

Kettlebrook Short Stay School

Tame Street, Tamworth, B77 1AL

Inspection dates

6–7 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students achieve well. All groups of students make good progress from their starting points so that they make up much of the ground they have lost previously.
- An increasing proportion of students achieve GCSE or equivalent qualifications in English and mathematics and a range of other subjects. This is because teachers tailor the learning very closely to their needs and interests.
- Students make great strides in their social, emotional and personal development and in the ways in which they engage with learning. Their behaviour is good.
- Almost all students return to mainstream education or successfully transfer to further education, training or employment.
- Teaching is good and an increasing proportion is outstanding. Teachers know their subjects well and have high expectations of students' behaviour and achievements. This spurs students on to achieve even more.
- Excellent work with partner agencies keeps students safe and secure. It helps them to address their behavioural, social and emotional needs not only in the school but also in their homes and the community.
- Senior leaders and the management committee have recruited a strong team of teachers and put into place a curriculum that meets very well the needs of students. Good use of alternative providers ensures no one leaves without recognised qualifications. This sets students up very well for the future.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to strengthen students' language and literacy levels in subjects other than English.
- The school does not have secure systems for ensuring that all information about students' attainment and learning needs is easily available. This means time is sometimes wasted in gaining this information and putting the most effective learning programmes into place.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed the school's work, including visiting nine lessons at the short stay school and the off-site provision at the Tamworth Amateur Boxing Club. In addition, the inspector held discussions with students and talked with them about their work and their views of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the senior leadership team, the Chair of the Management Committee, the school's improvement partner and representatives from the local authority and partner schools, including inclusion managers and the Chair of the District Inclusion Panel (the DIP).
- There were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to be analysed. However, the inspector talked with individual parents and took account of the school's own surveys of parents' and pupils' views. The responses of 13 staff to the questionnaire were also considered.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation including the records the school holds about students' progress, achievements and behaviour, its self-evaluation and improvement planning. Documents relating to incidents, to the performance management of staff, the management committee minutes and those relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Susan Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kettlebrook Short Stay School is a pupil referral unit for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students from five secondary schools and one special school in the Tamworth area. Students are referred through a District Inclusion Panel (the DIP) comprising representatives of these schools and other agencies.
- Kettlebrook is also sometimes commissioned by the local authority and individual schools to provide outreach support for individual primary-aged pupils and to provide support for re-engaging students in mainstream schools.
- Kettlebrook provides individualised learning programmes for learners at risk of permanent exclusion, or who have been excluded, from mainstream schools due to behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. It also caters for students with medical conditions and young mums to be, some of whom receive tuition at home.
- The proportion of disabled students or those who have special educational needs is very high. All students are supported at school action plus and four are either undergoing assessment for a statement of special educational needs or have a statement. Many students have additional learning needs to their behavioural, social and emotional difficulties such as autistic spectrum disorders, speech and language difficulties and specific learning difficulties.
- Thirty students, mainly at Key Stage 4, are registered solely at the school. Seventeen are dual registered with their local school. About three quarters of students return to their previous school or to another mainstream school following short stays at Kettlebrook.
- Many students have poor attendance records before attending Kettlebrook. A significant proportion have not attended school for lengthy periods of time. Some students arrive very late in their schooling during Year 10 or even Year 11 and fewer of these transfer back to their schools.
- The school has a higher proportion of students than usual known to be eligible for free school meals or who are children who are looked after but does not receive pupil premium or catch-up funding for all pupils eligible.
- About half of the students are taught part or full time by alternative providers such as The New House School, Tamworth Amateur Boxing Club, South Staffordshire College and Torc Vocational Centre.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all teachers take every opportunity to develop and extend students' language and literacy skills by:
 - making sure students and staff more consistently record students' own ideas for all to see in subjects other than English
 - thus, enabling students to see their ideas written down and used as models and their ideas, spelling and grammar developed further.
- Work closely with the District Inclusion Panel so that all schools and agencies routinely provide Kettlebrook with all available information about students' needs and attainment so that their needs can be provided for accurately and swiftly from the time of entry.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Almost all students' attainment on entry to the school is low. Students are often working below national expectations and many arrive with levels that have deteriorated since their Key Stage 2 assessments because of the disruptions to their schooling and their poor attendance and behaviour.
- Although students stay at the school for different lengths of time, records show that almost all make good and sometimes outstanding progress because it is so good at finding different ways of re-engaging their enthusiasm for learning. Parents and carers and students praise how swiftly the school transforms students' belief in themselves and motivates them to want to achieve as much as possible.
- A very small number of students, mainly those who arrive late in Key Stage 4 and who have not attended school for significant periods before transferring to Kettlebrook, do not improve their attendance significantly despite the school's best efforts. These students make less progress although the school is highly successful in finding work experience and college places for these and for other students.
- Students gain a good and increasing range of qualifications including a few who achieve at nationally expected levels or above, because the school works hard to find the right qualification to challenge and interest each student. Good use has been made of early entry for a few students, for example in GCSE mathematics, so that they gain in confidence about their own abilities and are spurred on to try to achieve higher grades. Increasing numbers of students gain GCSE at grade C or above in subjects like English, English Literature, mathematics, religious education and history or GCSE equivalent qualifications in information and communication technology (ICT), creative media and science.
- Students say they never expected to be able to take such qualifications and are now ambitious for the future either at college or if they return to their mainstream school. More-able students as well as those with additional learning needs say they learn so well because the classes are small and the work is so well tailored to their needs and teaching is good. Learning is good because student programmes are well thought out to help them to catch up and to motivate them to come to the school.
- Students following courses with alternative providers make good progress in their basic skills work and in developing specialist skills often related to possible future carers such as in construction or care or a specific college course. This is because the school monitors these providers and students' achievements carefully.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals or are looked after by the local authority, including those for whom the school receives the pupil premium and those supported at home, also make good progress from their starting points. This is because the school uses available pupil premium funding wisely to provide activities and support programmes that are targeted very directly on students' priority needs and these students achieve at similar levels to their classmates.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because teachers know their students very well and are skilful in holding their

interest and managing their behaviour. Teaching assistants, too, make a good contribution to students' learning, helping them to review and reflect on their work and encouraging them to develop it further.

- Leaders and teachers themselves work hard to identify programmes which will set students up most effectively for their next steps either at post-16 or when they return to mainstream school. Students are taught in small groups, sometimes ability streamed, or individually. This means time for learning is used well and students learn to work productively with each other as well as by themselves. Homework, too, is used to good effect to accelerate students' learning further.
- Careful assessment of students' attainment levels, behaviour and progress means that if progress starts to slow, support programmes are quickly put into place. Good use of one-to-one teaching from both teaching assistants and teachers, for example, ensures that when students transfer to the school, they quickly improve their attention and attitudes and start to move forward in areas such as reading, ready for joining in larger groups.
- Students are very clear as to what they need to do to improve their work whether it is their work in the school or at other locations. They have access to good independent careers advice which helps them to have ambitions and be even more determined to achieve well in subjects so that they can fulfil these.
- Marking contributes to students' understanding of how well they are doing and almost always suggests next steps in their learning. Students have particularly good skills in ICT and these are used highly effectively to support their independent learning through research, in the presentation of their work and to inspire them to write.
- Excellent thematic teaching supports students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the development of their key skills. For example, the 'international week' theme really strengthened students' understanding of different cultures and beliefs but also their listening skills as they learned new words in Greek or the names of Hindu gods and goddesses. Excellent teaching, through very well-tailored activities, meant students worked out the meaning of very complex words with Greek roots in English.
- Most teachers create opportunities for students to use their literacy and numeracy skills in lessons. Computers are used highly effectively to research and to write, for instance, and good examples of students' application of their numeracy skills were seen in science, food technology and geography. However, sometimes when students struggle to express their good ideas, teachers miss opportunities to summarise and rephrase these more effectively and extend their grammar and vocabulary.
- This was done very well indeed, however, in one outstanding English lesson on *An Inspector Calls* where the teaching assistant recorded students' ideas on the whiteboard and modelled both the language and how to take notes, as the teacher and students discussed characters and events.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students behave well in lessons, often showing a remarkable transformation in their behaviour compared with their record from previous settings and placements. This is because they respond very well to the small group and individual attention they receive and the consistently high expectations that staff have of them.

- Staff create a calm and secure learning environment for them. Students say they feel valued and trusted and that they know their teachers want their best for them. Although there may be behavioural incidents when they first attend, these reduce dramatically as students settle. Students feel and are safe because the school is meticulous in providing for this wherever their students are learning.
- Students know that their learning and behaviour are improving. They trust staff and know that they can go to anyone if they feel anxious or need to talk. They are clear that there is no bullying and that if there were, staff would sort it out quickly and fairly. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and about what is and is not appropriate to say and to write to each other. They say that because this is taught so well in personal, social and emotional development this helps them to manage their feelings, emotions and friendships outside the school and to behave better in the community, though a few still struggle to do so.
- The large majority of students improve their attendance considerably. This is by over 20% on average, although attendance is still below that of other schools, because a few struggle to attend regularly. In these cases, the school and its partner agencies do everything they can to engage both students and families and have had considerable success with individuals through part-time programmes, work experience and the use of alternative provision.
- A good proportion of students are returned successfully to their home school, particularly those in Key Stage 3. This is because students have been helped to accelerate and re-engage in their learning but also because they now have strategies for managing their own behaviour, which Kettlebrook helps their home schools to further support.
- Students' attitudes to learning and towards others develop extremely well whilst at Kettlebrook. They become more ambitious for themselves and take advantage of the support available, including the careers support to move towards their ambitions.

The leadership and management are good

- An excellent senior leadership team is now in place that gives clear direction to the school and is very well set up to improve it further. The headteacher has worked tirelessly since the last inspection with the management committee to recruit a strong band of teachers and the leadership team so that teaching is now good and sometimes outstanding and the curriculum is very well suited to students' needs.
- Good assessment and monitoring procedures are in place that enable support programmes to be carefully tailored to students' needs. Strong links have been established with partner schools and agencies through the DIP which mean that the school is in a position to be highly responsive to students' needs from the moment of transfer. However, not all students arrive with key information about their most recent achievements and needs to date and this interferes with Kettlebrook's ability to tailor packages as swiftly as possible.
- Leaders, including the management committee and the local authority, are very clear as to the school's strengths and areas for development. Good systems are in place for analysing data and for making sure that teachers and subject leaders take responsibility for students' progress.
- Arrangements for checking on the performance of teachers and of alternative providers are clear. Senior leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching and the range and relevance of courses available have improved since the last inspection. Teaching, the curriculum and achievement are now good and improving.

■ The range and variety of the curriculum, including the increased number of higher level courses, the careful selection of alternative provision and of work experience and the range of visits and sporting activities, are a key element in why students make the academic and personal progress that they do. The ethos of mutual respect, valuing of the individual, fairness and of taking responsibility for choices promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and citizenship well.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The local authority, the management committee and the DIP provide good support for the school and ensure that students generally receive a 'team around the child and family' approach that secures both their well-being and achievement. However, although there are some excellent working relationships in place not all members provide effectively for the sharing of information about students. The management committee knows the school's strengths very well, however, and keep a careful check on how well individuals are doing and how successfully they transition back into school or move onto the next steps in their education, training or employment when they leave the school.
- The management committee includes individuals who bring a range of highly relevant skills to the school. They ask highly challenging questions about students' achievements and about how teaching contributes to this, including how this relates to staff performance and pay and to alternative provision. The management committee has ensured that students are kept very safe, checking up on any learning points from incidents and reviewing policies appropriately. They review carefully how effectively additional funding is spent and its impact, including the pupil premium.

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	133583
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	406533

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	11–17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Kirsty Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	17 February 2011
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