-school gatherings. The great attention given by the adults ensures that pupils are taught about behaving in public. Nothing is rushed. Pupils are expected to stay at the table for the entire period of eating lunch and join in with others. Thus, they show outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural outcomes when working and relaxing together.
- Pupils were always very polite and welcoming during the inspection. They readily showed off their new-found social skills and confidence through engaging in conversation and volunteering to read.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Despite changes in leaders and managers, very high standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
- The new headteacher and senior team demonstrate excellent capacity to improve the work of the unit further. Very thorough self-analysis systems have resulted in clear, meaningful targets for improvement.
- Some of this work has been specifically designed to ensure that the unit can continue to provide an outstanding service to local schools following the move towards increased autonomy that will take place next year. Local headteachers and the local authority indicate that they are enthusiastic about 'buying in' to the service in the future, including the highly effective outreach service.
- Leaders and managers constantly encourage and challenge teachers through performance management systems. This has resulted in staff experimenting with and fine-tuning all aspects of the behaviour management system. Other recent outstanding improvements have enhanced the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils.

- The school improvement plan identifies, correctly, how subject coordinators need to develop their management skills even further and the need for teachers to implement assessments that show pupils' very small gains in learning.
 - Staff are very highly motivated and dedicated to helping pupils make the most of their opportunities. Many have undertaken training, for example, in phonics that has improved the quality of the teaching of reading. This results from the high-quality performance management work undertaken by the senior team.
 - The common vision at work at Golden Hill is linked to high rates of staff stability.
 - The outstanding curriculum enables teachers to provide memorable experiences in lessons. A full range of national curriculum subjects is offered so that pupils do not fall behind in any areas of study. Therefore, they have excellent opportunities to catch up with their peers in mainstream, particularly in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and reading. The curriculum helps pupils to learn how to stay safe. It is enhanced by a great range of indoor and outdoor activities, such as gardening and cooking.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - is outstanding because the local authority and management committee rigorously support and challenge the work of the unit
 - provides an excellent balance of input from the local authority and by members of the management committee
 - has ensured that the new leaders and managers of the unit are absolutely right for the job,
 - ensures that the pupil premium is paid to the unit in respect of the proportion of time each eligible pupil stays
 - has ensured that the senior team identify the needs of the staff through professional development and that their training is used to the direct benefit of the pupils
 - has ensured that all requirements for safeguarding are in place.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	119106
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	403796

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	25
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mrs Allison Collinge
Date of previous school inspection	March 2012
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