

Hendon Brook School

Hendon Brook, Townhouse Road, Nelson, Lancashire, BB9 8BP

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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

- Leadership and management, including governance, require improvement. The overall effectiveness of the unit has declined since the last inspection and requires improvement.
- The achievement of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics requires improvement. Pupils do not make good progress from their starting points.
- Teaching requires improvement because pupils do not do as well as they should, regardless of ability. Too frequently, teachers do not take full account of the individual needs, abilities or starting points of pupils.
- Teachers do not have access to recent accurate assessments of what pupils can do. Therefore, they are unable to challenge pupils individually with well-matched small steps of learning.
- Systems to record and report the attainment and progress of pupils are insufficiently robust. Consequently, it is difficult for leaders and managers to demonstrate convincingly the progress that pupils make.
- Governance through the management committee does not hold the senior leadership team fully to account in respect of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. As a result the quality of teaching and the level of achievement have declined since the last inspection.

The school has the following strengths

- Aspects of leadership and management by the present headteacher are good, including those related to the management of pupils' behaviour.
- The well-managed intervention service offered to local primary schools is highly regarded by the local authority.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning and gain significantly in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural attributes. Staff keep pupils safe and secure.
- Many pupils return successfully to mainstream schools. Almost all those supported by the intervention service successfully avoid permanent exclusion from their mainstream schools.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of seven lessons and was accompanied on four of these by the headteacher. He attended part of a whole school assembly and a meeting of the school council.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the manager of the intervention service, two members of the management committee and two officers of the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed documents including the headteacher's analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the unit and plans for future development. He scrutinised pupils' work and took account of the records of their progress.
- The inspector examined policies and procedures for safeguarding, and the arrangements for health and safety.
- The inspector took account of the 14 questionnaires completed by staff and the unit's own surveys of parents' views. He met with two parents to gain their views of the unit. There were insufficient responses to the online government survey, Parent View, for the inspector to review.

Inspection team

Terry McKenzie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hendon Brook is a pupil referral unit that provides education for primary age pupils. At the time of the inspection, more than half had been permanently excluded from their mainstream school. Others who come here are at risk of exclusion or require additional temporary support. The service also offers outreach to pupils in more than 160 local primary schools and this is known as the intervention service.
- The number of pupils fluctuates from day to day but at the time of the inspection there were 29 on the school roll including four pupils in Key Stage 1. There is no early years provision.
- Pupils can be placed here at any age or stage of their primary education. Some stay for only a very short period of time while others continue to the end of Key Stage 2. Almost all pupils are boys. Many are dual registered with a mainstream school. The very large majority are of White British heritage. A few are looked after by the local authority.
- A small number of pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. All who attend here are regarded as pupils with special educational needs.
- Currently, approximately 10% of pupils are known to be disadvantaged and eligible for support through the pupil premium funding. However, the pupil premium funding is not always allocated to the unit because it has already been used by the mainstream schools from which the pupils come. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority. Recently, however, the management committee and local authority have secured some of the pupil premium for use by the unit, particularly in respect of those who are permanently excluded from mainstream school and for any looked after by the local authority.
- Similarly, the additional funding that is usually available for primary sport is not allocated to Hendon Brook. However, last year the unit received a very small portion of the funding.
- There are too few pupils who are disadvantaged or most able to report separately on their achievement.
- The powers of governance were devolved from the local authority completely to the management committee about a year ago. The headteacher was appointed 18 months ago following a period of temporary leadership and management in the school and three changes in the headship.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To ensure that leadership and management, teaching and achievement all become consistently good, leaders and managers, including the management committee, must develop and implement robust and effective systems that:
 - provide them with reliable information about how well each pupil learns and makes progress
 - enable them to quickly and accurately evaluate the progress made by pupils from their starting points at the unit
 - enable them to take steps, at the earliest opportunity, to support any pupils who appear to be falling behind or who are not catching up quickly enough
 - encourage teachers to take account of the individual needs and standards of pupils when setting small-step targets for learning
 - ensure that teachers acknowledge pupils' achievements more regularly and record them as quickly as possible.

An external review of governance 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

- The overall effectiveness of the unit has declined since the last inspection. Leadership and management therefore require improvement to bring the performance of the unit back to its previous high quality. Following on from an extended period of changes in leadership, the staffing is now more stable and leaders are developing consistent practice among staff.
- The information about pupils' learning and progress is held and published in a variety of contradictory ways. These do not enable staff to quickly and easily understand if pupils are on track to meet their targets, or are falling behind or failing to catch up. It is not possible from these data for leaders and staff to be certain as to what each pupil has achieved. This makes it more difficult to fill the gaps in their learning.
- There are long intervals between the recording of pupils' attainment and progress. Consequently, teachers do not always have reliable and up-to-date information to use when setting targets for learning. As a result pupils sometimes make less progress than they should in class.
- Following the decline in standards of behaviour after the last inspection, the headteacher has re-established new and effective systems to manage the behaviour of pupils. These have resulted in the unit being a safer place for all because there are fewer serious incidents. Pupils are kept safe here and are well cared for. As a result they mainly demonstrate good attitudes to their work. Many develop well enough to return to mainstream education or move on to special schools. The headteacher ensures that policies and procedures for child protection are robust and requirements for safeguarding are met.
- When pupil premium funds are made available to the unit they are used very specifically for the benefit of those for whom the funding is intended. New and better resources have been made available for eligible pupils to enhance their learning in literacy and to provide additional adult support for those who require it. It is not possible to establish the effectiveness of the funding on pupils' performance because the school's current information lacks this level of detail.
- The unit received a small amount of money last year in respect of the primary sports funding and this has been put to good use to enhance the outdoor environment of the school. This enables a wider variety of games and activities to take place. It has also been used to purchase the services of a dance instructor. The use of dance has enhanced the self-esteem of some pupils and encouraged a few reluctant attendees to come more regularly to school.
- Teaching requires improvement but is becoming better under the management of the headteacher who checks the work of teachers regularly. The management committee links teachers' pay and promotion to their performance.
- There are very few middle managers but senior leaders are supported effectively by them, for example, as seen through the operation of the intervention service.
- The effective courses of study within the curriculum help pupils to fill in the gaps in their literacy and numeracy. Pupils have opportunities to continue with all of the other main subjects studied in mainstream schools. The gains made by pupils in these areas are instrumental in helping most return to mainstream schools or move on to special schools.
- Pupils learn about the public institutions and services of England through their lessons in personal, social, health education and citizenship. British values of democracy and fairness are promoted through many aspects of school life such as in the school council. The council is made up of pupils who represent their classes very well and debate issues in a sensible and organised manner.
- All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are fully included in learning. None are discriminated against and there is equality of opportunity for all. The management committee makes it clear that extremism will not be tolerated; leaders and managers promote good relationships with pupils.
- The intervention service enables the unit to establish good partnerships with other local primary schools. For example, staff from the unit provide training for mainstream school teachers in how to manage challenging behaviour.
- The local authority provided effective support throughout a period of difficulty and change for the unit. The officers of the authority recognise the value of the work done here in supporting pupils in crisis and helping them return to mainstream education or to gain a place in a special school if appropriate.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The management committee is not effective enough because members do not challenge the senior leadership team sufficiently to find out how well pupils are doing against national expectations. They have not fully understood the information about pupils' achievements as presented to them.
 - Since governance was devolved from the local authority last year, however, the committee has gained

confidence in its ability to govern. Members have successfully stabilised the funding for the unit through working with the local authority and managing the budget effectively. They have supported the headteacher in negotiations about the primary sports funding and the pupil premium, allocated in the first instance to mainstream schools for disadvantaged pupils. They have ensured these additional funds have been allocated wisely and for the benefit of pupils for whom they are intended.

- Members play their part in the appointment of staff and have supported the management of teachers' work by the headteacher, ensuring that promotions and pay awards link closely to performance. Members are gaining in their ability to understand the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. They have set targets for the headteacher designed to move the service forward.
- The management committee ensures that all of the statutory requirements for safeguarding are met and arrangements to keep pupils safe are effective.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Mainly, pupils show good attitudes to their work in class and behave well around the unit. At break and lunch times they get on well together. Senior leaders and all other staff expect pupils to behave well but act quickly and appropriately if they do not.
- Most pupils arrive here in a state of crisis and some take a while to come to terms with the unit and the expectations of staff about their behaviour. Nevertheless, following a decline in standards of behaviour the headteacher has successfully introduced new methods of behaviour management. Through training, she has helped staff understand how to de-escalate difficult situations. Staff report that the unit is now a safer place for all.
- The number of serious incidents and restraints and exclusions has reduced significantly since the appointment of the headteacher. Initiatives are underway to help staff provide lessons that will encourage pupils to take part and learn rather than demonstrate poor behaviour.
- On occasions, pupils remove themselves from lessons because they cannot cope. This reduces the risk of any disruption to the learning of other pupils in the class. Sometimes, however, pupils do not take a full part in lessons because the activities are not as well matched to their needs and abilities as they should be.
- School council members develop and demonstrate good social interactions with each other. Their classmates are included in decision-making because members discuss with them the issues to be taken back to the forum of the school council. As a result even the youngest and newest pupils have opportunities to contribute to important decision-making in the school. They learn about voting and accepting the views of others even if they do not agree with them. This helps pupils gain well in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. This is confirmed by pupils, staff and parents. Robust safeguarding procedures ensure close links are maintained with the local authority over child-protection matters. The management committee regularly reviews the policies and procedures associated with safeguarding.
- The arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of staff and pupils meet expectations. Appropriate training has been provided for staff in safeguarding, first aid and health and safety. Records relating to serious incidents and health and safety matters are maintained appropriately.
- Personal, social and health education courses provide pupils with information about how to keep themselves safe including when online or using computers. Pupils learn about the effects of bullying and harassment. They report that these are rare events in the unit. Racial intolerance is almost unknown here.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement as pupils do not achieve well. However, the evidence from school records and from the inspection is that the teaching is getting better and the gaps in pupils' learning are lessening due to the close attention from leaders to improving the quality of teaching.
- The main purpose of lessons here is to ensure that pupils make gains in literacy and numeracy skills. As a result most lessons focus on reading, writing and number work. Pupils made good use of their literacy and communication skills, for example, when teachers encouraged them to debate with each other and clarify their thinking through discussions about different religions. Pupils had opportunities to practise and extend

their speaking and listening skills.

- The emphasis on reading and writing ensures pupils have the basic skills they will need when returning to mainstream education. Through filling in the gaps they have in their knowledge of mathematics, pupils are better equipped to use numbers in everyday life, for example in telling the time and using money.
- Some teaching demonstrates high expectations of pupils and encourages them to achieve well. All staff, through knowing the pupils very well as individuals and fostering good relationships with them, ensure pupils feel safe and secure here. This encourages them to attend well and usually take part in lessons.
- The strong relationships promoted by the adults encourage pupils to behave well in class and around the school. Staff act as positive role models so that pupils get on well together and respect each other. Parents report they very much appreciate the efforts of the staff in helping their children to overcome their difficulties. They say that it is through the work of staff that their children have opportunities to return to mainstream schools or move on successfully to special schools.
- The unit is resourced well. The apparatus and equipment are used effectively to provide activities that motivate pupils to learn. However, the teaching does not always take sufficient account of pupils' different learning difficulties and the standards at which they work. The tasks provided to pupils are generally not carefully matched to take full account of their individual needs. This results in some pupils finding tasks too easy while others struggle to complete them.
- Pupils have a wide range of special educational needs and they succeed best when they work towards small steps in their learning. However, the targets for learning provided to pupils by staff are usually too broad for teachers and pupils to measure success and set the next steps of learning.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Almost all pupils arrive with standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics well below those of pupils of their age in mainstream schools. This is because of the significant disruptions they have previously experienced to their education. Many have previously been absent from school for long periods. The very large majority of pupils arrive with little confidence in their ability to learn. Their self-esteem is low. Over time, most do not make progress from their starting points in accordance with national expectations. Consequently, even though most learn and generally make the progress expected of them day by day, the achievement of pupils over time requires improvement.
- Occasionally, the pace of pupils' learning falls away when teachers do not take full account of their individual learning difficulties and their educational standards. Sometimes, this results in pupils refusing to take a full part in the lesson so they do not further their knowledge, understanding and skills as well as they could.
- Teachers generally identify the gaps in pupils' learning, particularly in English and mathematics, and help them begin to catch up. The evidence from observations of English and mathematics lessons, and from the scrutiny of pupils' work, is that pupils generally fill gaps in their learning and make expected progress, although not better than expected progress, in their literacy and numeracy.
- Parents who spoke with the inspector confirmed their children have improved their writing here. Some of the younger pupils are making good progress in their writing.
- In all parts of the unit, pupils are now doing well in developing their reading skills. The confidence they gain in reading was demonstrated when almost every member of the school took part in an assembly about different faiths. For each pupil, this also demonstrates a significant gain in their personal development and is a remarkable achievement for the unit.
- The intervention team is effective in helping pupils in mainstream schools who are in danger of being excluded to remain in education at their school. Their work prevents much of the disruption that would otherwise occur to pupils' education if they were excluded. Occasionally, the intervention team works with pupils who are based in the unit. Here, they are able to show, through the records they keep, that pupils take part in lessons more often and behave better as a result of this support.
- Throughout the inspection, most pupils participated in learning and completed the tasks set. This includes boys and girls, and any pupils with a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan.
- There are no apparent differences between the performance of permanently excluded pupils and those who are placed at the unit on a temporary basis.

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	119110
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	448142

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	29
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Harrison
Headteacher	Nicola Fielding
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2010
Telephone number	01282 693432
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