

# Harbour

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

## Inspection dates

27–28 September 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders and managers have improved Harbour since the previous inspection and subsequent monitoring visit. In particular, the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are both good.
- The head of school is ambitious for all pupils to benefit from high-quality education. She is ably supported by the executive headteacher, managers and staff.
- Pupils' progress is good because teachers make sure that the activities they are given are neither too easy nor too hard.
- Good use of subject specialists enables pupils to learn well in subjects such as music.
- Skilled behaviour support assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- The staff very effectively manage pupils' social and emotional needs so that pupils learn to understand their feelings, and how to manage them successfully.
- The staff's strong emphasis on pupils' well-being and mental health ensures that pupils feel happy and well cared for.
- Pupils' behaviour is good overall. Many present challenging behaviour when they arrive. Staff manage this well so pupils quickly improve.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff provide activities that encourage pupils to work and play well together. These also contribute to their preparation for their next school.
- The curriculum is enriched by many interesting activities that enthuse pupils.
- Pupils are very well prepared for their next school and the majority return to mainstream school successfully.
- The relationship with parents is very positive. Parents say the school staff always 'go the extra mile' for their children.

## Full report

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

- Eradicate the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
  - teachers' knowledge and understanding of how to teach reading skills are secure
  - expectations of pupils' presentation and pride in their work are high.
- Work with feeder mainstream schools to ensure that a full and accurate picture of each pupil is obtained prior to arrival so that:
  - pupils make a smooth transfer into the school
  - staff have the information they need to enable new pupils to start making good progress as soon as they arrive.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The head of school is single-minded in her determination for pupils to receive high-quality education. The executive headteacher, managers and staff share her determination to see the school build further on the improvements made since the previous inspection.
- School leaders and staff successfully promote a culture which encourages all pupils to do their best and behave well. The school's values are prominent around the school and in the pupils' day-books. Staff succeed in providing a climate in which pupils thrive and strive to improve.
- School leaders' accurate understanding of what the school needs to improve means that they make the right choices for priorities. For example, the changes in intake reported at the previous inspection led to a new behaviour policy to better meet the needs of these pupils.
- School leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching. This information is used well to plan training. Particularly effective are links with other schools. For example, English teaching and learning benefits from close links with an outstanding school.
- Staff's skills to manage safely the growing number of older pupils, and pupils with more significant needs, have improved since the last monitoring visit.
- Subject leaders effectively manage their subjects. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The mathematics leader, for example, has trained staff so that the subject is well taught and pupils do well. She has implemented a curriculum that focuses closely on core skills so pupils are better prepared for their next school.
- Staff morale is high. Four in five of those responding to the online survey agree that school leaders are considerate of their well-being. Pupils, especially when they first arrive, can be very challenging. Staff meet with the head of school at the end of every day to share successes and difficulties, and consider any potential solutions. As a result, they go home knowing that something will be done to improve the situation for pupils and staff.
- Leaders' deployment of the team of able, well-trained behaviour support assistants is effective. The team works directly with pupils and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and academic progress.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. All pupils receive extra help matched closely to their needs.
- The curriculum is broad – an improvement since the previous inspection. Activities, such as cookery, interest and engage pupils.
- The school's new assessment system provides useful information about pupils' progress during their time at Harbour.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Moral and social development is particularly strong. Pupils are well prepared for their next school.
- Pupils understand British values well. Those spoken to recognised the need for rules and laws in a community, and why it is important everyone obeys them. Pupils are given good opportunities to reflect on themes such as right and wrong, and how these

themes can link to feelings and actions.

- Leaders' effective use of pupil premium funding promotes the academic and personal development of disadvantaged pupils. This is an important improvement since the previous inspection.
- Effective use of the primary school sports funding is beneficial to pupils. Pupils enjoy a wide range of opportunities, including golf. Pupils clearly understand the importance of exercise to healthy living. The specialist teacher builds their skills and techniques well. Sport is also used effectively to teach and practise essential life skills such as the importance of playing as part of a team, the understanding you cannot always win the game.
- Links with other partnership schools are strong. Expertise is shared. For example, staff receive training from the special educational needs coordinator of a partner school.
- Links with other schools are generally good. When pupils return to mainstream schools, those schools speak highly of the care and attention to detail that ensures pupils' transition to them is smooth. However, pupils' transfer to Harbour is often less well prepared.
- The local authority plays an important role in supporting and checking the work of the school. The local authority and the school communicate and work together effectively to meet local needs – an improvement since the last monitoring visit.
- Links with parents are very strong. Parents say they receive daily communication about their children: 'The school lets you know where they are struggling and what they are doing well, it is important to know the good stuff, too.' Parents are particularly positive about the lasting effect the school has on their children when they move on to their next school, and how they behave out of school. One parent said, 'My home life since he has been here has been completely different, he is much happier and less anxious.'

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance is effective.
- Managers are proactive. They have overcome recruitment difficulties and gained a wider range of expertise to draw on through their reorganisation.
- Each individual manager's skills are used effectively. For example, an educational consultant with expertise in behaviour management has supported the school to develop the behaviour policy and procedures.
- Managers use the school's information about pupils' progress successfully to gain an independent view of how well pupils are learning.
- Managers analyse the information they are given. They regularly question school leaders about the impact of spending decisions on outcomes.
- All decisions taken about spending are firmly based on improving outcomes for pupils. Managers check that additional funding, such as the pupil premium, is used effectively. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
- Managers oversee the performance of staff, including the executive headteacher, rigorously.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders and managers ensure that safeguarding is a priority, and that everyone plays their part in keeping pupils safe.
- Staff are confident in raising any concerns with the designated lead for safeguarding, and effective systems are in place for recording and noting them carefully.
- All staff receive regular training in aspects of safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Staff understanding is checked through a questionnaire. This training equips staff with the up-to-date knowledge they need to detect pupils who are potentially vulnerable so that action to intervene can be taken quickly.
- Relationships with parents are very strong. Parents see the head of school as very approachable and accessible. This gives parents confidence to share information with the school or raise concerns.
- Relationships with outside agencies are very strong. The head of school ensures that action is taken swiftly to address any concerns and seeks early help to support vulnerable families. This is particularly important given that outside agencies are involved with about two in every five pupils.
- Documentation is comprehensive and detailed. Checks on the suitability of staff, managers, regular volunteers and contractors are thorough.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. School leaders and staff have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified then.
- Teamwork is a strong feature. Staff share ideas and expertise to improve. Three quarters of those responding to the staff survey agree that school leaders trust them to be innovative in ways that are right for pupils.
- In their every action, staff demonstrate the attitudes and behaviour they expect from their pupils. Pupils generally follow their example.
- Staff fully understand the range of factors that can inhibit these pupils' learning. Staff work very hard to overcome pupils' difficulties; for example, teaching pupils how to recognise when they are becoming frustrated, and methods to cope.
- Staff establish safe and secure classrooms where mutual respect is clearly evident. There are positive relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff. These encourage pupils to try harder, as they know they will be praised for their efforts.
- During lessons, staff recognise when pupils do not understand, and quickly reshape their teaching to accommodate pupils' needs.
- Typically, pupils arrive having had some time out of their previous school. Staff are particularly skilled at recognising gaps in pupils' learning and altering their planning to go over the missing work.
- Speaking and listening skills develop well. Staff regularly engage pupils in conversation or discussion. Staff model how to speak in full sentences, and encourage pupils to do likewise. Pupils learn to express themselves clearly.
- Mathematics is taught well. Staff use equipment effectively, for example giving pupils a

visual picture of how one fraction compares with another. All staff use a similar approach, focusing particularly on basic skills. Pupils see the relevance of the skills they learn and try hard.

- Writing is taught well, an improvement since the previous inspection. Staff benefit from guidance and support from a local outstanding school. As a result, what is taught, and how it is taught, is much improved since the previous inspection.
- Reading is generally taught well. However, while the majority of staff have good knowledge and understanding of how to develop pupils' reading skills, some are less secure. For example, a few teachers and behaviour support assistants struggle to teach phonics, and skills such as inference.
- Feedback to pupils has improved since the previous inspection. The school's marking policy is followed consistently.
- Homework is used effectively. Most activities practise basic skills such as spelling. A few encourage pupils to research for upcoming work in school.
- Most, but not all, teachers and behaviour support assistants expect pupils to take pride in their work and present it neatly. Where they do, pupils generally respond positively and try their best.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Parents spoken to during the inspection feel that their children are very happy at school. One parent said: 'My son came here hating school; he would never go. Being here are the best days he has ever had in school.'
- Key to the school's success is the promotion of pupils' personal development. The staff skilfully teach pupils to understand their own emotions, and suggest helpful strategies to handle them. One pupil said, 'I don't know what would have happened to me if Harbour hadn't helped me.' Hearing a pupil outside shouting, another pupil told an inspector, 'He's new; he'll learn; you'll see.'
- Pupils enjoy helping one another and working together. Staff are effective in teaching them to listen to each other, and to share ideas.
- Pupils' understanding of themselves as learners is good. One pupil explained how he had become more accurate in his mathematics. Another pupil said, 'I have learned to try, to give everything a go; sometimes I surprise myself!'
- The day begins with pupils coming together for breakfast. This helps build a sense of community and belonging. Pupils learn social skills because staff model how to live and work with others. In assembly, pupils are rewarded for following the school's values.
- Pupils say they like being with the same staff for most of their lessons because they build a close and positive working relationship. They say they feel comfortable, know the routines and what to expect.
- Activities are carefully planned to teach pupils skills they need to return successfully to mainstream school. Effective use is made of music to teach pupils how to participate as part of a group.
- Pupils' thorough understanding of how to stay safe is promoted very effectively through many relevant activities. Pupils receive regular reminders, such as how to use

the internet and social media safely and responsibly.

- School leaders and staff work very closely with a range of outside agencies to ensure pupils' needs are met, and to prevent pupils from the risk of harm out of school.
- Attendance is good in comparison to similar schools. Since the previous inspection, the head of school has introduced more robust and rigorous procedures. These are effective, and unauthorised absence rates, particularly, have fallen.
- Transition to other schools is effective. The school ensures everything is done to set the pupils up to succeed. One pupil said, 'I'm looking forward to going back to my school, I've learned lots of coping strategies here and I know I'll manage.' Pupils also benefit from the strong relationships the school has with the receiving schools.
- Transition from other schools is less effective. Pupils often arrive without all the information the school needs. As a result, the first few days can be more difficult for staff and pupils, and the pupils' progress can stall because staff do not have the attainment and progress information they need.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good overall. The number of exclusions has fallen significantly over the past year. Three quarters of staff responding to the online survey agree that the school's culture encourages calm and orderly conduct.
- Pupils, particularly when they first arrive, can present challenging behaviour. The school's approach is used consistently by all staff. As a result, pupils quickly settle.
- Staff praise and reward pupils doing the right thing. Pupils understand the system, and are motivated by the rewards, including bowling and roller-skating. Parents, too, receive a copy of the guidelines.
- Rewards are linked to the school's values. The values are known and understood by every pupil. One pupil said, 'I try to follow them to help myself, to listen and learn particularly.'
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare. They say that, even when a pupil gets angry, they feel safe in school and know staff will look after them. They say that there are adults in school they feel confident talking to if they are ever worried. Parents spoken to said that any issues are quickly resolved. One said: 'If there is an issue, they deal with it straight away. This is a big plus. It is much better for children to sort it out straight away.'
- Parents spoken to during the inspection believe the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved. One parent said, 'My eldest struggled; they taught him practical things, like how to wait your turn, how to respect one another.' Another said: 'My son had major anger issues. They were very patient with him, gave him time and space to calm down. Then his teacher talked through with him what he did, the consequences of that, and the better choices he could have made.'
- At the end of every day, staff meet and discuss each individual pupil's day. This practice has a significant impact on pupils' development. For example, staff 'put their heads together' to find new ways to help pupils struggling to control their behaviour. As a result, on following days, pupils receive a consistent approach from all staff.
- Pupils' understanding of right from wrong is clear. The school's approach aims to teach them self-discipline, and is largely effective.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection. The strong focus on improving the quality of teaching has largely been effective.
- Pupils typically enter the school with standards below, or well below, those typical for their age. In addition, many have gaps in their learning, often caused by periods of disruption in their learning.
- The school's checks on progress, and the quality of work in pupils' books, show that the vast majority of pupils now make good or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, progress often stalls when pupils first join the school because staff do not have the information they need. As soon as a pupil settles, checks are done and appropriate tasks provided. Even so, this delay disrupts learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils make progress similar to that of their peers. If they struggle, they receive extra help tailored to their needs. The very small proportion of most-able disadvantaged pupils are given harder work and do well.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. The needs of these pupils are largely social, emotional and/or behavioural. School staff very effectively enable these pupils to settle quickly and make the academic progress of which they are capable.
- The excellent care and guidance given to vulnerable pupils and children looked after enables them to settle and make good progress.
- The very few most able pupils also make good progress. These pupils are encouraged to tackle harder work that challenges them sufficiently.
- The curriculum is much improved since the previous inspection and gives pupils many opportunities to pursue their interests and curiosity, and deepen their understanding.
- Pupils do well in subjects such as music, physical education and science. In music, for example, pupils enjoy performing. Many discover an aptitude or skill to play, perform and even compose. This builds their self-confidence and self-esteem, which they then take into their other learning.
- Pupils transferring to other schools generally succeed. School information shows that about three quarters are still at their next schools after two terms.



## School details

Unique reference number	134762
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10019615

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	7 to 14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	
Headteacher	Nicola Meakin (Head of School)
Telephone number	01502 539755
Website	<a href="http://www.harbourpru.suffolk.sch.uk">www.harbourpru.suffolk.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@harbourpru.suffolk.sch.uk">admin@harbourpru.suffolk.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	13–14 November 2014

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Harbour is a pupil referral unit serving pupils in north Suffolk who are at risk of being permanently excluded, or have been permanently excluded, from mainstream school.
- The school's aim is to prepare pupils for a successful transition to their next school. The majority return to mainstream schools. Most pupils are registered both at Harbour and at their mainstream school.
- Most pupils, who are nearly all boys, are White British.
- All pupils have behavioural, emotional and/or social difficulties. Seven pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- In July 2016, the management committees of the partnership schools amalgamated.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited all classrooms. Some observations were conducted jointly with the head of school or the executive headteacher. In addition, the inspectors observed pupils learning in small groups.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read.
- The inspectors observed pupils in other activities and as pupils moved around the school.
- Meetings were held with the head of school, executive headteacher, other leaders, staff and managers. Meetings were also held with a representative of the local authority and staff from outside agencies. A representative of a partner school was spoken to by telephone.
- The inspectors met with pupils to discuss their experiences at school.
- The views of two parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account. The inspectors also held informal discussions with parents. The inspectors considered the views of 20 members of staff who responded to their online surveys.
- The inspectors looked at a range of school documents and information. These included the school development plan, checks on the quality of teaching, curriculum plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body, and pupils' behaviour and attendance records. The inspectors also looked at arrangements for safeguarding and records of safeguarding procedures.

## Inspection team

Robert Greatrex, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Fletcher	Ofsted Inspector

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