

Harbour

Harbour Pupil Referral Unit, Saturn Close, Lowestoft, NR32 4TD

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Subject leaders are not fully involved in evaluating the work of the school or the impact of teaching on pupils' learning within their subjects.
- Leaders are not working closely enough with mainstream schools to ensure that pupils known to be eligible for additional funding receive it. This includes the pupil premium, the primary physical education and sport premium and Year 7 catch-up funding. As a result, the management committee are unable to hold the unit fully to account for these areas of spending.
- The new curriculum and assessment arrangements are at a very early stage of development.
- Behaviour requires improvement because minor disruption occurs in lessons when pupils' behaviour is not managed as well as it could be. A small number of pupils are not attending the unit as regularly as they should.
- The quality of teaching varies too much. It requires improvement because pupils do not always know what they are expected to achieve.
- Pupils do not receive enough feedback on how well they have done or how they can improve their learning, particularly in writing.
- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because a few pupils do not always achieve as well as they should, especially in writing.

The school has the following strengths

- Good leadership by the acting headteacher, with good support from the executive headteacher, the management committee and the local authority performance adviser, has improved teaching and pupils' achievement. All pupils are returning successfully to their mainstream schools and the majority of pupils are making good progress.
- Rates of exclusions and incidents of challenging behaviour have reduced substantially.
- The unit's efforts to ensure pupils' safety are good.
- Parents speak highly of the unit and would recommend it to others.
- Teachers and behaviour support assistants have good relationships with pupils. Behaviour support assistants provide good support for pupils' learning.
- Some pupils, particularly among the most recent groups to join the unit, are making outstanding progress in science and in physical education because teaching is very effective in these subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons jointly with senior leaders to look at the impact of teaching on pupils' learning over time. They saw all teachers teach.
- The inspector listened to a few pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with one group of pupils and informal discussions were held with different pupils in lessons, at breakfast club, at break time and lunchtime. Meetings were also held with senior leaders, teachers with leadership responsibilities, four members of the management committee and the local authority representative. The inspector met a group of six parents and held informal discussions with a few other parents, during the Harbour café session, to seek their views as there were too few responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. The inspector also took account of nine completed questionnaires returned by staff.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation including the contracts made with mainstream schools on placing pupils in the unit, attendance figures, records of exclusions, behaviour logs, information about pupils' progress over time, minutes of management committee meetings, the self-evaluation document and the unit's improvement plan.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Harbour is a pupil referral unit serving pupils in North Suffolk who have been permanently excluded or at risk of being permanently excluded from mainstream school.
- Its aim is to return pupils to mainstream school to continue their education. Nearly all pupils are registered both at the unit and at their mainstream school. Currently, 18 pupils attend on a full-time basis for two or three terms, which is a three-fold increase since the previous inspection. The remaining 12 pupils attend on a part-time basis, which is almost half the number since the previous inspection.
- Most pupils, who are mainly boys, are White British and none speak English as an additional language. All pupils have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, five of whom have a statement of special educational needs.
- Just over half of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, which is well above average. This is additional government funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The unit does not make use of any alternative schools or locations to provide education for its pupils.
- There have been significant changes to leadership since the previous inspection. The deputy headteacher was appointed as acting headteacher in September 2013. The unit entered into a partnership with two neighbouring pupil referral units in September 2014 with each unit having its own management committee and subject to separate inspections. A new executive headteacher was appointed to manage all three units at that time and the posts of assistant headteacher and deputy headteacher were abolished.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop teaching so that it is at least good and raise pupils' achievement, particularly in writing, by making sure that:
 - pupils always know what they are expected to achieve, how well they are doing and how they can improve their learning
 - staff are always rigorous in managing pupils' behaviour in lessons.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - making sure that subject leaders are fully involved in evaluating the work of the unit and the impact of teaching on pupils' learning in different subjects
 - working closely with families to reduce the rate of unauthorised absence so that pupils attend regularly
 - working closely with mainstream schools to ensure that pupils eligible for additional funding receive it while they are in the unit
 - providing the management committee with a clear picture of the spending and impact of additional funds so they can hold staff to account for their use.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- In February 2014 the unit experienced a sudden three-fold increase in the number of excluded pupils, which effectively changed its ethos and put severe strains on staff. They could not sustain the good behaviour identified at the previous inspection. In order to gain control and ensure pupils re-engaged with learning, the rates of fixed-term exclusions increased temporarily. This had a positive impact on restoring good behaviour so that, half-way through the summer term, behaviour, attendance and pupils' attitudes to learning improved significantly.
- The roles of teachers with leadership responsibilities are not fully developed because they are not sufficiently involved in evaluating the work of the unit. There are a few weaknesses in their leadership of teaching, particularly in monitoring the impact of teaching on pupils' learning across a range of subjects. For example, marking in pupils' books shows that some leaders are not rigorous enough in checking that teachers are tackling pupils' use of grammar, punctuation and spelling when writing in subjects other than English.
- Arrangements for managing the performance of staff are securely based on the robust monitoring of teaching, and its impact on learning, by the acting headteacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the executive headteacher, who provide strong leadership of teaching. This has seen a significant rise in good and better teaching since June 2014, as pupils successfully re-engage with learning.
- Leaders are not working closely enough with mainstream schools to ensure that eligible pupils receive their entitlement to additional funding. This includes the pupil premium, the primary physical education and sport premium and the Year 7 catch-up funding. There are inconsistencies in the contracts between the unit and different mainstream schools. Some specify that a proportion of pupil premium funding should be transferred to the unit and others do not.
- A small proportion of additional funding for the pupil premium has been delegated from the local authority directly to the unit. This is used effectively for general educational enrichment such as the funding of outdoor activities to build confidence and self-esteem. This has had a positive impact on pupils' personal development and attitudes to school as pupils increased their enjoyment of learning.
- The school does not receive additional funding for the primary physical education and sport premium or Year 7 catch-up funding. None of the unit's contracts with mainstream schools mention the transfer of these funds. As a result, they have not been spent by leaders nor challenged by the management committee.
- Equality of opportunity is not always promoted well enough because a few pupils are not making as much progress as they should and progress in writing is not as good as progress in reading or mathematics. The school tackles discrimination appropriately on the very rare occasions it occurs.
- Within the space of a term, the acting headteacher, with good support from the executive headteacher and the management committee, has been effective in using temporary exclusions to restore an ethos of calm and order where good behaviour can begin to flourish and pupils can re-engage with learning. As a result, pupils are now more willing to engage with learning and behaviour has improved.
- All pupils who were due to leave the unit after two terms, in October 2014, successfully transferred back to their schools. Decisive leadership by the acting headteacher, with good support from the executive headteacher and the local authority performance adviser, has ensured that the majority of pupils are now making good progress.
- The local authority is providing good support for the unit. They were quick to respond to the decline in discipline and carried out a review in May where challenging targets were set. The acting headteacher confirmed the good support provided by the local authority performance adviser in helping the unit restore a sense of calm and purpose.

- The unit promotes pupils' safety and well-being effectively and its arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. Robust procedures are in place to check the suitability of staff and visitors to work with children. All training in safeguarding and child protection is up-to-date. Records of attendance, behaviour and exclusions are meticulously checked and the school works closely with outside professionals, such as social services, to ensure pupils' safety and wellbeing.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced with a strong emphasis on building pupils' self-esteem and changing their behaviour in order to transfer back to mainstream schools. The unit is successful in this work but does not place enough emphasis on accelerating pupils' academic progress. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the celebration of different faiths, and opportunities to learn about different cultures. Pupils have opportunities to reflect, share ideas and take turns in lessons. British values, including democracy, are promoted within the programme of personal, social and health education. This prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Although leaders have attended various meetings about the new curriculum, they have yet to develop this and produce schemes of work. As a result, new assessment arrangements are not yet being developed.
- Pupils in Key Stage 3 receive most of their careers guidance in their mainstream schools because they only attend the unit for a relatively short space of time.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The management committee cannot hold the unit to account for its additional spending of the primary physical education and sport premium or Year 7 catch-up funding because no funds have been received. It is partially holding the unit to account for its spending of the small proportion of pupil premium funding transferred directly by the local authority to the unit.
 - The management committee has a realistic view of the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning, through visits to the unit, receiving reports and through the review of data. Members are acting effectively in supporting the performance management process and have already agreed the performance objectives for the acting headteacher. They are ensuring that good teaching is rewarded and any weaknesses are tackled. The management committee provides good oversight of the unit's child protection and safeguarding arrangements, particularly in ensuring policies and procedures are up-to-date. The named member of the management committee visits the unit and liaises regularly to ensure that all potential risks are assessed and the unit complies with the local safeguarding board's requirements. The management committee is overseeing pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development appropriately.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' behaviour deteriorated in February 2014 when a large number of excluded pupils with challenging behaviour were admitted to the unit. Staff struggled to maintain an ethos where good behaviour flourished and as a result the number of fixed-term exclusions and rates of unauthorised absence increased.
- At times, the management of pupils' behaviour is not always strong enough which results in occasional low-level disruption. This is reflected in the unit's own records of behaviour.
- The acting headteacher has acted quickly, with good support from the executive headteacher, to restore an atmosphere of calm, enabling more pupils to re-engage with learning. As a result, the majority of pupils have positive attitudes to school, reflected in their good attendance and their enjoyment of learning. In discussions, different pupils said how much they enjoy learning and how much their behaviour has improved during their time in the unit. This is also reflected in the unit's success in meeting its aims of successfully transferring pupils back to mainstream schools.
- The good behaviour of the majority of students is having a positive effect on their spiritual, moral, social

and cultural development, as their self-esteem and relationships towards adults and one another improve. Pupils were helpful and respectful to visitors during the inspection. There is no evidence of graffiti or damage to property of any kind in the unit. Pupils' books showed that they take a pride in their work.

- Parents believe that their children's behaviour improves greatly, during their time at the unit, and that by the time they return to mainstream school their behaviour is good. Staff and the management committee share this view.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils said that they feel very safe in the unit, which was also confirmed by parents. Staff actively engage in activities with pupils – at breakfast, break and lunch times – to ensure pupils' safety.
- Strong systems are in place to promote good attendance. Absence is dealt with immediately with a telephone call home and sometimes a visit. Attendance targets are set and good attendance is rewarded. Where necessary and especially if there are likely implications for safeguarding, outside agencies are involved.
- Pupils say some bullying occurs but it is mainly name calling and is always dealt with effectively by staff. No use of derogatory language was heard during the inspection. Parents expressed few concerns about bullying. Pupils say that they can go to any staff if they are concerned about any matters.
- Pupils know how to stay safe and were observed handling practical equipment safely, abiding by safe rules in the gym and using computers safely. Pupils talked about the safe use of the internet and the potential dangers of social networking sites.
- A few pupils are persistently absent despite the best efforts of the unit to promote good attendance.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Pupils' work and the unit's data show that the impact of the quality of teaching on pupils' learning over time requires improvement. The unit's monitoring of teaching since the previous inspection shows that not enough teaching is good or better.
- Assessment is not used effectively enough. As a result, pupils do not always know what they are expected to achieve and they are not always provided with feedback on how well they have done or how they can improve their learning, particularly in writing. This was seen during visits to literacy and numeracy lessons and in pupils' work. For example, there were several missed opportunities to correct pupils' use of spelling, punctuation and grammar in their written work.
- Occasionally, behaviour is not managed well enough by teachers, who sometimes tolerate and ignore minor disruption, such as talking over others. Consequently, when this happens, progress slows.
- Teachers and behaviour support assistants have good relationships with pupils. They engage fully with pupils during learning activities and provide appropriate praise and encouragement to boost pupils' confidence as learners.
- Behaviour support assistants provide good support for targeted pupils, such as those with a statement of special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils. They break tasks down into smaller, achievable steps and clarify any misunderstandings by, for example, carefully explaining the meaning of any technical vocabulary.
- The teaching of reading is good. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' use of phonics in reading and providing them with an interesting range of books which they enjoy. As a result, pupils read at home as well as at school. During the inspection pupils read with great enthusiasm. The teaching of mathematics is also good because pupils have good opportunities to use and apply their numeracy skills in

different activities such as constructing a tall and stable tower.

- The teaching of science and physical education is good and occasionally outstanding. Teachers' good subject knowledge and improved behaviour management result in pupils making significant gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding in these areas. In a physical education lesson seen, pupils made very rapid progress in understanding the impact of circuit training on different muscle groups in the body. They learnt where these muscles were, extending their vocabulary by focusing on the correct use of anatomical language to deepen their understanding.
- In science work, pupils have clear targets to extend their learning and are always reminded to use complete sentences and the correct units of measurement when writing up investigations. Systems for recording and tracking pupils' progress in physical education and science are good.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- The unit's information about the progress of current pupils over time, the monitoring of teaching over time and evidence seen in pupils' books show that pupils' achievement requires improvement. Following a period in the last academic year when pupils' learning was disrupted, pupils are now making the progress expected of them.
- Pupils typically enter the unit with below average attainment, mainly due to prior disruption to their education.
- Pupils' work and the unit's data show that they are not making as much progress in writing as they are in reading and mathematics.
- A few pupils make outstanding progress in reading and mathematics and approximately a quarter make outstanding progress in science and physical education.
- Disadvantaged pupils make at least the same progress as their classmates. The unit uses the limited additional funds, made available directly from the local authority, well to extend their educational experiences. This builds their confidence and self-esteem, so that they enjoy learning and make good progress.
- The unit does not receive any of its entitlement for the primary physical education and sport premium or Year 7 catch-up funding so it is not possible to evaluate the use of this additional funding on the progress these pupils are making. Nevertheless, pupils were seen exercising vigorously while playing basketball at break time and making rapid progress in developing their circuit training skills in a physical education lesson.
- Most of the few pupils with a statement of special educational needs are making the same progress as their classmates in literacy and numeracy due to effective support from behaviour support assistants.
- The more-able pupils are making the same progress as their classmates because their thinking is usually extended through more challenging tasks.
- All pupils successfully transfer to other schools after two or three terms as a result of good progress in their personal development.

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	134762
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	447979

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	8–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	30
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Nicola Meakin (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2012
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