

New Horizons Learning Centre

Mulberry Drive, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 4EA

Inspection dates

11–12 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in a wide range of subjects as they pass through the school. They are well prepared for the next steps of their education or work.
- Teaching is consistently good. High expectations of achievement and behaviour, relevant activities, teachers' good knowledge of their subjects and the effective deployment of teaching assistants help ensure pupils do well.
- The very large majority of pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around school, and this assists their good progress. Pupils are proud of the school and place great trust in the staff. Pupils feel safe and value staff help and support.
- The school's outstanding leadership and management include strong governance and very effective systems for improving performance. Consequently, since the previous inspection, pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching, safety and behaviour have improved from 'requiring improvement' to 'good'. Attendance has markedly increased.
- Engaging lessons ensure that learning and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are effectively encouraged .
- Well informed governors hold the school to account diligently and thoroughly evaluate their own performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes, pupils are not clear what they are aiming to learn or achieve in lessons. Just occasionally, low level disruption is not tackled promptly enough. Both inhibit pupils' progress from being outstanding.
- The number of fixed term exclusions has recently increased.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in six lessons across the primary and the secondary sites, involving five teachers. Two of these lessons were observed with senior leaders. Break times were observed on the primary and the secondary sites. The inspector talked to two groups of pupils (primary and secondary) and heard younger pupils read to him individually.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff, subject and pastoral leaders and teachers. The inspector met with governors, a representative of the local authority and representatives of one of the alternative providers.
- The inspector looked at various aspects of the school's work including documents relating to safeguarding, information on pupils' progress and records of attendance and behaviour. He looked at pupils' work and in lessons talked to pupils about their work where possible. The inspector examined the school's own evaluations of its performance, plans for developing further, records of the school's checks of the alternative provision, and documents relating to the leadership of teaching, the management of staff performance, and staff training.
- Account was taken of 15 responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire) and the inspector met with a parent.
- Responses to 30 questionnaires completed by staff were looked at.

Inspection team

Michael Farrell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- New Horizons Learning Centre educates pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Some have additional learning difficulties. Each pupil has either a statement of special educational needs or, as the local authority moves to a nationally required new form of identification and assessment, an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- The school opened in September 2011.
- The school has no girls on roll and no sixth form.
- Pupils often start at different times of the year and at different ages, so that older pupils may not have been in the school when they were younger.
- The school has separate campuses. These sites are about a mile apart from each other for primary and secondary-aged pupils. Primary-aged pupils are taught in mixed age groups.
- Most pupils are from a White British heritage. Over 60% of pupils receive pupil premium funding, which is additional government funding for pupils eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority. This proportion is well above average. A small number of pupils is looked after by the local authority.
- The school does not receive any catch-up funding for Year 7 pupils.
- Alternative provision is provided at three venues on different sites: KTS, Yate, which provides for one pupil part time; Education First, Bristol, providing for three pupils full time and one pupil part time; and Rock Steady, Bristol, which provides for one pupil full time. Where a pupil attends alternative provision part time, the rest of the provision is at the main school site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure outstanding achievement by ensuring that:
 - all elements of what pupils should be learning in lessons are precise and that pupils know exactly what they should be achieving
 - occasional low level disruption is always promptly tackled to minimise disruption to learning.
- Significantly reduce the number of fixed term exclusions including by increasing the number of pastoral staff supporting pupils and families.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and senior staff successfully nurture a culture in which staff feel highly valued and seek excellence. This culture contributes to rapid and continuing improvements since the previous inspection.
- Excellent policies guide what the school does, ensuring pupils make rapid gains in their learning.
- Meticulous systems of managing staff performance use a wide range of evidence. Regular, accurate evaluations of lessons, meticulous reviews of planning and thorough checking of pupils' work and understanding help the school sharply identify strengths and development areas. Subsequent highly focused training and coaching ensure rapid improvements in teaching.
- Very well-planned and regular opportunities for writing in different contexts have improved standards rapidly. Subject leaders contribute very effectively to such developments.
- Thorough training and careful checks by leaders ensure that staff consistently follow school behaviour policies and procedures, leading to greatly improved pupil behaviour.
- Very effective strategies introduced by leaders, including home visits, have increased attendance in the past two years. The attendance of some individual pupils has dramatically improved.
- Local authority contributions to moderating judgements of achievement, shared observations of teaching, and staff and governor training have effectively contributed to improvements.
- Engaging programmes of study effectively promote pupils' academic progress and good behaviour. Spiritual and moral development is strongly developed, for example by opportunities for discussions on relevant topics in the news. Art and English lessons, particularly, contribute, by providing work giving pupils' insights into different cultures. Social development is highly encouraged in day-to-day interactions with pupils and staff and in opportunities for pupils to work together on activities. Visits and visitors greatly enhance all these areas of development.
- Governors, staff and pupils are acutely aware of and rise to the importance of preparing for life in contemporary Britain. The school effectively tackles hindrances to learning, including family difficulties. Staff set very good examples of respect and valuing others, fostering warm relationships. Programmes of study and staff guidance of pupils emphasise that discrimination is unacceptable. Effective careers guidance and advice assist pupils in making well informed choices. Staff prepare pupils for interviews and arrange visits providing insights into possible careers.
- The school's arrangements to keep pupils safe meet statutory requirements. Staff and governors closely follow clear procedures. The school thoroughly and rigorously checks off-site provision, including arrangements for keeping pupils safe, attendance and behaviour.
- Parents generally express highly positive views of the school. They receive clear information about school activities and their child's progress.
- Effectively targeted and evaluated additional funding for disadvantaged pupils ensures increased individual support for learning and specialist resources for literacy. As a result, these pupils achieve as well as their peers and sometimes better. Very well deployed and evaluated primary sport money has successfully provided programmes for physical education and specialist sports coaching. This has led to an increase in staff expertise and pupil enjoyment.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school very well, vigorously holding it to account. Through visiting the school and receiving reports, the governors know the strengths of teaching and where teaching can improve further. Governors have a clear view of the school's performance, conscientiously reviewing a range of information and linking this with first-hand experience of the school's work. They ensure that the performance of staff is thoroughly and fairly reviewed through very effective systems. They check that good teaching is rewarded and that any underperformance is promptly addressed. Governors undergo regular training and critically review the quality of their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This applies to both primary and secondary sites. The school's thorough checks indicate good behaviour at alternative provisions because the activities and opportunities they provide motivate pupils well.
- Pupils, parents and staff say that behaviour is good, supporting the evidence seen during the inspection. Thorough checks and analysis of pupils' behaviour enable the school to identify patterns, such as the

times when there are occasional dips in behaviour. Leaders are then extremely adept at developing strategies accordingly. Pupils recognise improvements in their behaviour. 'I'm calming down quickly now,' said one.

- Pupils enter the welcoming, attractive classrooms punctually and prepared to work because they enjoy lessons. One parent stated her son's view of the school, 'He loves it.' Pupils readily recognise British values such as 'being fair'.
- Attendance has considerably improved over the past two years because leaders have emphasised its impact on progress. Pupils attend regularly.
- The school considerably reduced fixed term exclusions last year. However, the behaviour of a small number of pupils has led to a recent increase in fixed term exclusions. Having evaluated the reasons, the school intends to address them, including through increasing its additional support to the pupils and their families.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they typically feel safe and any time they do not, or are anxious, they can talk to member of staff who will help.
- The school's regular checks indicate that pupils attending alternative provision feel safe.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying, including verbal and physical. They understand the risks of using social media. They say that bullying is uncommon. Occasionally they say that pupils use racial or sexually-related name calling and that staff intervene promptly when this happens.
- Pupils place trust in the school's effective approach of encouraging pupils to rectify matters if they have done something wrong, so called 'restorative approaches'.
- Pupils, including younger ones, can give instances of how to keep safe, for example when using the internet.
- Pupils at risk of falling behind are cared for well, including through the school working closely with other services.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good across the school at both the primary and secondary sites. Staff's high expectations of pupils' achievement, reflected in the challenging work that is set, help pupils to try their best.
- Issues raised at the previous inspection have been successfully tackled. Teachers' focus on providing opportunities for longer pieces of writing in a wide range of subjects is improving pupils' literacy skills. By ensuring there are relevant and motivating activities, mathematics learning has been enriched. Regular daily reading sessions are raising reading achievement.
- Close working between teachers and support staff contributes to the positive atmosphere observed and aids learning. In a GCSE English lesson, older pupils made good progress in writing formal letters. The teacher effectively deployed teaching assistants to question pupils and elicit from them their strategies to tackle the task.
- Teachers' enthusiasm and confidence in their good subject knowledge are conveyed to pupils, helping them to attempt difficult tasks. Key Stage 2 pupils achieved well, editing previous examples of their writing because the teacher encouraged them to look carefully at their earlier work and think hard about how they could do better.
- Relevant tasks related to pupils' everyday life help to interest and motivate pupils. In a mathematics lesson, Key Stage 3 pupils achieved well, selecting menu choices within various budgets because they recognised the relevance of the activity.
- Thorough marking of pupils' work guides pupils to reflect on what they can do to improve; sometimes, a useful dialogue develops, with pupils writing comments back.
- Innovative approaches to encourage and extend 'home learning' have led to increases in the number of pupils producing homework.
- Trusting relationships between pupils and staff and the skilful use of visual reminders of expected behaviour help pupils' good conduct. Just occasionally, low level disruption is not tackled promptly enough, slowing progress where this occurs.
- Sometimes, teachers are not precise enough when explaining all aspects of what pupils are learning. Consequently, pupils are not clear about that element of what they should be learning, slowing progress and preventing it from being outstanding.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is low because of their special educational needs, additional needs and missed schooling.
- In Key Stage 2, Disadvantaged pupils attained at similar levels to other pupils in the school in writing and mathematics and were about two terms ahead in reading.
- Key Stage 4 examination attainments last year were below when compared with pupils nationally for both disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school. In English, while no pupils gained GCSEs, they gained other qualifications such as equivalent 'Level 1 and Level 2' courses. In mathematics, three pupils gained GCSEs, with disadvantaged pupils being approximately a year behind non-eligible pupils in the school. Other pupils gained mathematics qualifications such as functional skills.
- Published data do not always appear to support good achievement. However, they do not take account, for example, of individual circumstances that prevented older pupils from attending examinations or, where they attended, performing at levels reflecting their capabilities. Good achievement is indicated by the school's records, pupils' work, progress in lessons, and the views of pupils, parents and others.
- Pupils entering Key Stage 2 generally make adequate progress for a term as they settle in, then progress begins to improve and over time it is good. Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 make good progress and achieve well.
- Because the school meets individual pupils' needs effectively, they achieve well in English and mathematics and other subjects including art and design and technology.
- The daily support of 'reading coaches' accelerates pupils' progress. Because the school effectively teaches them the sounds letters make, readers at the early stages of reading develop growing confidence and competence and enjoy reading. The school's well planned increase in opportunities for writing across all subjects has rapidly improved writing skills.
- A well-chosen range of academic and vocational qualifications engages pupils' interests. Last year, 100% of leavers went on to further education. The school does enter pupils early for repeat GCSEs. This is not detrimental, but is to try to help them to manage their performance under examination pressure.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress over time because of targeted one-to-one work. Those looked after by the local authority make good progress and the school works effectively with other services to provide support to the pupil and family.
- Comparatively more able pupils achieve well because teachers' good subject knowledge ensures challenging work. Pupils using the carefully chosen alternative provision make good progress because the school checks pupils' achievement, intervening where necessary.

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	135827
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	453514

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Reed
Headteacher	Tania Craig
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 February 2014
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