

Fountain House

Fountain Road, Hull, HU2 0LH

Inspection dates 26–27 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching in English and mathematics, though now improving, has deteriorated and not been good enough to bring about good achievement over time.
- Students' attendance, though now improving, remains low.
- Assessments in English and mathematics are not always accurate and, as a result, targets set and work planned are not appropriate for the abilities of the students.
- Teachers' marking does not provide students with clear advice on how to improve their work.
- In the past, prior to full delegation of responsibilities and access to information, the management committee had not held the unit to account for the achievement of the students.
- Subject leaders do not yet contribute sufficiently to the improvement of teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour and safety are good, as are attitudes to learning.
- Leadership and management are driving rapidly the improvement in achievement in English and mathematics.
- Students feel safe and value the kindness and care extended to them by the staff.
- Alternative provision is used very effectively to prepare students for further education or employment.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 12 lessons, including three with alternative providers. Eleven lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors examined students' work in files and books.
- The inspectors held discussions with staff, the Chair of the Management Committee and two management committee members as well as a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors considered the written views of parents and carers about the unit. There were three responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors looked at minutes of the management committee and the school development plan. The inspectors also looked at documents that track students' progress and documentation on how the unit gains a view of its performance. The inspector examined the unit's procedures for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Pauline Hilling-Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- In September 2013, Fountain House pupil referral unit amalgamated with Smart Moves, which moved onto Fountain House site. Smart Moves was the local authority out-of-school provision for disengaged students. The headteacher and engagement manager at Fountain House were the previous leaders of Smart Moves. All students access lessons for varying lengths of time on the Fountain House site, depending on their courses, to make up a full-time provision.
- A restructured management committee came into place in April 2013.
- All students are in Key Stage 4 and usually stay for the rest of their time in Key Stage 4. The majority of students are in Year 11 and the most usual length of stay is nine months, though it ranges from one week to two years.
- The vast majority of students are either permanently excluded or on the point of permanent exclusion from mainstream school. A few have additional special educational needs.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage. The vast majority are boys.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those from service families) is well above average.
- The unit uses several alternative providers. They are Alcrest Hair Academy, Childcare@Schoolgirl Mums, City Works Training, DKM Assessment and Verification, East Provision, Educ8, Fire and Rescue, Local Works, Motorvation, North Carr Cuisine, North Provision, PCS Karting and Quality Personal Development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that achievement and teaching are consistently good or better in English and mathematics by:
 - making sure that assessments are accurate and used effectively to set work at the right level for each student in English and mathematics when taught on the unit's premises
 - setting more challenging targets for students in English and mathematics
 - liaising with alternative providers to address each student's individual targets in English and mathematics specifically
 - ensuring that each student's individual targets in English and mathematics are also developed in other subjects
 - improving the quality of marking so that it always gives students precise information about how well they are doing and how they can improve their work
 - providing focused training and coaching to improve the rigour of assessment and quality of teaching.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of the subject leaders to provide more effective support to other teachers
 - ensuring that members of the management committee continue to be supplied with necessary information and undertake training that enables them to fulfil their role effectively
 - ensuring that students' attendance continues to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' attainment when they join the unit, while wide ranging, is usually below that expected for their age. This is due to previous disruption to learning as a result of their disengagement with education or their special educational needs.
- Since the last inspection, progress in English and mathematics has slipped and it now requires improvement. Weaknesses in teaching in the past have meant that students have not achieved as well as they could do over time.
- Although achievement in English and mathematics is still too low, it is improving. Effective functional-skills lessons with alternative providers contribute to students' overall progress in English and mathematics.
- The unit's records, and observations during the inspection, show that there is little difference in achievement between most groups in the unit, including boys and girls and students from ethnic minority backgrounds. However, recent in-unit data show that the very few students with special educational needs make slower progress in English and mathematics than other groups.
- Extra money from the pupil premium is used to fund initiatives to support eligible students' overall progress and well-being. These include one-to-one teaching support in English and mathematics. As a result, these students are doing well this year and catching up with their peers.
- Development of reading prioritises the understanding of what the writer means. Sessions are well organised and students read plays with good expression.
- Students' skills and understanding are assessed on entry to the unit. They are set targets based on the expectation that they will re-engage with learning and make at least expected progress for their age.
- Students often make good progress in personal and social development and, as a result, re-engage with learning and begin to achieve their potential. They gain a wide range of qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4. A few students reach nationally expected levels in vocational courses such as motor mechanics, health and social care, and hair and beauty. Some make good progress in practical or work-related subjects, for example in art and land-based studies.
- Often students do particularly well in off-site work experience placements or other alternative provision, and this prepares them well for the future. As a result, the majority of students successfully gain a place in employment, further education or training when they leave.
- A small number of responses from parents show that they are very pleased with the remarkable progress made in some areas by a few students.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it has not enabled the students to make fast enough progress in English and mathematics over time. Assessments in English and mathematics are not always accurate and, as a result, what is planned for students to do in lessons is not closely matched to their abilities. Moreover, focused targets for each student are not supplied to teachers of other subjects in the unit or to alternative providers.
- In less effective lessons, the pace of learning is too slow and expectations are too low; the more-able are not challenged well enough because they are not given more difficult work to do.
- Marking varies in quality. Teachers' written comments too often lack precision, so students do not understand what they are doing well or how to improve their work. In the best examples, however, marking is sharply focused. Teachers suggest ways to improve and make time for students to respond.

- Teaching seen during the inspection was improving, often good and occasionally outstanding, because leaders have focused well on raising students' achievement.
- Where teaching is outstanding, teachers' expectations are very high, and students are fully engaged in their learning throughout the lesson. For example, in a health and social care lesson, the pace of learning was brisk and students were challenged to reach ever-higher levels. This was shown in students' files, where there are examples of impressive work.
- In the best lessons, teachers plan work well for different groups and make sure extra adults are used well. In these lessons, for example in land-based studies, the teaching assistants support the individual needs of the students expertly in practical work so all students make good progress throughout the lesson.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The unit has developed successful ways of improving students' attitude to learning and behaviour to enable them to make a successful return to learning or employment.
- The key to success is the family and learning support worker system. Mentors listen carefully to the students and their families and take action to remove the difficulties they face. The system is coordinated well by the school learning officer, with the result that a student's attitude to learning improves rapidly.
- Students benefit from a well planned programme of personal, health and social education which enables them to consider topics thoroughly, such as drugs and personal safety. This has a good impact on the development of an understanding of the different forms of bullying.
- The atmosphere in the unit is supportive and kindness pervades. Students say they feel very safe and know that there is always someone to turn to if the need arises. Parents and carers receive information regularly about how well the students are doing and agree that their children feel safe and are cared for well.
- Students think about the possible impact of use of the internet and social network sites on bullying, and reflect on situations that have arisen, affecting themselves and others. Any incidents that do occur are recorded in detail, and parents and carers are fully involved by staff when dealing with them.
- Students learn how to anticipate unsafe practices, for example in health and beauty by ensuring that they use antibacterial soap to wash their hands before carrying out a procedure. They understand that personal protective clothing is vital in work situations because this is given high priority when learning with alternative providers.
- Individual students' attendance usually rises rapidly when they start at the unit and improvement for a few students is remarkable. The improvement for these students usually carries on when they move on, and this plays a significant part in their continued success. However, overall attendance is still too low.

The leadership and management are good

- The resilience and hard work of the headteacher and engagement manager have been highly effective over the transition period. They know, however, that there is still work to do in raising the quality of teaching in a minority of lessons in English and mathematics.
- The unit's partnerships with parents, carers, families, other schools in the local authority and a wide range of professionals and agencies are effective. They contribute significantly to students' personal development and academic achievement. The unit works very well in partnership with the local authority to arrange placements with a wide range of quality-assured alternative providers. This significantly extends the courses and opportunities available to the students.
- The unit works well to improve teaching. Procedures to check on the quality of teaching are well

supported by the local authority, which provides good support and guidance for the headteacher. Senior leaders provide detailed and helpful information, linked to the standards set for teachers, to support them in improving their practice. However, other leaders do not contribute sufficiently to monitoring the quality of teaching and training priorities are not linked closely to information from monitoring.

- Leaders make sure that any additional funds, such as the pupil premium, are used to good effect by providing extra resources for eligible students, such as additional access to staff. Their progress shows that the way the funding is being used is making a positive difference to these students' academic achievement and personal development.
- The unit has an accurate view of its own performance. Development plans are effective because they state succinctly what needs to be achieved. They reflect the ambitious vision of the unit, identified in partnership with the management committee and the local authority.
- The curriculum meets the needs of most students well. Improving students' reading skills, especially reading for meaning, is given high priority to enable them to move on successfully. Physical well-being is prioritised through health education and work outdoors.
- Careful plans for students to make visits, and occasionally start on part-time arrangements when they transfer or begin courses in other establishments, give them the best chance of success.
- The unit's arrangements for safeguarding students meet current government requirements.
- **The governance of the unit:**
 - The management committee is developing rapidly under expert guidance from the local authority. It now makes a strong contribution to leadership because it is now supplied with vital information. Members have a range of expertise which they bring to bear on improvement. They increasingly challenge and support the unit and ask searching questions of its leaders. Members now have a clear picture of the quality of teaching and students' performance and achievement. The management committee now manages the budget effectively and makes sure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Members know how the pupil premium is spent and can identify the positive effect this is having on eligible students' achievement. They are involved in managing teachers' performance and have ensured a proper link between performance and staff pay.

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	117703
Local authority	City of Kingston upon Hull
Inspection number	425910

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simone Butterworth
Headteacher	Sue Yardley
Date of previous school inspection	22 October 2008
Telephone number	01482 226166
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