

Impact Alternative Provision

Daleacre Campus, Daleacre Drive, Bootle, Liverpool, Merseyside, L30 2QQ

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Students' achievement in Key Stage 3 requires improvement because they do not yet make sufficient progress from their starting points.
- Progress in English is slower than in mathematics because students are offered insufficient opportunities to undertake longer pieces of writing. Too little time is devoted to improving students' reading skills.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement, particularly in Key Stage 3. Staff do not always have sufficiently high expectations of what students can achieve.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to students do not follow the school's marking policy. As a result students are given insufficient guidance on how to improve their work.
- Students' behaviour in lessons is not always as good as it should be. This is because the school's behaviour-management policy is not consistently adhered to by staff. Students are not given clear enough messages about the consequences of their behaviour.
- Middle leaders do not play a sufficiently active part in the leadership and management of the school. They do not support senior leaders sufficiently well through checking the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects and improving outcomes for students.
- Although the unit has experienced many recent changes for staff, more needs to be done. Staff, particularly those in Key Stage 3, are not fully effective at implementing the new policies and procedures introduced by senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for students.

The school has the following strengths

- Students in Key Stage 4 make good, and some make better, progress, particularly in art and information and communication technology.
- Checks on students' progress are carried out rigorously.
- The quality of education provided for students away from the school site is of good quality.
- Students feel safe and staff, in partnership with health care professionals, provide excellent levels of support for students' health and well-being.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons taught by teachers and support staff. Joint lesson observations were undertaken with the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions were held with students, senior leaders, members of the school staff, a police officer based at the Key Stage 3 site and four members of the governing body. Inspectors also met with three representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors took into account the views of 27 parents who filled in questionnaires provided by the school and four parents who requested a meeting with the inspection team. No parents recorded their views on the online questionnaire (Parent View)
- The inspection team considered health and safety documentation, teachers' curriculum planning, documents relating to the procedures to check the performance of staff as well as the school's systems for checking students' progress across the school.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Tudor Griffiths

Additional Inspector

Fiona Dixon

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The pupil referral unit meet the needs of 157 students from Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 who have been excluded or are in danger of being excluded from their mainstream schools
- Since the last inspection the leadership team of the pupil referral unit also have responsibility for students in Key Stage 3. These students initially often join for an assessment of their needs with the hope they will return to mainstream schools. A larger than expected number stays for longer, particularly if they are put forward for statutory assessment.
- The vast majority are from White British families and live in and around the Bootle area of Liverpool. A number are currently in the care of the local authority and approximately 20 have a statement of special educational needs for social, emotional and behavioural issues.
- Currently there are more boys than girls on roll.
- Educational provision is offered on three sites. The Daleacre site meets the needs of Key Stage 4 students and has a hairdressing salon on site which also provides vocational training. Key Stage 3 students attend the Assessment and Reintegration centre. A small number attend the Alt centre which provides for the needs of students who find attending mainstream school difficult due to their psychological and emotional issues.
- The pupil referral unit does not receive a full entitlement of pupil premium funding, which provides additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority, but continues to make extra provision for eligible students.
- Impact works with many colleges and alternative off-site providers to enable them to meet the needs of their students and provide each with an individualised timetable. Currently students attend: Basetech Training; Cornerstone Vocational Training; Beacon Learning; Light for Life; Space; Fairbridge (Prince's Trust); Learnfit Academies (Educ8); Style Training; Litherland Youth Project; Silent Whispers (Shy Lowan); Central Schools; Vision of Beauty; Michael John; Oakmere College; Advanced Skills Academy (Army); JLP; Right Track Training; Foro College; Dream Academy; Hugh Baird College; Southport College; Liverpool Community College; and Rotunda College.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 3, by:
 - increasing staff expectations, especially for the more able, about the amount of work students can achieve so no learning time is wasted
 - improving the quality of marking and feedback so students are clear about what they need to do to improve their work
 - ensuring opportunities are provided for students to correct and improve their work so errors are not repeated
 - ensuring all staff rigorously apply the behaviour-management policy so students' behaviour improves.
- Improve standards in English by:
 - increasing opportunities for students to undertake longer pieces of writing
 - ensuring that work set enables students to practise their writing skills in different subjects
 - improving opportunities for students to practise their reading skills through increasing the amount of time spent on reading activities.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - increasing the speed at which change is brought about

- increasing the role of middle leaders, particularly subject leaders, in making checks in their areas to improve the achievement of students
- ensuring all staff fully implement recent changes to improve the quality of teaching and speed students' achievement, particularly in Key Stage 3.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement overall. Although standards reached by students at the end of Year 11 have improved over the last two years, too little progress is made by students in Key Stage 3, particularly in English.
- Students usually arrive at the unit with lower levels of attainment than their peers, largely due to the wide gaps in their learning often caused by exclusions from school. Staff are good at recognising students' needs in both the provision and in the wide range of off-site providers. As a result many re-engage and start to enjoy learning, particularly in Key Stage 4. A comment made by one student summed this up well, 'I feel better about myself and know I have bumped up my GCSE grades.'
- The vast majority of students attend off-site provision, which enables them to develop a wide variety of vocational skills from, for example, hairdressing and bricklaying to horse management and horticulture. All placements offer an accreditation, which the majority of students achieve. These experiences contribute well to their successful transfer to further education and the world of work.
- Students in Key Stage 3 do not always make such good progress. This is sometimes because they lack the skills required for learning, for example, being able to sit down and listen and, as a result, are often slow to start in lessons. A lack of continuity in staffing due to a high number of changes to staffing has also contributed to less good behaviour and progress.
- Students across the provision make better progress in mathematics than in English. This is due to a lack of good opportunities to undertake longer pieces of writing in different subjects as well as a lack of opportunity to practise reading skills in different areas. Whilst this issue is beginning to be addressed in Key Stage 3, the impact, for example, of the focussed reading sessions has yet to show in students' raised achievement.
- School data shows that standards in mathematics have improved, particularly in Key Stage 4, and that improvement has continued over the last two years. This is due in part to improvements in the quality of teaching and a closer focus on all students achieving a mathematics qualification.
- The progress of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, requires improvement in line with other groups. The school's current data shows that gaps are beginning to close more quickly. These students benefit from a more effective system, which is boosting achievement, for example, through one-to-one and small group sessions led by trained staff.
- The progress of the more able students varies between year groups. Many make the progress expected of them, a few make better than expected progress in line with their peers. In writing, there are insufficient opportunities for them to apply their skills to longer pieces of work. Their needs are being more fully met in mathematics and this is raising their attainment in this subject.
- The support given to disabled students and those with special educational needs and the few who speak English as an additional language, ensures they make similar progress to others in English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Overall teaching requires improvement. Activities do not always sustain students' interest and some start to get restless and become disengaged, and this has an adverse impact on their learning, particularly in Key Stage 3.
- Work set does not always fill the time available for learning so some students finish faster than expected and sometimes become bored and disruptive.
- The vast majority of Key Stage 4 staff diligently mark students' books. However, not all of Key

Stage 3 staff consistently adhere to the school's marking policy. It is not always made clear to students how they can improve their work. Time is not consistently set aside for students to correct and improve their work. As a result errors are repeated and progress is slower than it could be.

- Parents feel that staff work hard to ensure their children succeed. Comments from a small group of parents who came to visit the inspection team reflected this well. One parent commented that staff, 'always go the extra mile to support students and families'. Another commented on how much happier her daughter was and how proud she was at her early successes in GCSE examinations.
- Students make good progress, enjoy learning and engage well when activities are well prepared. This approach could clearly be seen, for example, in mathematics, when students were set the task of interpreting a range of football scores data. Students clearly enjoyed this topical approach and benefitted from work at their level of ability which enabled them to get to work promptly. Work in books supported their good progress and showed that all groups clearly enjoyed the challenge and achieved success.
- The quality of tuition delivered in the off-site provisions is sometimes variable in quality. In some of the units it is good and there is a close focus on achievement. In others where, for example, there is a closer focus on improving behaviour, students' achievement is less good. Work seen in students' folders confirms this variability.
- Close partnerships between support staff and teachers are evident in the majority of classrooms. Additional support such as extra sessions for the less able students, disabled students and those with special educational needs are clearly focussed on areas to improve. The effective impact of these sessions has contributed to the recent improvement in students' progress, particularly in mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' behaviour requires improvement.
- Despite their often high level of need, the majority of students are eager to learn and show positive attitudes to their work, particularly when they are on work placements or in other training away from school. For example, a group of Year 10 students were observed learning about the dangers of knife crime at an external provider with a sporting focus. All showed calm and mature attitudes during the discussion, listening to each other's opinion politely.
- However, when teaching does not capture students' full attention behaviour dips and in the words of one student, 'You don't get it, so you just don't see the point in listening.' This leads to disruptive behaviour, which at times is not well managed, particularly when staff do not consistently apply the behaviour-management policy.
- Parents spoken to and those who completed a recent questionnaire set by the provision, believe staff work hard to help their children to learn to behave and that they often notice an improvement both at school and at home.
- Students' often demonstrate good attitudes and good behaviour outside the classroom, as evidenced by their often caring and friendly attitudes to each other, staff and visitors.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection. This is due, in part, to the effective work with families undertaken by staff and the vigilance of external providers who report non-attendance every morning. This allows staff to be effective in their efforts to find out the whereabouts of all students.
- The work to keep students safe and secure is good. Staff work diligently to keep students safe. For example, work undertaken in partnership with the school nursing team has helped reduce smoking.
- Students spoken to were clear about the different forms bullying can take. They feel incidents happen, but infrequently. They also think that they are given good advice on what action to take should an incident happen inside or outside school.

The leadership and management

- Leadership and management require improvement because actions have not been effective in raising the quality of teaching and students' achievement since that last inspection. However, standards are beginning to improve, particularly in mathematics, and students' attendance has risen. This demonstrates leaders' determined approach to bring about further improvement.
- The role of middle leaders is not sufficiently clearly defined and, as a result, they do not offer senior leaders a good level of support in improving the quality of teaching and outcomes for students. Subject leaders do not yet effectively check on teaching and students' achievement in their areas so issues and priorities are not always identified promptly. As a result actions are not always put in place quickly enough.
- The recent amalgamation of Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students and staff into one provision has not gone as smoothly as the leadership team could have hoped. This is largely because of the difficulties of some staff in dealing with the changes. As a result new systems put in place to improve outcomes for students have been slow to be fully implemented.
- Despite being new to post the deputy headteacher already has a very clear idea of how successful the provision can be. A very rigorous system checks students' progress effectively and ensures those in danger of slipping behind are clearly identified and actions are taken.
- The headteacher ensures the quality of teaching is regularly checked. Teachers are set performance targets linked directly to students' achievement and the targets in the school's plans for the future. Checks on the performance of staff are undertaken regularly and information gathered is used to make decisions on teachers' pay.
- Links between subjects are clear. Experiences outside the classroom enhance students' learning and develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. For example, a recent trip to an outdoor pursuits centre was described by one student as 'Awesome'.
- Although the provision for teaching sports is limited by a lack of on-site facilities, best use is made of other provision, for example, in local sports centres. As a result the majority of students make good progress in this area. Work on a new sports area is planned to start next year to improve facilities and speed up progress further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The recent audit of the management committee has brought about much change including the appointment of a new chair. Members now bring a range of skills and experience to the committee which they have continued to update by attending training. As a result they have sufficient understanding of students' achievement data and the quality of teaching to offer senior leaders support and challenge in improving standards of achievement across the school.
 - They show a good level of commitment to their duties as committee members. This is demonstrated by the good attendance recorded at committee meetings. In partnership with senior leaders, they have developed an effective system for checking the performance of all staff which rewards good teaching and addresses underperformance. Gaps between the attainment of more vulnerable students and their peers are beginning to close due to effective targeting of additional funding. Members ensure that safeguarding procedures and policies meet current requirements. They also seek to ensure that the school promotes equality of opportunity well and that students reject all forms of discrimination.

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	104849
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	442340

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	14–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bernice Harvey
Headteacher	Margaret Bridson
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2013
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