

Enterprise Learning Alliance

The Westwood Centre, Enterprise Road, Margate, CT9 4AJ

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The leadership of the executive headteacher is outstanding. Her vision for the future of the school, well supported by other leaders, managers and governors, has led to improvement in teaching and students' achievement.
- Leadership at all levels is strong. There is a cohesive vision of high expectations.
- All centres share a common ethos of care and high expectations for students' personal development, learning and achievement. As a result, the school is very highly regarded by students, parents and carers, headteachers in mainstream schools and in the community.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan interesting activities to support students' learning. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and very effectively deployed.
- Students' achievement is rising rapidly. By the end of Year 11 most students make very good progress in English and mathematics and in a range of other subjects.
- The curriculum is a real strength of the school. In addition to English and mathematics, there are GCSEs and work-related courses with clear progression routes for students into employment and training. These are enriched through a wide range of projects and opportunities in the arts, business and industry.
- Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- Students' behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. They are welcoming to visitors and show respect for staff and each other. Relationships in classrooms between staff and students are strong and students are fully engaged in their learning.
- Students' safety is a high priority for all staff. Students feel very safe in school and parents and carers agree.
- The management committee is fully involved in the development of the school and provides robust scrutiny, challenge and support.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Activities in lessons do not always challenge all students to make the best progress.
- Teachers do not always comment well enough on how to improve pupils' written work, and ensure this is acted upon.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited the six centres of the Enterprise Learning Alliance and an outreach project run by East Kent College.
- Inspectors observed parts of 10 lessons all of which were joint observations with senior leaders. Two registration sessions were also observed.
- A range of students work was reviewed.
- Meetings were held with school staff, including the executive headteacher and senior leaders, the centre managers, the special educational needs coordinator and the transition team for careers, employment and training.
- Meetings were also held with the chair of the management committee (which provides governance of the school) and with the member with responsibility for safeguarding.
- Three groups of students talked to inspectors about their views of the school; including some students who had successfully reintegrated into mainstream schools.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school’s self-evaluation, development plans and curriculum plans; also, information on the management of staff, minutes of the management committee meetings and records of safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View questionnaire for these to be published. However, inspectors took account of the school’s parental survey.
- Inspectors took account of the school’s survey of mainstream schools that had students attending the centres and considered other testimonials from mainstream schools.
- Inspectors took account of 60 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Janet Hallett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Judy Rider

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Enterprise Learning Alliance is a pupil referral unit for students between the ages of 11 and 16 who have been permanently excluded, or are at risk of being excluded, from mainstream schools. Students are referred to the unit from schools in the Thanet, Dover, Deal and Sandwich areas of Kent.
- Since the last inspection, the school has taken full control of its budget from the local authority and taken over the running of centres which were previously alternative provision. These now operate as part of Enterprise Learning Alliance.
- The school currently provides education for 139 students, in six centres across Thanet and Dover. The Northwood Centre and Ashentree Learning Centre provide education for 30 students between the ages of 11 and 14. These students are referred for a period of 14 weeks.
- There are currently 100 students between the ages of 14 and 16; their education is provided at The Westwood Centre, Dover Skills Studio, Project 15 and Dover ARC.
- Two thirds of the students are boys.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children) is well above average. There are a few looked after children.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is broadly average.
- The school uses alternative provision and takes up places at East Kent College for some of its students.
- Thanet and Dover have high levels of deprivation compared with the national picture.
- School staff deliver a range of outreach work in mainstream secondary and primary schools and with families in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and so raise achievement by ensuring that:
 - activities in lessons always challenge students to make better progress and achieve the GCSE grades and other qualifications at the level of which they are capable
 - all teachers make relevant comments on students' written work so that they are clearer about what to do to improve their work, and ensure students act on this.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The leadership of the executive headteacher is outstanding. Since the last inspection the school has taken up full delegated funding from the local authority and has taken over the running of those centres which were previously external provision. The senior team has been expanded and the headteacher and her colleagues now ensure high standards across all centres. As a result, achievement has improved.
- Leadership at all levels, from established centre managers to newly appointed members of the transition team, who support students to find employment and further training, is highly effective. All leaders and managers know that they are expected to put forward their own ideas for improving the service to young people and their families and know that they will be listened to. All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and how they contribute to the development, learning and achievement of the young people in their care. This has had a positive impact on behaviour, teaching and achievement in all centres.
- Centre managers as middle leaders have the freedom to develop a vision for their own centre within the overall philosophy of the school but are also held rigorously to account by senior leaders. Common systems for assuring high-quality teaching are in place. Joint observations with senior leaders take place regularly to make sure teaching reaches a good standard.
- Teaching in East Kent College is also quality assured by the school through lesson observations. The monitoring of attendance and progress of students is highly effective.
- The school meets all the safeguarding requirements; work to keep students safe in school has a priority and is very effective.
- Systems for tracking students' progress are also strong. Achievement is measured every six weeks and staff from all centres meet together regularly to consider students' progress and support needs.
- The school is very highly regarded by headteachers of mainstream secondary schools that use the service. They are unanimous in their approval of the level of engagement they receive from Enterprise Learning Alliance and that the behaviour of students who have accessed the service has improved.
- The curriculum is a strength of the school. There is a strong focus on English and mathematics and on improving students' literacy and communication skills. The range of GCSE qualifications available is wide and evolving in response to the local economy and students' needs. For example, one centre introduced a qualification in barbering because of interest and demand from boys. East Kent College provides appropriate specialist facilities for higher-level qualifications in motor vehicle maintenance and construction.
- The school uses its resources to support students eligible for the pupil premium very successfully. As a result this group of students achieve well.
- Students have access to high-quality and impartial careers advice and guidance. The school's transition team is relatively new but is already making an impact. Students remain in contact after they leave and are effectively supported into Year 12 to ensure that employment and training are successful.
- Students are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The personal and social development course supplemented by a wide range of events and visits within the community enriches and broadens their experience of life. They learn about democracy and the importance of British values, which are fully promoted through the school's focus on tolerance and respect. The school promotes equality, fosters good relations and tackles any discrimination effectively.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Students are clear about right and wrong, develop skills to enable them to reflect, work successfully together in groups and interact socially with their peers and adults. There is a programme of projects throughout the year to learn about a wide range of faiths and cultures.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. Although they are often anxious when their child is first referred, later feedback shows that their views have changed. This because of the very effective work of staff including family liaison officers, which are a recent addition to staffing. The vast majority of parents and carers are satisfied with the improvement in their child's attitudes and learning. They are unanimous in the appreciation of the courses and experiences offered by the school.
- Feedback from staff is very positive. They are unanimously proud to work at school and believe it is well led and managed and that leaders do everything they can to improve teaching.
- The local authority's school improvement partner provides light touch support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the management committee is a real strength of the school. Members scrutinise performance data rigorously and are highly effective in the level of challenge and support they offer to

the headteacher.

- Members of the committee bring a vast range of expertise, including in safeguarding, special educational needs and finance, to support the further development of the school. They have worked very effectively with the headteacher to ensure that funding has the maximum impact on outcomes for students.
- They set challenging targets for the headteacher and are involved in discussions on performance management and pay awards. They know about the quality of teaching in the school and are aware of where support has been provided to tackle underperformance to improve teaching and that this has been effective.
- Together with the headteacher they have set out an ambitious five-year plan to reduce the number of full-time places available and increase the existing outreach work in secondary and primary schools to better support students in their own schools.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. In lessons and around the school they are generally welcoming to visitors and show respect for each other and staff. They conduct themselves well. On a visit to a local public leisure centre for fencing lesson students waited in a sensible and mature manner to set up in the sports hall. They were aware of and respectful to members of the public and helpful and responsive to members to staff.
- Students' behaviour at the alternative provision is good and effectively monitored.
- All students have individual education plans with clear targets. They develop positive attitudes and are able to learn and make progress in lessons. They show pride in their work and are keen to display and share it with staff and each other. Even students who had only recently been referred to the school and had attended for less than a week were positive about their experience and keen to show inspectors what they had designed and completed.
- Staff are hugely supportive of students in praising and developing good behaviour and improving any behaviour that slips below the school's high standards. Bad language is rare and is immediately challenged by staff.
- Students understand and are very clear about the behaviour management tracking system for rewards and consequences, which has recently been re-launched. They say that most of the time behaviour is good but they also say that sometimes lessons are interrupted and that although staff follow the procedures, their learning is occasionally disturbed. Students' attendance has improved.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding procedures on the different sites are carefully monitored.
- Students are clear that they feel safe in school and parents and carers agree. Risk assessments are thorough and detailed and staff training is up to date.
- Students know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and mobile phones. This is supported by information in personal and social development lessons and from talks from visiting speakers.
- Students say that bullying, including racist and homophobic bullying, is very rare but when it happens it is dealt with effectively by staff.
- Staff work constantly with students so that they can successfully develop their ability to reflect on their actions and behaviour. This is key in enabling students to develop their own self-awareness, manage risk and keep themselves safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and learning activities are very well planned with high-quality resources to support students' learning. Very good use is made of laptops to develop students' research skills.
- Students respond very well to teachers' high expectations and the very strong relationships between students and staff ensure that there is a very positive learning atmosphere in lessons. This has a strong

impact on students' progress.

- Teaching develops students' speaking and listening skills very well. Students have high levels of concentration and they listen attentively to teachers and to each other. In an arts project delivered at the Turner Contemporary art gallery, students listened carefully to gallery staff and then designed questions they might ask visitors to the gallery before practising their conversation on adults.
- Teachers and teaching assistants routinely build reflection time into their planning and there are many opportunities for students to analyse their own performance and give feedback to others. In the fencing session, students were hugely supportive of each other's efforts and discussed strengths and weaknesses and how they could improve next time.
- Teaching assistants are very effectively deployed by teaching staff and are highly skilled in supporting students. They build their confidence, enabling them to develop knowledge and skills and encouraging them to learn for themselves as well as cooperating successfully with other students during group work.
- Sometimes learning activities lack sufficient challenge so that students do not make as much progress as they should. Students agree and say that sometimes the learning is not as challenging as it could be.
- Students' work is always marked regularly but sometimes teachers' comments are too vague and not detailed enough to help students make progress. Students are not always given time to respond to comments and make corrections on written work.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The achievement of students is good and continuing to improve. Since the school has taken over its funding and external centres, students' attainment has risen rapidly. Across all qualifications attainment scores more than doubled in 2013 and have continued to rise in 2014. In 2013 almost two thirds of students achieved five A* to G grades at GCSE compared with a quarter of students in 2012.
- Achievement in English and mathematics has improved. Starting from a very low base, attainment in English and mathematics at A* to C is rising and in 2014 has trebled since 2012. Across Years 10 and 11 the proportion of students making good or better progress in English and mathematics is strong.
- Boys did not attain as well as girls in Year 11 in 2014 in English and mathematics. However, progress data for students currently in the school show that boys' achievement is improving. In literacy and numeracy the proportion of boys making good progress matches that of girls.
- Disadvantaged students achieve similar to and sometimes better than non-disadvantaged students. They make at least equivalent progress in English and mathematics. There are no in-school gaps for attainment or compared with national figures.
- Students with special educational needs generally achieve in line with the cohort. Students with a statement of special educational needs are particularly well supported and achieve very well.
- Progress for students who speak English as an additional language is improving. Their attainment at the end of Year 11 was lower than for other groups. The school has employed an interpreter in Slovak and accessed specialist language teaching at a local college. This has been effective in helping these students access their learning, and attainment for this group is rising.
- The achievement of the most able is improving as the curriculum is adapted to suit their needs. For example, a few students are offered the opportunity to study for the higher mathematics paper so they can aim for grades A* to B.
- Occasionally activities lack sufficient challenge for students and feedback to students on their written work sometimes limits progress because it is not detailed enough.
- Reading is a priority for the school. Students keep reading-logs and parents and carers say that they are pleased with their child's progress.

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	135466
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	447776

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	139
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Andrew Somers
Headteacher	Micheala Clay
Date of previous school inspection	31 January–1 February 2012
Telephone number	01843 231758
Fax number	None
Email address	mclay@ela.kent.sch.uk

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