

# Maple Medical PRU

Cedar Road, Balby, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN4 9HT

**Inspection dates** 17–18 March 2015

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Good leadership and management operate at all levels in the service, including by the management committee. As a result, all parts of the service are improving quickly.
- The centre's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. The level of care, guidance and support provided is of an exceptionally high standard. Students who arrive in crisis quickly come to feel very safe here.
- Students' behaviour both in and out of lessons is excellent.
- Students' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is exceptional. Their self-confidence and self-esteem quickly blossoms. They show great care, tolerance and respect for one another. Most younger students successfully return to full-time education in mainstream schools.
- In each of the different areas of the service, all groups of students make consistently good progress in English, mathematics and other areas of study. At the end of Year 11, students move on successfully to further education and other destinations having gained useful qualifications.
- Teaching is consistently good and is improving quickly. Some teaching is already outstanding. Expectations of what students can achieve are high. A strong focus is placed on making sure students successfully fill any gaps in their skills and knowledge, especially in literacy and numeracy.
- Members of the management committee provide effective support and challenge to the service that is helping it improve.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders and managers do not always hold teachers fully to account for students' learning and progress.
- Teachers do not always carefully consider students' particular needs and abilities when setting them tasks and challenges.
- Some of the targets set for students' learning are sometimes too broad. As a result, students do not always fully understand precisely what is required of them and how to improve as quickly as possible.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed eight parts of lessons usually accompanied by the headteacher. They observed the homework club in operation. An inspector spent over half of a day looking at the hospital education. One inspector visited the alternative education provision to check that students are safe when placed here and that the courses of study are appropriate.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, two members of the management committee, an officer of the local authority, the Standards and Effectiveness Partner (StEP) and a practitioner from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Inspectors spoke with students and teachers during lessons, break times and lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed important documents, including the headteacher’s analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the service and plans for future development. They scrutinized students’ work and took into account records of their progress.
- Inspectors examined policies and procedures for safeguarding and inspectors looked closely at classroom displays.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 questionnaires completed by staff and the 13 responses to the online Parent View. They also spoke directly with eight parents and family members of students.

## Inspection team

Terry McKenzie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Halford

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Maple Medical Centre is a pupil referral unit that provides education for students who are unable to attend school because they are unwell or have related social or emotional needs. The main groups taught here are: those who are in hospital for long or short stays; some who are receiving medical treatment but are not in hospital; a few who are parents of statutory school age (young parents) and students who require mental health support and are referred by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- The hospital school can take students between the ages of five and 16, but in the main service students are always of secondary school age. Currently, the service deals with 46 students, which are all in Key Stages 3 and 4, but numbers can greatly fluctuate from day to day.
- At the time of the inspection, almost all students were of White British origin with around three-quarters being girls.
- Currently, around 40% of students are disadvantaged and supported through the pupil premium funding. The pupil premium is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and any looked after by the local authority. All students who attend here remain registered with their mainstream school. Except at the hospital, almost all are part-time and attend for one, two or three days each week. Consequently, the pupil premium funding remains with the mainstream schools where eligible students are registered. Recently, however, the management committee and local authority have secured some of the funding for use by the service when eligible students are here for a particularly long period.
- A very few students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) and all who attend here are regarded as students with special educational needs.
- Home tuition is provided to a small number of students who cannot attend school for medical reasons.
- The service makes use of one off-site provider of alternative education at Doncaster Community Arts ('DARTS') based in the centre of Doncaster.
- The powers of governance were devolved from the local authority completely to the management committee around two years ago.
- A small number of students are entered early for GCSE examinations.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding by:
  - ensuring teachers always carefully consider students' particular needs and abilities before setting them tasks and challenges
  - providing students with targets that identify the very small steps of learning they need to take so they can understand better what is required of them to improve as quickly as possible.
- Ensuring leaders and managers hold teachers firmly to account for students' learning and progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Good leadership and management by the headteacher and others in all areas of the service ensure that students are provided with very careful induction and excellent guidance. Students are kept very safe and are cared for extremely well. As a result, students demonstrate outstanding attitudes and develop extremely well here. Furthermore, students do well in their academic studies and gain qualifications as a result of effective teaching.
- Teaching is good and improving quickly. Some is already outstanding. This is because the senior leadership team throughout the service check teachers' work closely. Where it is possible to do so, they link teachers' pay and promotion to their performance. However, leaders and managers do not yet fully hold teachers to account in respect of students' attainment and progress. As a result, the targets set for students sometimes lack challenge. Senior leaders are supported well by a very few middle managers who have responsibilities, for example, relating to the collection of students' progress information.
- Senior leaders undertake responsibility for particular aspects of the service. This often requires them to work independently and sometimes remotely as in the hospital school. They make important decisions about the daily management of their area of responsibility. They study information about how well students are progressing in their studies and use this to plan with their teachers how they can help any students who fall behind. Leaders ensure that where students show signs of being capable of reaching higher standards of achievement, they are able to access courses that allow them to reach their potential.
- When pupil premium funding is secured, the headteacher allocates it for the benefit of eligible students. To date, it has been spent appropriately for a variety of purposes, including helping students take part in residential experiences and purchasing additional resources to support students' reading. Disadvantaged students achieve as well as others in the centre as a result.
- The safeguarding of students is a priority because of students' particular vulnerabilities. The arrangements for safeguarding are of a very high standard. Leaders and managers make every effort to maintain the safety and security of students, including when they attend alternative education provision.
- Leaders take every opportunity to help students keep themselves safe and avoid potential dangers. Key staff undertake a great deal of additional training in matters relating to the difficulties that students might face. Parents recognise and appreciate this work. The close relationships fostered with students' families are instrumental in encouraging students to improve their attendance.
- The different areas of the service provide very different courses of study and ways of studying. These are carefully thought out and play a major part in supporting students. For example, those students previously experiencing long periods of illness and that have gaps in their literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge are provided with effective support to fill them. Others are encouraged to make the most of their time here to gain qualifications that will enable them to move on to further education or training. Those at the hospital school are generally encouraged to maintain the studies they normally undertake at their mainstream schools so they do not fall behind.
- As a result of a carefully tailored range of courses, all students, including disadvantaged students, are fully included in learning. Leaders ensure that all students have equality of opportunity and none are discriminated against. Extremism is not tolerated and very good relationships are fostered between the different groups of students. A very cohesive learning community is evident despite the very different areas of operation.
- Students learn about British democracy and public institutions and services through lessons in personal, social, health education and citizenship and through good use of displays. They are prepared well for living in modern British society. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They make great gains personally and are extremely well prepared for moving onto the next stages of their lives or returning to mainstream school.
- Excellent advice and guidance is provided to students about their future opportunities and possible careers. This enables them to carefully choose from the pathways that are open to them.
- When students are capable, and if it is appropriate to do so, they attend alternative education provision. Very close links are maintained between the headteacher and the head of the alternative provision. As a result, the service is always certain that students are attending and behaving well. For students who cannot leave Maple, the alternative education provision comes to them. This ensures that all can take part who wish to. The therapeutic courses offered by the alternative education provision are of particular help to certain students and form a valuable part of their programme of study.
- The service has close links with a wide range of services that support students' welfare and education.

These include workers in the health services, such as doctors and nurses at the hospital, a wide range of therapeutic services and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Those workers from some of these services spoke with inspectors and stressed the importance of Maple in the local structure of children's services. 'I don't know what would happen to some of these young people if Maple wasn't here!' reflects a typical comment.

- The local authority provides good support. It has recently overseen the direct allocation of funding from the local authority. Authority officers greatly value the work here and are keen for it to become a beacon of outstanding practice in its specialist field of operation. The authority pays for an improvement partner (StEP) to work with the service. With the help of this partner, the headteacher and management committee have improved teaching and students' achievements and established systems capable of accurately evaluating the work of the service. As a result, the headteacher has drawn up good plans for development based on these findings.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Since the powers of governance were devolved from the local authority, management committee members have gained confidence in their own ability to govern. The committee is now effective and improving. Members challenge the headteacher through finding out how well students achieve set against national expectations
- Members have worked with the local authority to stabilise funding. They have recently replaced the human resources service in order to gain better value for money. They ensure that finances are appropriately managed and staff morale is maintained at a high level. Members are instrumental in helping the service gain access to the pupil premium funding allocated to mainstream schools for disadvantaged students. They look closely at how these funds are used to help the students catch up with their peers.
- Members are involved in the appointment of staff. They ensure the school, including the quality of teaching, improves through the management of teachers' performance. However, members are yet to ensure that leaders set targets for teachers that hold them firmly to account in respect of students' attainments and progress. Members set targets for the headteacher that are designed to move the service forward.
- The management committee ensure all the statutory requirements for safeguarding are met and arrangements to keep students safe are effective.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. They demonstrate excellent attitudes in their classes and on the hospital ward. They tackle tasks willingly, including by completing homework. Some attend extra lessons and one-to-one support, by arriving early in the morning or by staying later in the afternoon.
- The excellent behaviour demonstrated in lessons contributes to students' good learning. Their good concentration is linked to the interesting activities provided.
- Students gain greatly from the successes they have in class. Parents report their children have blossomed in self-confidence and self-esteem since starting here. Parents were keen to tell inspectors how their families have also benefited from the changes in behaviour arising from their children's attendance at Maple. Students report the pleasure felt in, for example, being able to successfully complete a particular calculation in mathematics, and the very positive impact this has on self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Outside classrooms, including at off-site alternative provision, students' behaviour is exemplary. Students from all parts of the service support each other superbly well. They recognise and understand each other's difficulties. Students take part in the school council to help make things better for each other.
- Almost all students attend very regularly. Any absences are generally associated with students' medical difficulties. The rate of unauthorised absence is very low.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Those responsible for safeguarding maintain close links with the local authority over child protection matters. The policies for safeguarding of students are robust and reviewed regularly by the management committee. Maple's procedures for safeguarding are checked frequently by a member of the management committee who has responsibility for safeguarding. This person visits regularly, talks with the headteacher and checks records.
- Staff maintain high standards of health and safety and are provided with appropriate training in

safeguarding, first aid and health and safety. They also receive instruction in how to assist students who have mobility and other physical difficulties. Records are maintained well. Staff are vigilant about the health and safety of students when attending alternative education.

- Many students have previously experienced some form of harassment because of their difficulties and disabilities. Staff help students work together without acrimony. Bullying and racial intolerance here is almost unknown.
- Parents and students are keen to express their gratitude to staff for helping students feel very safe. Some parental comments made by parents are very moving; including statements to the effect that for the first time their child feels free from bullying and harassment.
- The nursery, located close to classrooms, is specifically for the use of the young parents. It helps ensure young mothers here are kept safe and that they receive appropriate help, support and advice about the health and welfare and entitlements for themselves and their babies.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching is consistently good in all areas of the service, including the main part, the hospital school and in home tuition.
- Initiatives such as, placing increased attention on developing students' literacy skills and improvements in the way that teachers question their students in class, are helping to improve the quality of teaching even further. Some teaching is already outstanding.
- Teachers have high expectations of students and encourage them to achieve, behave and attend. Staff know their students extremely well and enable them to feel very safe and secure so they are confident to take part in lessons.
- Young mothers who need to attend to their babies in the nursery and some students with mental health difficulties prefer to attend very early before the main groups arrive. Teachers make themselves available to students whenever necessary to meet their particular needs. Some staff work with students outside normal school time, including during weekends. As a result, students place great trust in them. The strong relationships that result are instrumental in encouraging students to re-engage with education. Students and their parents report that they very much appreciate the additional efforts of staff.
- In Key Stage 3, teachers pay particular attention to any gaps in students' literacy and numeracy skills. Consequently, students catch up quickly and make good progress in all areas. For older students, the good attention to developing their literacy skills is instrumental in enabling them to take part in a wide range of GCSE courses.
- The good gains made by students in English and mathematics occurs because specialist teachers are employed in these areas. Teachers provide good support for all in Key Stage 4 who are undertaking courses leading to examinations. The extra challenges faced by staff resulting from very small numbers of students undertaking many different courses, such as GCSE and BTEC in science is managed well.
- The wide range of resources available enables teachers to generally plan interesting lessons that motivate students to learn. The headteacher is already working with teachers to ensure they make even better use of resources available. However, on occasions, the different needs and abilities of students are not taken into full account before setting tasks and challenges.
- Students, particularly those that take very small steps in learning, are not always fully clear of what is expected of them. Targets for learning are sometimes too broad to enable students to know precisely what is required of them.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- All groups of students in all parts of the service achieve well, including in reading, writing and mathematics. Most students make at least the expected rate of progress and the majority do better than this.
- Almost all students arrive with standards of attainment that are well below those of their peers in mainstream schools. This is often because they have experienced long periods of illness that has disrupted their education. Many have significant gaps in their learning and some have previously been absent from school for long periods.
- By the time students return to mainstream school or move on from Year 11, students' standards have

improved at a good rate from their starting points, but remain below those expected for their age. Almost all students begin to fill in the gaps in their learning and catch up with others in mainstream schools.

- Some Key Stage 3 students demonstrate standards in line with those expected in mainstream. This is possible because of the significant gains students make in their reading skills and writing.
- A very few students catch up slowly and do not meet their targets for learning. This is often because they require additional time to overcome their medical conditions before they can learn efficiently.
- A few students in Year 11 gain GCSE qualifications of the standard expected nationally in English, mathematics and other subjects. A very small minority of students are sometimes entered early for GCSE in a wide range of subjects, usually in cooperation with their mainstream school and this prepares them well for their continued studies.
- Students make good progress in their personal development. Following placement here, students quickly feel very safe and secure. They successfully take part in lessons and participate in education. As a result, their self-esteem grows and they become more confident. Inspectors witnessed an example of this in an English lesson. Students shared their thoughts about different texts they were studying. The headteacher reported this activity would have been impossible for them until very recently because they would have lacked the confidence to do so.
- Leaders and managers examine information collected about students' progress in different subjects carefully. They very quickly spot if any are not making enough progress and offer additional help to make sure they do not fall behind. School data and inspection evidence show that all groups of students in all parts of the service, including those who are disadvantaged, boys and girls, disabled students and those who are the least able, make good progress in English and mathematics.
- The most able students achieve well and return quickly to mainstream if their medical conditions allow. Some of the most able students in Year 11 achieve passes at GCSE that are similar to those expected in mainstream schools with a very few gaining five A\* to C, including in English and mathematics.
- In the hospital school and for some in the main part, the primary purpose of the service is to help students maintain the momentum of their education while receiving medical treatment. The service successfully maintains close liaison with the mainstream schools that students are registered with to ensure they are provided with work that is appropriate to the courses they are studying. As a result, these students achieve well.
- The few students who attend alternative education provision gain greatly from the therapeutic work that they do. This helps them to be more effective in their academic lessons.
- All parents that spoke with inspectors praised the headteacher and staff for their efforts in successfully encouraging their children to get back into regular education. 'Previously, it was impossible to believe that my child would ever achieve anything at school, and has already gained GCSEs and is studying for more! This is all down to the excellent work of the staff!' reflects a typical parental comment.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135502
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	449508

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	46
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The management committee
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Gallafent
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kath Formby
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 September 2011
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