

Cloughside College

Bury New Road, Prestwich, Manchester, M25 3BL

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- The school's effectiveness has deteriorated substantially over the last four years. Leadership, management and governance are inadequate.
- A plan for school improvement has not been developed or implemented. Leaders at all levels have been unable to get teachers to accept the much needed change. As a result, leaders cannot demonstrate success in improving the quality of teaching, students' achievement or behaviour.
- Teaching is inadequate. The work most teachers set for students is usually undemanding and dull. It does not build upon what they learned in their mainstream schools, nor does it encourage good attitudes to learning.
- Achievement is inadequate. Very few students make any progress in subjects other than in English and art.
- Teachers cannot show how much progress students are making because they do not check it. Students produce very little work. They choose which lessons they will go to and quite often decide what they will do in those lessons, rather than doing what the teacher has intended.
- Students are not provided with a curriculum that matches their skills and capabilities and which adequately promotes the development of their basic skills.
- Students are not sufficiently encouraged by leaders and staff to become more responsible for their own behaviour and learning. Although students often attend school they are rarely in the places they are meant to be while they are there.
- The safeguarding of students is inadequate because the recording of the vetting of staff is not thorough enough.
- Governors are not doing enough to check on whether the school's work is effective or not.

The school has the following strengths

- Art is particularly well taught. Students enjoy the subject, show good attitudes to learning and make a lot of progress.
- Progress in English is improving, especially in Key Stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- Large parts of nine lessons were observed and small parts of a further three. All but one teacher was seen teaching.
- Meetings were held with senior staff, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. Many informal discussions were held with staff and students.
- Ten responses to a questionnaire circulated amongst staff were taken into account by the inspector.
- There were no responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspector took into account the results of a recent survey of students' views conducted by the school.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to self-evaluation and the safeguarding of students.

Inspection team

Alastair Younger, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with 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 in the school.

Information about this school

- Cloughside College is a hospital school for students with mental health problems. It operates on two separate but adjacent sites on the Prestwich site of the Greater Manchester West Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust.
- The Gardener unit is a secure male adolescent forensic psychiatric unit for up to 10 students. All are in-patients, referred there through the courts. Few students in this unit are offered full-time education. The McGuinness unit is a mixed, adolescent psychiatric open unit. Most students here are in-patients but a few are out-patients. There are about equal numbers of boys and girls in the McGuinness unit.
- The two sites share the same teachers and the same leadership and management team. Under the Children Act and for child protection reasons, students on the two sites are not allowed to meet or mix. There is no transfer between the two.
- Nearly all students remain on the roll of their mainstream schools and are dual-registered with Cloughside. Most students stay less than six months but there are some who have been at Cloughside for as long as two years. There is a high turnover of students in the McGuinness Unit because most placements there are for a short time.
- Students come from a wide range of social backgrounds and from an extensive geographical area. Most are White British. Very few students have a statement of special educational needs. A small minority are looked after children. Some, especially in the Gardener unit, have disabilities or special educational needs but some students in the McGuinness unit are following A-level courses in their mainstream schools.
- Most students are between the ages of 15 and 17; about half are in the sixth form.
- No records are kept of students' entitlement to free school meals, as all meals are provided by the hospital trust. The school does not receive pupil premium funding (extra money provided by the government to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and the children of service families), because this funding is allocated to the students' mainstream schools.
- Turnover of teaching staff is very low. Most of the teachers have been in post for over 15 years. A longstanding headteacher left in July 2011. A new headteacher stayed for a year. The deputy headteacher then became acting headteacher for a few months but was replaced by a seconded acting headteacher from an outstanding school in the borough in November 2012. A new headteacher has now been appointed and will take up post in April 2013.
- A new building to re-house the McGuinness unit is nearing completion.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in subjects other than English and art so as to help students make at least good progress by:
 - making sure that teachers know what they expect students to learn in each lesson, that their expectations are high enough, and that they plan well for their lessons and teach what has been planned
 - making sure teachers prepare lessons that are interesting and innovative enough to encourage students to engage in learning and produce a good amount of work

- making sure that activities are suitably matched to students’ abilities and build on what they know already
 - making sure that teachers assess the progress that students make in every lesson
 - making sure that all timetabled activities have a clearly defined educational purpose
 - doing more to encourage students to make the right choices and to be more responsible for their own behaviour and learning
 - ensuring students attend the lessons they are expected to be in.
- Urgently improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
- ensuring that the single central register of recruitment and vetting checks meets current requirements and is kept up to date
 - establish clear expectations for students’ behaviour and ensure that the agreed approach taken by staff to managing behaviour is consistently followed
 - establishing systems that rigorously track the progress of students
 - taking steps to improve teaching so that it is at least good by ensuring teachers meet the National Teachers’ Standards
 - making sure that the targets for improvement in teachers’ performance are suitably challenging and that those teachers on upper pay scales demonstrate they provide value for money
 - gathering evidence about the achievement of students, the progress they make and the quality of teaching they receive to help establish an accurate view of the school’s strengths and weaknesses and drawing up a robust plan for improvement in the light of the findings
 - developing stable leadership so the school becomes less reliant on external support
 - providing a relevant curriculum for all students and establishing a stable timetable across the school so that there is consistency for all students in relation to groupings and lessons
 - making sure that governors make effective checks on the quality of the school’s work including improving their knowledge of the quality of teaching and improving their understanding of what they should be asking for, including information about student’s progress
 - improving the governing body’s ability to challenge the school’s leaders rather than accepting the information as fact.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- The achievement of students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, is inadequate because too much of the teaching they receive is inadequate and insufficient effort is made to ensure they attend the correct lessons. They do not receive the same standard of education that they would be expected to get in their mainstream schools. Their education is limited more by the quality of teaching and the curriculum than by their mental health needs.
- Other than a few students in the Gardener unit, most students do not have significant learning difficulties but they are often treated as if they do. Teachers do not expect enough of them. All too often, students are given time-filling exercises that occupy them but do not challenge them or contribute to their learning and progress. For example, a sixth-form student, studying 'A' levels at school, spent most of her day sticking pieces of paper to a balloon in a 'group' lesson. Other sixth-form students were solving tangram puzzles in an 'acquired skills' lesson. A large majority of students say that the work they do is rarely challenging. Inspection evidence shows that all groups of students underachieve and produce a limited amount of work in many lessons.
- Many students are already studying GCSE or 'A' level courses when they come to the school, and lower attaining students are frequently involved in courses that lead to qualifications. However, teachers rarely help students to use their time effectively in the unit to make further progress in these courses. Too often they rely on the students' mainstream schools sending work, and this often consists only of past examination papers. There is very little new learning so students make inadequate progress.
- Very few students go to enough consecutive lessons, which means that any progress is not sustained. Their timetables change weekly. None know what they will be doing next week or where they will be doing it. This occasionally increases their anxiety levels and gets in the way of them making better progress.
- There are two notable exceptions. Students make good progress in art. They love the vibrancy of the art lessons. The learning environment created by the teacher encourages students to develop and demonstrate their creative skills. They are drawn to this exciting environment even when they should be in other lessons. Recently, Key Stage 4 students have also been making better progress in English because the lessons increasingly appeal to their interests and are consistently well taught.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Inadequate teaching lies at the heart of the school's problems. The quality of teaching has not been sufficiently developed over the past 15 years and does not reflect current expectations of good practice. Many of the teachers have become entrenched in their ways and are resistant to change. Very little teaching meets the requirements of the Teachers' Standards, as published by the Secretary of State for Education.
- During the inspection most of the teaching observed was either inadequate or required improvement. However, there were very occasional examples of good and outstanding teaching, for example in art. In these lessons, students participated well, had good attitudes to learning and showed that they can make good progress when they are taught well. However, too often weak teaching fails to engage students' interest and does very little to promote good attitudes to learning.
- Teachers rarely set high expectations, or inspire and challenge students to learn effectively or develop good behaviours. There is very little evidence of teachers monitoring the progress of students. They record when students have attended sessions but do not record what students have learned during the lesson. There are examples of good marking and helpful guidance being offered to students in English lessons but not elsewhere.

- Students are allowed to choose the lessons they attend. They gravitate towards teachers they like, rather than those whose support they need to pursue their coursework. When students fail to arrive for their lessons, teachers rarely seek to find out where they are, what they are doing and why they are not present.
- Very few teachers plan lessons effectively. Too many are unclear about what they expect students to learn in their lessons. They do not ensure that students build upon and develop their previous learning. Teachers often wait for students to arrive and then decide what to do depending on who turns up; these ad-hoc lessons do not meet students' learning needs.
- Teachers do not always stick to the subject that is supposed to be taught. For example, students arriving for a science lesson were talked through a Preparation for Working Life examination paper and the plan for a design and technology lesson related to music for one student.
- Over the years the school has developed two unique subjects. These are 'group' and 'acquired skills'. They could be described as therapeutic or nurturing but they do not do enough to promote academic progress. 'Group' lessons do not identify exactly what students are expected to learn because, in the words of the teacher, 'the importance of the teaching is to give the student the opportunity not to do something'. There are no clear aims in these lessons and there is no assessment of what may have been learned.
- Traditionally, the school has not employed teaching assistants. It has done so recently but some teachers appear to be unsure about the role of the teaching assistants and the potential benefits they bring to teaching. This is despite the clear explanation given by the acting headteacher. One of the best lessons seen during the inspection was taught by a higher level teaching assistant.
- Teachers do not assess students' progress. They talk vaguely about the importance of increasing students' willingness to engage in lessons but have limited knowledge of the standards that are expected from students in mainstream education. Teachers use a commercial scheme to record students' attainment but do not use it to analyse their progress. As a result, there is no reliable information to demonstrate the relative progress of different groups of students.
- Few students in the Gardener unit get a full time education. Hospital staff confirm that there is no medical reason why they should not and feel that more taught time would help them overcome their difficulties. As one student said, 'if the work is too easy, it gives us more time to think of the bad stuff'. The interim acting headteacher has successfully increased teaching time in the Gardener unit from 12 to 22½ hours a week over the last four months, but not enough of this time is used to further promote reading and mathematics skills and to speed up progress in those areas of learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students are often friendly, articulate and inquisitive. However, they are set too few boundaries and often are not expected to be responsible for their own behaviour and learning. As a result, their difficulties in developing suitable social and moral skills are not being properly addressed. Their attitudes to learning are often ambivalent, but when they are given work that interests them they often set about it with gusto.
- Lessons are not disrupted by misbehaviour because if students do not want to join in they are allowed to leave the classroom. Students can therefore avoid anything they do not want to do. This is accepted by staff and it is doing students a disservice. Students are seldom challenged and as a result confrontation is avoided. The students themselves show little concern. They appreciate the school and say that there is no bullying or harassment of any kind. They say they are happier here than in their mainstream schools and feel safer.
- Some members of staff express concerns about the way students' behaviour is managed. However, they expect other staff to do something about it, rather than doing something themselves. Inspectors found that the leadership team has not established a consistent approach to the management of behaviour.
- Despite the 'group' sessions, students are rarely asked to work with each other and to co-

operate to solve problems in lessons. In the main they get on well with each other at informal times.

- Most students are in the school the majority of the time. However, many are not where they are meant to be because they pick and choose which lessons they will attend. Once in a lesson, they often change their minds and leave, or set the agenda for what they want to do. Teachers frequently allow this to happen.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders, managers and governors have not improved the school quickly enough. A rigorous plan for improvement has not been developed or implemented in a timely manner. Not enough has been done to improve the quality of teaching. For this reason, the school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.
- Leaders and managers have not implemented a curriculum that provides students with challenging work which supports their progress and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Because teachers do not assess students' attainment they cannot be sure that the work they set students challenges all of them equally. As a result, equal opportunities are not effectively promoted.
- Leaders and managers are not doing enough to secure good behaviour from all students. Consequently there is an inconsistent approach to the management of students' behaviour and meeting their individual needs.
- At present, those long-serving teachers whose lessons are ineffective are not improving their practice. Most of these teachers are at the top of their pay scales and their teaching is inadequate or requires improvement. Inadequacies in checking the effectiveness of teaching in the past have resulted in teachers receiving too much reward for too little success. Weak teaching has not been tackled and staff have not been held accountable for students' progress.
- Teachers have recently been set targets for improvement but these are starting from a very low base. For example, when the main target is to write a scheme of work for a subject it demonstrates how far the quality of teaching and the curriculum has fallen behind current expectations of good practice.
- Leaders and managers have not gained an accurate picture of the impact of the school's work because there is no formal system for checking the progress of students. Information about students' participation in lessons is gathered but not analysed.
- There is no established curriculum. The timetable changes weekly and students do not know what they might be doing from one day to the next. Older students do not have sufficient opportunities to undertake work-based learning because partnerships with the hospital trust have not been sufficiently developed.
- There is no focus on promoting communication, reading, writing and mathematics skills. In the McGuinness unit insufficient time is given to teaching English, mathematics or other academic subjects.
- Minimum safeguarding requirements are not being met. The register of checks made to ensure that only appropriate adults are working with students has not been kept up to date and has many omissions.
- Very recently advances have been made into identifying the school's weaknesses and proposing how to deal with them. This has all been done by an inspired acting headteacher drafted in by the local authority. The local authority acknowledges that it did not keep a close check on the school. Once difficulties became apparent the local authority acted appropriately, in particular through its appointment of the interim acting headteacher and its commitment to supporting and mentoring her successor.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors acknowledge that in the past they have relied too much on the information they have been given by the school's leaders and managers. In particular they have not done enough to make certain that pay rewards are linked to good quality teaching that secures

good outcomes for students. Additionally they have not asked for data, for example, they have not required the school to make proper checks on students' progress. They were shocked by the accurate evaluation of the school's effectiveness by the interim acting headteacher and the findings of this inspection. They have done too little, too late, but show a tremendous resolve to make the school better.

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	105376
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	408908

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	12–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	25
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Claydon
Acting Headteacher	Elaine Parkinson
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2009
Telephone number	0161 772 4625
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