

INSPECTION REPORT

FOUNTAIN HOUSE PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT

Hull

LEA area: Kingston upon Hull

Unique reference number: 117703

Headteacher: Mr D King

Reporting inspector: Alastair Younger
23587

Dates of inspection: 20-23 March 2000

Inspection number: 215509

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

Type of school:	Pupil Referral Unit
School category:	Pupil Referral Unit
Age range of pupils:	14-16 (as of January 2000)
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Unit address:	Fountain Road Hull
Postcode:	HU2 0LH
Telephone number:	01482 224414
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Appropriate authority:	Kingston upon Hull Local Education Authority
Name of responsible officer	Mr C Herrick
Date of previous inspection:	Not previously inspected

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Alastair Younger	Registered inspector	Science, Art, Design technology	Pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
Denise Shields	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Avril Anderson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Physical education	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
Glyn Jones	Team inspector	English History Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

This is a unit for pupils nearing the end of their compulsory education. Numbers fluctuate greatly but there are presently 35 on roll, most are white and English speaking. Most have been unable to complete their education in mainstream schools because of behaviour problems that have led to their exclusion. All pupils are in Years 10 and 11. Until recently there were also pupils from Years 7,8,9 but the opening of a new unit for these younger pupils some weeks ago has left Fountain House with a clearer brief to prepare pupils for life after school. Pupils are admitted at any time of the year, often at short notice. All pupils are recognised as having special educational needs and there is a growing number who have statements of special educational need, currently seven, all for emotional and behavioural difficulties. Whilst most pupils are of average ability the long periods that many have spent out of school, and the disrupted nature of their previous education, means that attainment on entry is often low. All pupils are given full-time education at the unit. A few are also on the registers of other schools but none are presently attending those schools

HOW GOOD THE UNIT IS

This is a good unit. It is doing a difficult job well because it is finding solutions rather than problems. The pupils who attend regularly benefit from good teaching and make good progress but the non-attendance of a small minority of pupils and the spasmodic attendance of many others is resulting in overall achievement being only satisfactory. The unit is well managed and the headteacher is providing very good leadership. The unit provides good value for money

What the unit does well

- Teachers manage the very difficult behaviour of pupils well. Nearly all lessons are well taught and this helps those pupils who attend to make good progress
- There are many very good physical activities which contribute significantly to good links with the community and to pupils, social and cultural development
- The unit is very well managed by the headteacher who sets a strong example through his teaching and his relationships with pupils. He is well supported by the local education authority and management group
- There is a very good ethos, pupils show great loyalty to the unit and parents are very appreciative of the work it does

What could be improved

- The introduction of more humanities, a greater range of practical experiences and more practical science would strengthen the curriculum
- Several classrooms are too small, especially the science room where the cramped conditions limit what can be taught
- Although there have been good recent improvements, there are presently insufficient links with local colleges and few pupils find work experience placements
- The assessment of pupils academic progress is not sufficiently being used to aid planning
- Attendance is low and often deteriorates over time

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the local education authority.

HOW THE UNIT HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The unit has not previously been inspected.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils are achieving in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the unit.

Progress in:	by age 16	Key	
English	B	very good	A
mathematics	B	good	B
science	C	satisfactory	C
personal, social and health education	B	unsatisfactory	D
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C	poor	E

* IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs

Progress is good in English lessons. Pupils listen attentively, speak in turn and some write sensitively. They make good progress in mathematics where there is an appropriate focus on its use in real-life situations. In science, progress is being slowed by the lack of suitable accommodation, which contributes to pupils having insufficient opportunities to do practical work. They do, however, build up a satisfactory body of scientific knowledge. There are very good opportunities for pupils to participate in physical activities and they make very good progress. Very good progress is made in art, where a good variety of techniques is practised. In woodwork, pupils gain valuable practical skills. Satisfactory progress is made in information technology lessons but it is not sufficiently used in other subjects. Personal, social and health education is good. Most of it is very informal but important issues are discussed on a very regular basis.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the unit	Most pupils overcome many of their negative feelings about education and demonstrate a commitment to overcoming their problems. A minority of pupils do not come to terms with the unit's expectations and continue to create problems.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	In most lessons behaviour is good. Even when pupils are reluctant to work they seldom disrupt others. Behaviour out of lessons is weaker and there are many recorded instances of extreme behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	There are very good relationships between staff and pupils. Whilst pupils tolerate one another they do not form strong relationships. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to study independently
Attendance	Most pupils have a history of unsatisfactory attendance prior to attending the unit and this is not sufficiently overcome, especially with the older pupils who are nearing the end of their school lives

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Lessons seen overall	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Teaching is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, 90% is good or better and 22% is very good or better. Teaching is good in English and mathematics and satisfactory in science. There is little formal teaching of personal, social and health education but issues are regularly and well addressed in whole unit meetings at the beginning of each session. There is good teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and this is helping all pupils, whatever their ability, to improve these skills. The greatest strength of teaching is the management of pupils' behaviour. This helps to give pupils the chance to concentrate on their work with the minimum of distraction.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE UNIT

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides suitable educational activities. It covers the important subjects of English and mathematics in good detail. There is satisfactory provision for science. Aesthetic activities are provided through a very good art programme, practical activities through woodwork. There is a very good physical education programme and good attention is paid to pupils' personal, social and health education. The lack of a humanities programme is a weakness
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The special needs of pupils relate to their emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is good support to help them cope better, especially in lessons
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall, strongest in spiritual, social and moral aspects which are good. Although cultural provision is satisfactory overall, insufficient attention is paid to multicultural issues, and the lack of a humanities programme further weakens this aspect
How well the unit cares for its pupils	The unit provides a supportive and caring environment. Many procedures are informal but the small size of the unit facilitates communication. The small classes enable teachers to maintain a good understanding of pupils despite weaknesses in assessment procedures

There has been a weakness in forging good links with colleges that may provide pupils with opportunities when they leave but this weakness is being quickly addressed. More pupils are also being found work experience placements. There are good relationships with parents and carers. There is good, regular communication with them and they feel very welcome when visiting the unit. Many parents co-operate very well with the unit in trying to improve their children's attendance. The certificates that pupils are awarded provide parents with the reassurance that their children are trying hard. There are no annual reports and this is a weakness.

HOW WELL THE UNIT IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very strong leadership with a clear focus on trying to provide the best possible education for all pupils. He sets a very good example through his own teaching and behaviour management skills. Subject co-ordinators have a good understanding of their areas of responsibility and are conscientious in their work
How well the management committee fulfils its responsibilities	The unit is well supported by a well established management group. They meet regularly and are fast to act in support when it is needed. It is well informed through termly reports from the headteacher
The unit's evaluation of its performance	There is good monitoring of the unit by the local education authority and staff meet every day to discuss pupils' progress. The headteacher visits all classrooms on a regular basis and this gives him a very clear view of strengths and weaknesses
The strategic use of resources	Resources are well used. Staff are efficiently deployed according to ever changing need.

There is a good number of teachers with appropriate qualifications and experience to deliver the curriculum effectively. The accommodation is satisfactory overall but several classrooms are very small. This is particularly significant in science, where the lack of suitable accommodation is restricting what can be taught. The accommodation is beautifully maintained. There are good resources but not enough to promote multi-cultural education.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE UNIT

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The unit helps their children • They feel well informed • They feel welcome and like the informality of the unit • Their children get bullied less than in mainstream schools • Their children are not stigmatised but treated as human beings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More examinations

The inspection team agrees with the parents' views. The parents' meeting was well attended and was overwhelmingly supportive of the unit, its headteacher and staff. This reflects the team's view that this is a good unit.

OTHER INFORMATION

The management committee is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the unit will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the unit.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The unit's results and achievements

1. As the centre caters for pupils who have not succeeded in benefiting from their mainstream education it would be inappropriate to make comparisons with national averages or standards. Many of the pupils have had regular absences from school in the past and several have moved from school to school over the whole of their education, resulting in a very disrupted pattern in their educational provision. This has meant that although most are of either average or just below average ability, none have achieved their true potential before being referred.
2. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. In most lessons they benefit from the good teaching and make good progress but the low, or spasmodic, attendance of pupils means that many fail to gain the maximum benefit from what the unit has to offer and this is slowing overall progress. Comments about achievement in the report refer to those pupils who have established and are maintaining a satisfactory pattern of attendance. There is no discernible difference in the progress being made by girls and boys or in the different year groups. The targets set for individual pupils are too vague for the progress of pupils of differing ability to be closely monitored but there is no clear evidence to suggest that any particular group of pupils is making better, or worse, progress than any other. Differences depend far more on the individual motivation of pupils and their subsequent attendance.
3. Overall achievement in English is good. Pupils show progress in the development of speaking and listening skills. They are increasingly able to discuss and debate the positive and negative aspects of a given topic. They make sensible contributions and listen to others, although occasionally wander to another topic. They listen attentively to a good selection of poems and their ability to convey thoughts and opinions shows progress in the understanding and appreciation of differing moods and messages contained in them. Progress in speaking and listening skills is also observed in Citizenship. A proposed visit to a local factory stimulates good responses and speaking skills. In a lesson focussing on drug abuse, several pupils are able to relate their own experiences and express their views with sensitivity. Pupils show progress in reading and writing skills. They are able to use punctuation correctly, identifying the need for full stops, capital letters, commas and speech marks. They are encouraged and show improvement in reading aloud either from basic texts or from their own written accounts.
4. Pupils make good progress in mathematics. They take a pride in their work, it is careful and very neat. Pupils know the different words which mean add, subtract, multiply, divide and equals. More able pupils know a quick and easy way to calculate VAT, understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages and know the factors of numbers below fifty. Less able pupils multiply single digit numbers without a calculator, understand place value and plot simple graphs to produce an animal shape. All pupils are developing a much more positive attitude towards mathematics as they consistently consolidate and increase their mathematical knowledge and understanding.
5. Progress is satisfactory in science. It is being hindered by the lack of opportunities for pupils to develop practical skills, to investigate and to conduct experiments. This means that whilst they are building up good scientific knowledge they are not experiencing

those things which add excitement to the subject and which are most likely to lead to a lasting interest. Recent changes to the curriculum have led to an appropriate focus on health and hygiene. This makes studies particularly relevant and increases motivation. Pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the ways in which common diseases are spread and what they can do to minimise the risk of succumbing to ailments such as food poisoning. Practical experiences have been limited to simple tasks such as dissecting flowers, checking heartrate before and after exercise and filtering solids from a liquid. Pupils have classified different substances by comparing their appearance and properties and when considering the differences between natural and man-made materials, they have extended their vocabulary to include words such as 'synthetic' to describe the latter.

6. Pupils make very good progress in physical education and in some lessons they achieve excellent standards. In practical lessons most pupils' ability compares very favourably with their peers in mainstream schools and a few have above average skills. They know how runs are scored in cricket, the protective clothing needed to play the game safely, the basic rules and which countries play first class cricket. When playing cricket and football pupils enjoy the games, they play according to the rules and show great support for each other, for example, spontaneously applauding good goal scoring and keeping and 'missing' catches to ensure weaker players have a fair share at batting. They understand the need for warming up and warming down before and after physical activity. Physical education lessons make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
7. Achievement in art is very good. Pupils make very good progress as they study and practise a wide range of two and three-dimensional techniques. They also learn about how famous artists have used and developed these techniques to produce their best known works. Once skills have been demonstrated, pupils use them to create their own pieces. This results in good examples of wire and plaster models with identifiable human features in the style of Giacommetti. Plates painted in the style of Picasso bear clear reference to his distinctive style but are naively executed. Experiments with fabrics have produced good examples of tie-dying, well linked to its practical use in decorating clothes and 'throws' for home furnishings. Pupils have created good, colourful, decorations for pottery which have then been transferred directly on to their own mugs. Many pupils have produced good examples of lino and press printing and show a very good understanding of colour and tone in their work.
8. Pupils achieve a good standard within a limited range of practical experiences focusing upon woodwork. Individuals use a good range of hand and power tools to produce good quality objects such as bird boxes and tables, furniture and games. They measure accurately and cut within an acceptable tolerance before assembling and use glue, nails and screws competently to join component parts. Good attention is paid to finishing techniques such as staining, painting and polishing. Pupils handle tools very sensibly and with good attention to safety. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to cook or to be fully involved in designing their own projects.
9. Overall, pupils are making satisfactory progress in information technology. This is clear from scrutiny of work and the awards already achieved in the short time the programme has been in operation. Pupils cut and paste pictures to illustrate a football team list, key in text they have written, save, recall and print independently, enter information on to a spreadsheet and enlarge or reduce pictures and text. Pupils' word process in English lessons but information technology is insufficiently used in most subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Overall, this is satisfactory. Pupils like the unit. When they attend most of them apply themselves to their work and their attitude is good. Most pupils respond well to the good teaching and lessons that are interesting and geared to individual needs.
11. Pupils are well behaved during lessons and structured times. Such behaviour reflects skilful teaching and effective behaviour management techniques. There are very good relationships between pupils and staff. They are kind to visitors and appreciate what the unit staff are trying to do for them. Pupils also display a degree of tolerance towards one another. They are aware of the impact of bouts of inappropriate behaviour on others, although this does not always deter them from carrying on. Pupils display tolerance and understanding when individuals are experiencing problems. Although there was an incident of challenging and violent behaviour, it did not adversely affect other pupils' learning because of the sensitive and effective methods used by the staff. A significant proportion of pupils lack the will to attend the unit. Occasionally bad behaviour during break-times carries over and delays the start of lessons. Many incidents of extreme, inappropriate behaviour are recorded in individual pupil files. These include violence to other pupils and to members of staff. However, apart from the one incident referred to, such bad behaviour was not observed during the inspection. During the inspection no bullying, sexism or racism was observed, though records show that it does exist.
12. Pupils who attend regularly consider themselves part of the unit's community. For some it is a place where they willingly attend. A few were of the opinion that the number of pupils at the unit was too small – they would prefer to be part of a larger peer group. They form a degree of constructive relationships with one another, but this is far more evident with the staff. The level of initiative and personal responsibility observed amongst the pupils was unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, in woodwork pupils are using potentially dangerous machinery sensibly and they use sharp craft knives safely in art. This suggests a degree of over-caution in science, where very little practical work is done, ostensibly for safety reasons.
13. At sixty-eight per cent, attendance is unsatisfactory and it often deteriorates over time. These figures include a small minority of pupils who have not attended the unit for a considerable period. The majority of pupils have a history of poor attendance prior to entering the unit. Their attendance often improves, when they start, but it is not sustained, and often significantly declines. This is particularly so in Year 11. Nearly all pupils have intermittent attendance and are frequently late arriving for the start of the school day. Figures for attendance are lower than for mainstream schools because there is a high number of Year 11 pupils who have very little incentive to attend because they are sitting no examinations. This pattern is also found in mainstream schools in the area, but at the unit there are no Year 7,8 and 9 pupils with better attendance to raise the average. Pupils' unsatisfactory and intermittent attendance impacts on their standards of achievement.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. Teaching is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Very nearly ninety per cent is good or better and twenty two per cent is very good or better. There is good teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and this is helping all pupils, whatever their ability, to improve these skills.
15. The quality of teaching is the single most important factor in enabling pupils to make progress. The greatest strength of teaching is the management of pupils' behaviour. This helps to give pupils the chance to concentrate on their work with the minimum of distraction and successfully addresses the main reason for their initial referral. There are many other strengths. In nearly every lesson teachers show a good understanding of what they are teaching and of the factors likely to present difficulties to pupils. This is evident in the choice of topics to be taught and the way teachers try to link these to everyday life. In English, for instance, poems and stories often relate to situations which pupils can associate with. In science they learn about how to keep healthy, and in mathematics the impact of the subject on everyday life is nearly always stressed. Lessons proceed at a good pace and this reduces the likelihood of distraction and hence disruption. Most planning takes into account the gaps in pupils' knowledge and the problems that individuals may encounter. This has a significant effect upon helping pupils to acquire new skills and knowledge and to help them make more sense of what they already know. Because they see the significance of what they are being taught they show more interest and put more effort into their work and achieve success that has often previously eluded them. Where planning is weaker, such as in science, insufficient attention is paid to the specific needs of lower or higher attaining pupils, resulting in all following the same lesson, and with similar expectations regarding how pupils will record their work. Expectations are, however, realistic, resulting in pupils nearly always being able to complete their work to a good standard. The use of exercise books instead of files helps pupils to build up a good record of well presented work, of which many are proud, and reduces the possibility of work being lost. Support staff are used to good effect to help individuals achieve success. Some are deployed to help those pupils with more pronounced behavioural problems whilst others offer individual help to those who experience greater learning difficulties. A good range of high quality resources is used, especially in English, art and woodwork.
16. The quality of ongoing assessment is satisfactory in that it is enabling teachers to plan well and understand the immediate needs of individuals. It is strongest in mathematics and physical education. Where it has a weakness is that it does not always sufficiently inform pupils where improvements could be made because the marking of books is often cursory. This is, however, compensated for by regular feedback in lessons which gives immediate encouragement to pupils. Homework is not regularly set but when pupils ask if they can finish work at home they are encouraged to do so. This is realistic and satisfactory. A weakness of teaching is that pupils are given insufficient opportunity or encouragement to use their own initiative in planning work and studying independently
17. Teaching in English is good. The teacher has good subject knowledge, which is conveyed to pupils with enthusiasm and conviction. Well-planned lessons take account of pupils' individual needs and are skilfully geared to ensure that levels of concentration are maintained. Questions and prompts are effectively used to consolidate previous learning. Explanations are clear and pupils are constantly encouraged to submit their own opinions. Good relationships between pupils, teacher and support staff provide a positive approach to teaching and learning. A good range of teaching strategies are used. In a poetry lesson, several short and humorous poems portraying various moods, situations and aspirations promote lively debate. When reading "The Highwayman", the

teacher carefully explains some of the vocabulary and metaphors used which, in turn, are understood by the pupils. There is a good supply of resources and materials in the classroom. These show signs of regular use, but are clean and tidy with no graffiti. Word processing also features in the teaching of English but was not used during the inspection.

18. Teaching in mathematics is good. While lessons follow a single theme, all pupils have individual lesson plans which ensure their work is at the specific level they need to build on previous knowledge. This ensures that pupils quickly begin to make progress and their previous negative attitudes to mathematics gradually become more positive. Emphasis is rightly placed upon filling in the many gaps in pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding as well as teaching mathematics that will serve them well for life. Opportunities such as Budget Day are used well, for example, to illustrate the need for understanding how to work out percentages for discounts and VAT. Team teaching is used very effectively to ensure pupils' good progress. Assessment is ongoing and used well in planning. Recording of work covered and pupils' achievements is simple, clear and very effective.
19. Science teaching is satisfactory overall and occasionally good. Lessons are tightly planned and well structured but pay insufficient attention to the needs of individuals. Awkward behaviour is well managed, enabling most pupils to complete set tasks. Lessons start promptly, with the expectation that latecomers, with the help of well deployed support will have to catch up on work they have missed. There is good quality discussion which helps those pupils most reluctant to record work to express their views. The organisation of the classroom is dictated by its smallness but by seating pupils around one central table the teacher is able to observe all pupils closely and to make sure that all are working productively. Praise is well used to encourage pupils without appeasing them. There are minor lapses in subject knowledge; scabies and headlice, for instance, being referred to in a lesson about infectious diseases. There is a high expectation that pupils will record work neatly but there is insufficient expectation that they can conduct more experiments and work with apparatus. This is having a detrimental effect upon the progress that pupils are making because it is significantly narrowing the science curriculum.
20. There is little formal teaching of personal, social and health education but issues are regularly and well addressed in whole unit meetings at the beginning of each session. These sessions are very well managed and deal with issues of immediate importance to pupils. One such example was a lesson in childcare which was taught to an excellent standard by a teacher showing a very strong knowledge and understanding of the pupils and what was being discussed. Many lessons are only loosely planned, often at short notice. This reduces the certainty that all topics of importance will be covered by all pupils but is particularly effective in keeping them relevant and interesting. The main significance of these lessons is that they very effectively set the context in which all other teaching is conducted. There is very good attention to the needs of individual pupils and there is a high expectation that all pupils will contribute.
21. Teaching in physical education is very good overall and sometimes excellent. Excellent teaching gives the impression that the pupils are relatively easy to teach, which is far from the case. Lessons are very well planned and structured, ensuring pupils' interest is gained and held at all times. Teachers ensure that all succeed at their own level and enjoy their lessons, whilst continually making progress. Very good team teaching takes place in all lessons, with all teachers taking the lead at relevant times. Information and skills teaching occurs throughout the lessons but it does not slow the pace and

enjoyment of activities, such as studying the gear needed for cricket as well as actual cricket and football games. A wide range of physical activities are taught, including swimming, cricket, football, hockey, wall climbing, cross-country running, canoeing and sailing. Assessment is ongoing throughout lessons and used very well in practice, both immediately and in future planning, but recording is weak. Health and safety issues are observed in all lessons.

22. Teaching in information technology is good overall. The Hull accredited 'IT for Life Programme' is used as the basis for all lessons. Pupils who choose it as an option generally gain at least the first two awards. All lessons are individually planned, ensuring each pupil works at his/her own level and makes maximum progress. Teaching is low key and provides pupils with directed activities as well as allowing for free choice. Pupils respond well to this skilful approach. Assessment is clear and used for future planning. Recording of work covered and pupils' achievements is simple, clear and very effective.
23. Art teaching is very good. It is clear from the scrutiny of pupils' work that the teaching observed during the inspection is consistently maintained and possibly bettered on occasion. This stems from the excellent subject knowledge of the teacher, her organisation and high expectations. A particularly good range of methods are used to interest and motivate pupils and the results of this are to be seen in the high standard of work being produced by many pupils. Praise is well used and it is good that the teacher also encourages pupils to look at each other's work and to make positive comments. Because pupils are kept interested and are attempting work well matched to their ability the teacher can concentrate more on teaching than behaviour management and this makes lessons productive. Even initially reluctant pupils become more and more involved as lessons progress.
24. Practical activities are well taught. The satisfactory results of this good teaching are a reflection on the curriculum rather than the quality of teaching. A good knowledge of the teaching of woodwork is shown. There are good demonstrations of the use of tools and whilst encouragement and help are freely given there is no undue interference with pupils' work and this serves to motivate pupils because they realise that they are largely responsible for their finished projects. Good attention is paid to safety in the workshop but pupils are not unduly restricted in their use of potentially dangerous machinery under close observation. The workshop is well organised, allowing good use to be made of time because all tools and materials are ready to hand. The main weakness of teaching is that insufficient attention is paid to helping pupils to design their own projects and to solve problems for themselves.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

25. The curriculum is sound. Although not required to cover the National Curriculum the unit's curriculum provides a satisfactory education. The local education authority's curriculum policy for pupil referral units is very general but the unit is well supported by the authority. Advisers visit regularly and provide an effective monitoring and evaluation service which greatly assists the unit's curriculum development and ensures that it reflects the guidance offered.
26. There is an appropriate emphasis on English, mathematics and science, which are taught on a daily basis and focus well upon their applications and relevance to life

outside school. Physical activities are very well provided for and pupils gain access to aesthetic activities through a very good art programme of study. Practical experiences are provided through a good woodwork programme but are weakened by the omission of cookery and other opportunities. There is good provision for information technology. Personal, social and health education is good but it is planned on a very ad-hoc basis resulting in the possibility of important elements being missed by individuals. Whilst what is taught in science is relevant to pupils there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment. There is insufficient attention to the humanities (history and geography in particular). It is not taught as a subject and only occasionally appears incidentally in lessons. At present there is insufficient external accreditation of pupils' work.

27. The unit is well supported by a careers' officer. Weaknesses in college links and work experience are rapidly being attended to by a newly appointed member of staff and the opportunities provided have recently improved considerably. From a previously unsatisfactory position this is now an area which is rapidly growing in strength. Careers are not currently timetabled for Year 10 pupils. This is unsatisfactory. The room newly designated for careers is very well equipped and reflects the growing commitment to improving provision.
28. Equal opportunities are provided for all pupils in that all have the same timetable but the occasional lack of attention to adapting lessons to meet the needs of individuals leads to a minor loss of equality. Planning in mathematics, art and information technology is very good, ensuring that pupils receive individual programmes according to need.
29. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good in practice but it is informal and unplanned. The morning assembly is a very good example of this. It addresses issues of the day and responds very well to crises that have occurred, but there is no way of knowing which pupils have received what information or advice. The lack of a planned programme and recording system is a real weakness, especially considering the spasmodic attendance of many pupils.
30. Extracurricular activities are satisfactory. They are largely facilitated by good links with the community. External professional links are close with social services, the police and education welfare services. All agencies provide good support for the unit. The unit has strong links with Hull Cricket Club, Hull City FC and Hull Kingston Rovers. An increasing number and variety of visits and visitors are programmed. Those already made include local museums, galleries, factories and coastal areas such as Mableton. Excellent links with local sportsmen include valuable anger management courses run by Carl Heath and a visit by Paul Ingle, IBF World Featherweight Champion. The unit provides residential experiences for some pupils, for example, on a sailing barge. Several pupils offer valued support to a local school for severely disabled pupils, helping others less fortunate than themselves in swimming lessons.
31. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall. Assemblies make a significant contribution in this area, giving pupils time to share and reflect and offer one another support. Pupils are encouraged to think about what they do and have good role models in the staff who treat them and their colleagues with courtesy, dignity and respect. Fair play and the opportunity to work together is encouraged in PE and it is here that very good examples of praise and support are evident in pupils' spontaneous applause for each other's success and effort. A sensitive and personal approach in the teaching of poetry makes a significant contribution to this area of development. A good example of the raising of awareness of

public health and hygiene was observed in a science lesson. Strengths in this area are the good celebration of pupils' successes and the value placed on pupils' work and way it is displayed. Weaknesses are the lack of humanities and music, no formal acknowledgement of world faiths and, except for a little in art, very little provision for multi-cultural development.

32. Overall, careers' education and the provision for work experience placements is satisfactory. The unit has recognised the need to address these areas and is making good progress in enhancing them. It is rapidly forging links with local business, industry and colleges that may provide pupils with placements and opportunities when they leave. At the moment, however, insufficient pupils are involved in these links and few have work experience placements. The unit receives good support from the careers' officer and all Year 11 pupils have a careers interview and draw up a career plan. The provision of a careers' room, with a suitable range of material, is a good recent addition to the unit and reflects the growing commitment to improving provision. New programmes of study for Years 10 and 11 are being developed. Pupils currently benefit from visits to local business and these are being further developed to broaden pupils' understanding of the opportunities that are available to them. From a previously unsatisfactory position this is now an area which is rapidly growing in strength. Careers are not currently timetabled for Year 10 pupils. This is unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. Although there are few formal procedures in place, much of the current practice is good. Teachers know the pupils well and provide a supportive and caring environment that is appropriate to the many problems the pupils have. Incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively, and teachers will take the time to listen to what pupils have to say and counsel them accordingly. They provide very good support and guidance for those in their care. The headteacher plays a very significant role in this aspect of the unit's work. He ensures that pupils are aware his door is always open. He willingly makes time available to talk through their problems and tries, at length, to seek ways in which to help and support them. Parents say that pupils are happy to attend the unit and that, as parents, they are quickly informed and supported themselves if problems arise.
34. Overall procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There is a designated staff member responsible for child protection and training is up to date. Although there is no formal child protection policy, teachers are careful to ensure that the area child protection guidelines are followed. The medical needs of pupils are well catered for and there are several members of staff who have first-aid training. There is a concise health and safety policy. The caretaker, who is the designated health and safety staff member, has received suitable training. There are clear procedures in place to report any health and safety concerns to the management committee. However, the unit has yet formally to undertake and document regular health and safety tours and risk assessments. Fire drills are not formally recorded. This is a weakness.
35. The unit receives good support from the educational welfare service which is actively involved in following the many cases of pupils' non-attendance. Regular meetings are held with the headteacher and frequent telephone contact is maintained. The administration staff effectively monitor attendance on a day to day basis and telephone parents and carers if pupils do not arrive at the unit. However, there is no formal tracking of individual pupils' attendance and therefore the school cannot easily analyse

data over a period of time to determine and reward individual progress in attendance. This is a weakness.

36. Procedures to promote good behaviour and to eliminate bullying are inherent in the ethos of the unit. Parents say there are few incidents of bullying and no incidents were observed during the inspection week. Good behaviour in classrooms, at lunchtime and on school visits, if taken, is rewarded at the end of each week. Pupils receiving the top ten marks have the opportunity to go motor bike riding at a local centre; pupils appreciate this reward. The unit employs the expertise of a local sportsman who supports pupils by providing anger management courses through the medium of sport. This has proved very successful with a number of pupils, two of whom have returned to mainstream schools. There is much good practice, especially in dealing effectively with any incidents that occur. There is no anti bullying policy but the designation of the hall as a safe area with constant supervision is a good initiative. There is no central record maintained to enable the unit to track the number of incidents of inappropriate behaviour or restraint that take place. There are no documented behaviour management plans for pupils attending the unit. This is a weakness. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are informal but satisfactory overall.
37. The assembly time, at the start of each day, is well used. Here, in a caring and supportive environment, pupils can discuss openly and honestly with staff and their peers concerns or achievements. Teachers respect the pupils and listen to what they have to say, providing appropriate advice or guidance when required. Daily staff briefings, and reviews at the end of the day, ensure that all staff attending are aware of any issues, concerns or achievements relating to pupils. However, development or progress made by a pupil is not recorded in their individual files. There is no systematic approach to monitor and support pupils' personal development but teachers' sharing of information is good and this suffices in this small unit.
38. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory overall. On arrival at the unit pupils are given a standardised spelling test and a group reading test. They are re-tested six to twelve months later. These results are shared with the pupils, as they like to know their progress. On the evidence provided it appears that ongoing assessment of English is limited to individual items of work contained in exercise books. There is, however, evidence that a better system is quickly being developed, which more precisely pinpoints what it is that each pupil knows, understands and can do. Assessment in mathematics is satisfactory. Insufficient records of what pupils know, understand and can do are kept in science. What is recorded is more in terms of what has been taught. Teachers build up a sufficient picture of pupils' ability to enable them to prepare appropriate tasks but the weakness of assessment is that because it is often informal it is not building up a sufficiently detailed picture to enable precise targets to be set for individual pupils or to inform longer term curriculum planning.

HOW WELL DOES THE UNIT WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Parents are very supportive of the work of the unit. They feel welcome and able to discuss their concerns in the informal atmosphere. Many keep in touch after their children have left at the end of their school lives.
40. Wherever possible regular contact is maintained with as many parents and carers usually by telephone. There are no formal parents' evenings but parents are encouraged to "drop in" to talk to teachers or the headteacher over a cup of coffee and

a great many do so. If they are unable to come to the unit the headteacher will visit them at home. All parents receive a home visit before their children enter the unit; this helps to establish the good relationships that exist.

41. Although communication is informal, the quality of information provided for parents is good. Most receive a daily telephone call about their children's progress or behaviour. The award of certificates that are sent home celebrates pupils' success; parents appreciate this. The unit brochure, although now out of date owing to recent changes in the status of the unit, is well presented and informative. Information about future events or visits is provided in good time. However, there are no annual reports giving parents information about their children's progress. This is a weakness.
42. There are good relationships with parents and, where they are able, many co-operate with the unit in trying to improve their children's behaviour and attendance. When homework is set, and where parents are able, they support this activity.

HOW WELL IS THE UNIT LED AND MANAGED?

43. The headteacher provides very strong leadership with a clear focus on achieving the principal aim of providing the best possible education for all pupils. He sets a very good example through his own teaching and behaviour management skills. A measure of the strength of leadership is the way in which the headteacher has successfully steered the unit through a series of far reaching changes and many enforced changes in staffing. He has a very clear vision of how the unit can develop, clouded only by the changes that have been necessitated by the reorganisation of behaviour provision in the authority. The success with which the unit fulfils its aims is reflected in its very strong ethos.
44. Curriculum co-ordinators have a good understanding of their areas of responsibility. They are conscientious in their work and are successfully raising standards in their subject areas. This is particularly evident in art, mathematics and in the recent development of careers, work experience and college links.
45. The headteacher is very well supported by a well established management group. They meet regularly and are fast to act in support when it is needed. The management group is well informed through termly reports from the headteacher. During the inspection the management group showed how well it supports the headteacher by rightly questioning the inappropriateness of a recent referral and taking steps to ensure that such a situation is unlikely to recur. It has also lobbied very effectively to ensure that all funding due to the unit is made available to enhance the provision. In this way it is well involved in shaping the direction of the unit. The management group has a good understanding of relative strengths and weaknesses of the unit and is at one with the headteacher in desiring to have a full staff on permanent contracts.
46. There is good monitoring by the local education authority. There have been several visits by curriculum advisers. The good partnership here is evident in the way that the unit not only asks for advice but also takes it and uses it to good effect, by incorporating much of it in the satisfactory development plan. The education welfare service also gives good support. The headteacher visits all classrooms on a regular basis and this gives him a very clear view of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and in standards in different curriculum areas. The headteacher is regularly appraised in line with statutory requirements. Other teachers are only informally appraised. Whilst this is

thorough, it may not be sufficient to support threshold pay increases in future and this is a weakness. Induction procedures ensure that no staff are left in a vulnerable position. They are well supported by more experienced staff. The informality of these procedures constitutes a weakness in that there is no check to ensure that all procedures in the unit are fully understood and this could lead to contention in contentious circumstances.

47. The unit manages only a small part of its overall budget but it does this well. It is well funded because the management group and the local education authority have made sure that monies that are designated to support pupils are made available in their entirety. This means that large projects have been able to be undertaken, such as the development of an excellent workshop, which contributes significantly to the high achievement in woodwork. Until very recently the extra money for pupils with statements of special educational need has been used to employ temporary support staff for those children. In a good initiative, a sum approximating to that amount is now being added to the school budget to facilitate more permanent staffing. Specific grants are well accounted for and used appropriately, most recently to enhance the number and quality of books and also staff training in behaviour management.
48. The good number of teachers ensures that classes can be kept to a size where behaviour can be well managed whilst still facilitating discussion and occasionally group work. There is a small range of subject expertise, sufficient however to ensure that all of the curriculum can be effectively delivered. Good support is always available to meet need. The accommodation is good overall. Many classrooms are small but this is not limiting what can be taught except in science. There is no gymnasium but very good use is made of facilities in the locality. The accommodation is immaculately maintained and demonstrates the pride that the caretaker, all staff and also the pupils have in the unit. This contributes significantly to the very good ethos. Resources are good and are still improving. Funding to improve resources is always made available when need is identified.

WHAT SHOULD THE UNIT DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards the local education authority, management group and headteacher should now:-

1. strengthen the curriculum by the introduction of:-
 - more humanities
 - more opportunities for pupils to conduct investigations and experiments in science
 - a greater range of practical experiences

2. continue to focus on improving attendance by:-
 - increasing the range of accreditation to motivate pupils in Year 11
 - monitoring individual patterns of attendance so that any improvements can be rewarded
 - increasing the range of college link courses to provide a logical progression for pupils about to leave and thus encourage them to think of school as a stepping stone rather than the end of the road

3. creating better facilities for the teaching of science

4. ensure that appropriate link courses are established for as many pupils as possible and that every opportunity is pursued to create meaningful work experience placements

5. improve the assessment of pupils' academic progress to:-
 - enable the setting of more precise targets for individuals, thus allowing any progress, however small, to be recognised and rewarded.
 - enable comparisons to be made between progress and achievement being achieved in different subjects

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES:-

Citizenship

There is an informal half - hour daily lesson on “Citizenship for All” held in the dining area. Firstly, registration and afternoon lessons/options are resolved. A topic or issue is then discussed which reinforces values the school is trying to promote – good positive behaviour, relationships, drug and alcohol abuse, respect, responsibilities – all aimed at improving and raising an awareness of good citizenship. Pupils are congratulated and praised for demonstrating good behaviour on previous visits. They are admonished for inappropriate behaviour that occurred during a previous visit. Emphasis is placed on work experience placements and visits, which could lead to employment opportunities. A forthcoming visit to a local pottery factory was carefully outlined by the headteacher who was very informed and knowledgeable about the manufacture of pottery. In another lesson pupils listened attentively about the effects of drug abuse. An anger management project worker was present and informed the pupils of the possible disastrous consequences of taking drugs. One pupil spoke openly about a drug-related problem within the family. This lesson was of relevance and concern to the pupils particularly as there had been a drug related incident with a pupil at the unit the previous day. This half-hour lesson is an important aspect of the unit’s work. It has an impact on many of the pupils’ lives and is a valuable role of the unit. During these lessons pupils are well behaved and contribute openly to frank discussions. Other teachers and support staff also attend so that all are aware of these issues. This contributes towards the good relationship and respect that exists between pupils and staff in the unit.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	13	68	10	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the unit's pupils

Pupils on the unit's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the unit's roll	35

Special educational needs	No of pupils
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the unit's special educational needs register	35

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
Unit data	10	Unit data	22

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for last whole term before the inspection

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	35
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y10– Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y10 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	134

Financial information*

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	296,000
Total expenditure	296,000
Expenditure per pupil	8,500
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	0

* The unit does not have a fully devolved budget

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	31
Number of questionnaires returned	8

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The parents' meeting was well attended. All present were very keen to express their support of the unit. They felt that it was helping their children to complete their education and felt well informed about what goes on and how their children are performing. All feel welcome and like the informality of the unit, are pleased that their children do not get bullied and are not stigmatised but treated as human beings