

# Hospital and Home Education PRU

Thorneywood Education Base, Off the Wells Road, St Anns, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG3 3AL

## Inspection dates

6–7 December 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Outstanding</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable to secure consistently good outcomes for all pupils.
- Not all teachers give pupils the high-quality feedback they need. As a result pupils do not always know how to correct their mistakes or improve their work.
- Leaders and managers do not currently have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is because the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment is not sufficiently rigorous.
- Although the management committee has identified the need to strengthen its skills and expertise, the impact of its work to hold leaders to account is not yet evident.
- The needs of the most able pupils are not always fully recognised by teaching staff. As a result, those who are with the school for longer periods of time do not make as much progress as they could.
- Teachers do not always plan learning in sufficient depth and detail. Next steps in learning are not consistently identified at the end of lessons and carried through at the next teaching session.
- The roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders are not clear enough and thus they are not held fully to account for performance in their areas of responsibilities.

### The school has the following strengths

- Day-to-day measures to keep pupils safe are robust. The caring culture of the school ensures that the well-being of pupils is top priority.
- For early years children and learners aged 16 to 19, strong links with home schools are maintained and personalised teaching supports learning well.
- Current leaders and members of the management committee have, despite a period of considerable challenge and change, ensured that the school runs smoothly each day.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - clarifying the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders and holding them to account for performance in their areas of responsibilities
  - implementing a whole-school process to systematically check on the quality of teaching and learning and providing training to enable leaders to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning accurately
  - organising a systematic approach that enables members of the management committee to check on the strengths and weaknesses of the school and ensuring clear lines of communication between school leaders and members of the committee through agreed reporting and recording
  - ensuring that all teachers give high-quality feedback that allows pupils to correct their mistakes and improve their work
  - developing a more streamlined and effective system that links the school appraisal process with teacher development to ensure that teachers understand what constitutes good and outstanding teaching.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - improving record keeping to allow more accurate planning of future work
  - ensuring that all teachers identify next steps at the end of each learning session and that these are communicated to pupils, and followed up during the next lesson in order to accelerate pupils' progress
  - ensuring that all teachers accurately identify each pupil's starting points and plan learning activities to meet their individual needs.
- Accelerate the progress made by pupils by:
  - improving systems to identify pupils' level of knowledge and skills more consistently and accurately
  - ensuring that work set for the most able pupils matches their needs and offers them sufficient stretch and challenge to maximise their progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection and especially over the last year, the school has faced significant challenge and change. The local authority is providing support to the management committee. The headteacher has been absent since January 2017. The two deputy headteachers are covering this role jointly as well as managing their head of site responsibilities.
- The Thorneywood site is undergoing change. In line with local authority needs, the key stage 2 provision was closed and the school has operated a key stage 3 group in its place since April 2017. Leaders and management committee members are preparing for the move to the new Hopewood Centre in April 2018. They are also consulting on a new staffing structure taking into account the management of the school provision as a whole.
- The school has not sustained the judgements from the last inspection and the quality of education the school provides to pupils has declined.
- The lack of a strategic approach for monitoring teaching, learning and assessment means that leaders and members of the management committee do not have an accurate understanding of the inconsistencies and weaknesses across the school. Regular checks and work scrutiny are not sufficiently in place to secure improvements.
- Although a system for evaluating staff performance identifies strengths across the school, it is not yet identifying weaknesses and inconsistencies. There is some strong teaching but teachers are not sharing their skills and knowledge by working alongside each other sufficiently well. As a result, there is a lack of consistency in quality across sites, and with home education.
- The management committee and leaders identify the school's strengths but do not have an accurate view of the weaknesses. They are over-optimistic in their own evaluation. This is because regular checks have not been made and external support to moderate judgements is not in place.
- The school website did not meet the Department for Education specification prior to the first day of the inspection. Leaders and members ensured that missing information was in place by the end of the inspection.
- Medical staff on the hospital wards greatly value the role played by the teaching staff, both in ensuring that pupils do not fall behind in their school work, and in helping to bring a sense of normality to an often stressful and potentially frightening environment.
- Inspectors spoke to staff from a pupil's home school during the inspection. They were positive about the work of the teaching team, particularly in relation to pupils who have been in the hospital school for a long time or are recurrently admitted. A typical comment was: 'Staff contact us frequently and together we discuss progress and next steps.' This close working partnership reduces the time lost from studies and improves pupils' progress over time.
- Parents were appreciative of the work of the teaching team in ensuring that their children did not 'slip backwards' in their learning. They also suggested that engaging

lessons took their children's minds off ongoing treatment.

- The curriculum provides a broad range of opportunities including the arts, drama and music. It prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain and supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils respond well to the activities offered to them. The school has links with a range of organisations and as a result pupils have opportunities to enjoy a wide variety of visits and visitors.

## **Governance of the school**

- The management committee takes responsibility for the Children's Hospital School serving 13 wards at the Queen's Medical Centre and Wolfson Centre at the City Hospital, the Thorneywood site, which supports pupils with mental health needs and includes those who are inpatients at the nearby unit, and Home Education.
- Recent additions to the management committee, including the change of chair and vice chair, have strengthened the skills and understanding of members. Members now have a diverse and broad range of skills. This is enabling them to tackle the challenges they face more effectively. Minutes of recent meetings indicate their ability to support school leaders but do not show how they hold leaders to account effectively.
- The local authority are working with the management committee and a plan is in place that provides the support the school needs to move forward. This includes the work of an experienced clerk, national leader of governance and two school improvement partners. An associate headteacher will support the school from January 2018.
- There is no strategic plan in place to ensure that systematic and regular visits are made by members to gather information for themselves. Consequently the management committee is over-reliant on information received from leaders. Leaders' roles and responsibilities have not been made clear enough during this period of change.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The culture of safeguarding is underpinned by the idea that the protection of children and young people is everyone's responsibility. It is at the heart of the school. Leaders maintain a safe environment and, at the hospital, follow the safeguarding protocols of the wards.
- Leaders have established rigorous checks to ensure that staff and visitors are equipped to work with children. Key personnel are trained in safer recruitment. Staff training is up to date and fit for purpose. Staff are aware of the protocols and procedures around reporting an incident. They are clear about which of the designated safeguarding leaders to contact at any given time, to report an incident or concern.
- Teachers at the hospital have regular discussions about pupils with hospital staff and are kept very closely briefed about any issues identified. They are therefore able to tailor their work accordingly. All staff work closely with parents, external agencies and the pupils' home schools to ensure that any issues are quickly identified and dealt with.

- Pupils say that they feel safe because there are adults in the school they can approach if they are worried.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Where pupils are taught individually, teaching is thoughtfully personalised and mostly linked to the programmes of work from their home schools. Sometimes though, and for pupils who work as part of a group, there is insufficient detail paid to pupils' starting points and their previous knowledge and understanding.
- Too much variability exists in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some teaching is strong and pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points, despite their significant health or mental health barriers. However teaching still requires improvement in some areas of the school.
- Feedback to pupils is inconsistent. When it is done well, pupils understand what they have learned and how to improve their work. This enables them to make good progress and ensures that they don't fall behind. However in some lessons, pupils are not encouraged to correct their mistakes before moving on to the next steps of their learning. Sometimes the subject matter is not revisited for several weeks, meaning further gaps in learning are created.
- Pupils, including the most able, do not always receive appropriate challenge from teachers to develop and deepen their skills, understanding and knowledge. However where teachers ask challenging questions and give pupils time to reflect, they are able to make rapid progress. For example, in a maths lesson on fractions, the pupil identified her own strengths and the need for more practice in relation to written problems.
- In some lessons, teacher's learning objectives are unclear. In these lessons teachers fail to plan opportunities that enable pupils to engage and enjoy their learning and become effective learners. In the best lessons, pupils are absorbed in the activity, appropriately challenged and keen to do even more to succeed.
- Teachers, especially those working with individual pupils, sometimes offer more support to pupils than is needed. This leads to pupils becoming dependent on answers being given to them. Where teachers allow pupils to think for themselves, they become confident learners. In a lesson where a pupil considered tone and pitch, he was not afraid to make mistakes, as he created his instrument with box and string.
- Teachers and support staff use a range of strategies to develop pupils' phonics and literacy skills, encouraging them to 'have a go' and so increase their confidence. In some lessons, the resources used to support learning are less effective.
- Hospital teachers are exceptionally skilled at engaging the pupils in their care. They are frequently required to teach pupils of different ages and with a diverse ability range. At 'the drop of a hat' they have the ability to switch between pupils and to develop a rapport with each one. Pupils are often feeling very unwell and many are undergoing treatment such as dialysis during the lesson. Once engaged in their schoolwork, they relax and forget their concerns, enjoying the opportunity to be a pupil rather than a patient.
- Staff quickly develop strong relationships with the parents of pupils. Parents' positive

feedback on the provision was reflected in comments such as: 'My child loves attending the school, the teachers are nothing short of amazing.'

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff work closely with members of the medical team to ensure that pupils' welfare needs are met. Nursing staff told inspectors: 'School staff are amazing; we wish the school was open all year round!' Staff also work closely with parents to enable them to support their children.
- Ensuring that pupils are able to keep up with school work is a priority. Teachers work closely with pupils' home schools to ensure that learning continues as much as possible, even when pupils are undergoing treatment. This often reduces pupils' levels of anxiety during key times, for example during national examinations.
- Pupils' self-esteem is often low when they join Thorneywood, begin home education or come into the hospital. Staff work hard to boost pupils' self-worth and ensure that they feel valued. They encourage pupils to keep in touch with friends and give regular updates to their teachers on progress.
- Pupils often feel scared when in hospital. However discussions with pupils during the inspection showed that pupils across the school all felt happy and safe and knew who to speak to about any concerns.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Despite the high level of stress pupils are often under, their behaviour is good during teaching time. This is consistently so on the hospital wards, at Thorneywood and during home education sessions.
- Even when pupils feel particularly unwell, they mostly respond well to teaching provided at their bedside. They are given every opportunity to engage in the lesson. Hospital staff work closely with teachers to provide necessary treatment during the sessions.
- Attendance is closely monitored. Records for some pupils who are studying through home education, or based at Thorneywood, show rapid improvements in their attendance when compared to their previous attendance records.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Requires improvement**

- Pupils' progress requires improvement overall because it is not consistently good across

all areas of the school.

- Pupils arrive at the school with a wide range of needs and with very different skills and knowledge. Some teachers tailor work carefully for each pupil and consequently pupils make very good progress over time, and achieve recognised accreditation. However this is variable. Some work carried out with pupils does not always meet their needs as accurately as it could, particularly the most able.
- Pupils have the opportunity to gain skills and qualifications in preparation for the next stage of their education, training or employment. They follow a wide range of accredited courses that are linked, where possible, to their home school programmes.
- Not all teachers keep accurate records of work completed by pupils. This means that, for some pupils, progress is slowed as next steps in learning are not accurately built on.
- There are no differences in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils. Pupils' offer of education is based on their health needs alone. The school does not receive pupil premium funding for any pupils.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- The very small number of children in early years are well supported in the Nottingham Children's Hospital School. Safeguarding is effective and leadership is strong.
- Teachers and leaders ensure that children access the support they need to keep up with their learning at this crucial stage in their development. Teachers work closely with the home schools in ensuring that children are ready for the challenges of Year 1.
- Teachers plan opportunities for children to learn through play. Although this is a challenge as children are based on the wards, teachers think creatively and bring exciting play and learning opportunities to the children's bedsides.
- Although children are taught on wards shared by much older pupils and the ward can be very busy, the learning environment meets their needs well. Teachers ask meaningful questions during carefully planned child-initiated play activities and children make strong progress during their stay in hospital.
- Children are taught phonics and teachers plan according to each child's stage of development. They make strong progress because of the focus that is placed on ensuring that children master skills, such as the ability to blend sounds to make words. Children employ these skills confidently when reading books. Teachers' effective questioning, while children read aloud, is developing their ability to explain what is happening in the book and why.
- Children in the early years display very positive attitudes to their teachers and to learning.
- Children's' learning journals reflect the good progress they make over time.

### 16 to 19 study programmes

**Good**

- There are relatively few 16 to 19 learners enrolled on 16-19 study programmes,

although the number of learners who access the provision/take part in learning can vary. Teachers provide students with very good support, which helps to boost their self-belief and enables their self-esteem to grow. As a result they have very positive attitudes to learning despite the barriers to learning they face as a result of complex physical or mental health issues.

- Leaders and teachers with responsibility for 16 to 19 programmes successfully ensure that students' needs are met. All learning is personalised and most is linked to the requirements of programmes of study students are following through their home school.
- Students study for, and achieve, a variety of accreditation through a range of awarding organisations, as well as achieving GCSE and A level qualifications.
- Teaching is effective and subject experts know the requirements of the courses they teach very well. On occasions, where teachers have required further subject specialism, leaders have brought in a teacher with the identified specialism.
- Teachers provide a great deal of support, encouragement and careers development opportunities. As a result, students develop personal, social and employability skills and many are able to follow the next steps of their chosen career path relevant to their individual needs. For example, inspectors observed a lesson in which a student was organising business cards and discussing with his teacher prices to charge for his work as a self-employed disc jockey.
- Leaders and teachers work determinedly with external agencies, hospital staff, colleges, universities and home schools, to ensure that students continue to access education.
- Students themselves are very positive about the teaching and support they receive telling inspectors that they viewed the personalised approach to be very beneficial at this point in their learning.
- Safeguarding is effective and leadership is strong.



## School details

Unique reference number	133164
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10005480

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	24
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	5
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Judith Ward
Headteacher	David Blackley
Telephone number	0115 915 3862
Website	<a href="http://hhe.nottingham.sch.uk/">http://hhe.nottingham.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@hhe.nottingham.sch.uk">admin@hhe.nottingham.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	22–23 January 2013

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The Hospital and Home Education Pupil Referral Unit is based on two sites within the city of Nottingham.
- The Thorneywood Education Base provides support for pupils with medical and anxiety-related needs and is the base for the home education service. The hospital school, which is based at the Queen's Medical Centre also has responsibility for adolescents who from time to time are in-patients at the Wolfson Cystic Fibrosis Centre

at the city hospital.

- The adolescent unit at Thorneywood supports up to 12 secondary pupils who are inpatients at the nearby health authority Child and Adolescents' Mental Health Service inpatient unit.
- Thorneywood staff also teach pupils in key stage 3 and those in key stage 4 known as the Fairmead group, supporting a range of anxiety-related conditions. Other pupils with a wide range of medical and anxiety-related conditions are taught within the home education service.
- A brand new inpatient unit for children and young people who need support for their mental health needs known as Hopewood, is being built and will replace the current adolescent unit at Thorneywood from April 2018.
- The school became a founder member of the Nottingham Schools Trust in September 2017 and works within the Redhill Teaching School Alliance.
- The headteacher was absent from the school at the time of the inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors carried out joint lesson observations with two members of the senior leadership team across both sites.
- Inspectors observed hospital teachers working individually with pupils at the bedside and in the teaching rooms at the Queen's Medical Centre. They observed pupils working both individually and in groups at the Thorneywood Centre and considered home education work.
- Discussions were held with the site leaders, middle leaders, medical staff, teaching and support staff, three members of the management committee and the hospital physiotherapist.
- Discussions were held with a group of pupils at Thorneywood and with pupils individually on the wards.
- Although there were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, inspectors spoke to a number of parents, taking into account their views together with the feedback from parents collected by school staff. They also considered the 16 staff responses.
- Inspectors analysed a range of school documents including safeguarding documents, the school's own evaluation and school improvement plan, and the minutes from meetings held by the management committee.

## Inspection team

Lynda Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julian Scholefield

Ofsted Inspector

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