

INSPECTION REPORT

THE BRIDGE EDUCATION CENTRE

PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT

Eastleigh

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115838

Headteacher: Mrs M. Turnill

Lead inspector: Mrs C. Marsh

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th March 2005

Inspection number: 273713

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIT

Type of school:	Key Stage 3 and 4 permanently excluded pupils, Key Stage 4 emotionally vulnerable pupils and Key Stage 2 behaviour support outreach
School category:	Pupil Referral Unit
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	27
School address:	2C Newtown Road Eastleigh Hampshire
Postcode:	SO50 9DB
Telephone number:	02380 629306
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Appropriate authority:	Hampshire LEA
Name of responsible officer:	Mr C. Diaper
Date of previous inspection:	April 2001

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UNIT

This pupil referral unit (PRU) is effectively a new unit which opened just over two years ago, when a previously existing unit (for Year 10-11 pupils) was amalgamated with new provision for pupils in Years 7-9. The unit occupies two sites: an unconverted special school near the centre of Eastleigh, catering for permanently excluded pupils in Years 7-9, together with any emotionally vulnerable pupils in Years 10 and 11; and a site (Woodside) catering for permanently excluded pupils in Years 10-11, three miles away, where accommodation is in temporary classrooms in the grounds of a church hall. The unit serves pupils in central Hampshire. Although this large geographical area is mainly economically advantaged, there is some social and economic deprivation. The head of the unit also manages the school provision at a purpose-built adolescent psychiatric hospital on the outskirts of Winchester, and the primary behaviour support team who are based on the Eastleigh site and who work in 72 primary schools, with pupils in danger of exclusion. At the time of the inspection, there were 27 pupils on the roll of the unit itself, 20 aged 14-16, and 7 aged 11-14. Of these pupils, seven were girls. Two pupils were in public care. Numbers are expected to rise during the year.

Attainment on entry is below average. Pupils have a wide range of special educational needs, predominantly social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. (At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils classed as being "emotionally vulnerable".) At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils from ethnic minority groups, no refugees, asylum seekers or travellers and there were no pupils for whom English was not their first language. There were no pupils with statements of special educational needs.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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14070	Mrs J. Tasker	Lay inspector	
1204	Mr D. Bolton	Team inspector	English, Information and Communication Technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good unit. For many pupils, attending the unit is a turning point. Pupils achieve well in their work overall, and they make satisfactory progress in their personal development. Teaching and learning are good. The quality of relationships is good. The leadership and management of the unit are good, with a constant focus on improvement. However, in spite of the unit's best efforts, there are major problems in reintegrating pupils into mainstream schools or other appropriate provision, and the local education authority (LEA) inappropriately uses the unit as an "alternative school". Parents and pupils value the work of the unit. Although the unit is expensive to run, it provides satisfactory value for money.

The unit's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is good thanks to effective teaching and the good level of care and support.
- Effective, thoughtful leadership and management support improvement.
- Pupils' attendance improves.
- The educational provision at the adolescent psychiatric hospital is of high quality.
- The work of the behaviour support team in mainstream schools is helping to reduce exclusions.
- Some pupils do not get a full-time education.
- Accommodation problems restrict what the unit can offer and are holding back developments.
- Some pupils stay at the unit for too long.
- Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory for pupils in Years 7-9.
- The Eastleigh and Woodside sites still operate too much as two separate units.

The unit has made good progress since the last inspection. However, since the last inspection, the unit has changed radically. It has a much wider remit and no longer caters solely for pupils in Years 10-11. Many strengths from the previous inspection have been built on. However, the weakness in accommodation identified in that inspection has not been adequately resolved and is a key reason why some pupils are not getting full-time education.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement at the end of:	In relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 9	Good	Good
Year 11	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.

Overall, achievement is good. Standards are below average, but, taking account of their starting points, pupils make good progress. For pupils in Years 7-9, achievement is good in all subjects except English, where it is satisfactory, and information and communication technology (ICT), where it is unsatisfactory. For pupils in Years 10-11, achievement is good in all subjects except mathematics, where it is satisfactory. Pupils gain worthwhile results in examinations. Achievement is very good for pupils taught in the adolescent psychiatric hospital. Overall, pupils make good progress in achieving the targets set in their individual education plans (IEP's).

Pupils' personal development while at the unit, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Pupils' improvement in this area is hard won. Their attendance and punctuality show good improvement. The improvements in their attitudes, behaviour and personal development are satisfactory. They gain in confidence and self-esteem and learn to manage themselves better. For a few pupils with the most extreme behavioural difficulties, behaviour remains a problem. For some of these pupils, the unit is an inappropriate placement.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the unit is good. The unit is successful in helping to keep pupils in education. **Teaching and learning are good overall**, and the recording and use of assessment is good. Teaching and learning are best in science, in mathematics in Years 7-9, in English and design and technology in Years 10-11 and at the adolescent psychiatric hospital. The usually successful way that behaviour is managed is leading to pupils learning to apply themselves and become interested in their work. The curriculum is satisfactory, but there are weaknesses in the accommodation, which are holding back developments, and some pupils are not getting a full-time education. There are weaknesses in ICT in Years 7-9. Opportunities for enrichment are good for the older pupils and satisfactory for the others. The unit enjoys the support of pupils and parents. Good links with parents and good levels of care, together with good support and guidance, help pupils to overcome the barriers that have faced them in the past. However, some pupils stay at the unit for too long.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the unit are good. The leadership provided by the head and by other staff is good. Management is good. It is thoughtful, reflective and evaluative and aims for high achievement. Staff work hard to make sure that all pupils are included and that their past history and present needs and circumstances do not prevent them from learning. Governance by the local education authority (LEA) is satisfactory overall – but it has failed to ensure that pupils have a genuine exit route and, for too many pupils, this has resulted in the unit being used as an “alternative school” rather than for short-term placement. Most statutory requirements are met – except that some pupils are not getting full-time education.

PARENTS’ AND PUPILS’ VIEWS OF THE UNIT

Parents are positive about the unit and feel it makes a difference. They value the support and guidance given to pupils and the fact that the staff know individual pupils and their needs well. Some would like to see pupils move back into mainstream school more quickly.

Most pupils appreciate what the unit offers, particularly the individual support, but would like additional facilities on the site for other subjects.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the unit and the LEA should do to improve are:

- The unit and the LEA should ensure that all pupils get full-time education.
- The LEA should ensure that accommodation problems are resolved.
- The LEA should improve reintegration rates and ensure that pupils have genuine exit plans so that the unit is not inappropriately used as alternative provision rather than for short-term placement.
- The unit should improve achievement in ICT for the younger pupils.
- The unit should improve the way the two sites work together as a single unit.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' standards of attainment are below average for pupils' ages. However, most pupils make good progress and achievement is good overall. Achievement of patients at the adolescent psychiatric hospital is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The progress most pupils make from low starting points is good, helped by the positive climate set in the unit.
- Pupils in Years 7-9 make good progress in most subjects, thanks to good teaching – but in information and communication technology (ICT), achievement is unsatisfactory.
- In Years 10-11, pupils achieve well – but do best in English, science, design and technology and personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- The achievement of pupils taught at the psychiatric hospital is very good.
- Some pupils have been in the unit too long and reintegration rates are not as good as they should be.

Commentary

1. The Bridge Centre does well by its pupils and makes a significant difference to them. Achievement is good, even though levels of attainment are below average, and in some cases well below, for pupils' ages, reflecting their previous history of disrupted education. All pupils have significant psychiatric, social, emotional or behavioural problems and some have extreme behavioural difficulties. When their starting point and circumstances are taken into account, they make good progress during their time in the unit. The reflective, positive climate generated by the head is at the centre of what is achieved. Pupils are constantly encouraged and staff make repeated efforts to raise pupils' sights. Adults take good account of pupils' circumstances, know their pupils well and use this to provide the significant levels of all-round care and support they need, as for example in the case of pupils in public care. All of this helps pupils get back on track and do better in their work.

2. In Years 7-9, although standards remain below average, pupils are helped to take their work seriously – an important step forward for many. They get to grips with aspects of work that have held them back in the past and they make good progress in most lessons. Achievement is good in most subjects, including the core subjects of mathematics and science, and PSHE, thanks to good teaching and the impact of the national strategies. In English, achievement is satisfactory. In ICT, however, achievement is unsatisfactory. The subject has not had the emphasis it should have had, the programme of work is not well enough developed and pupils have not covered enough in a systematic way or made enough progress.

3. In Years 10-11, pupils' achievement is good in English, science, design and technology and PSHE. Again, this is due to the quality of teaching. Achievement is satisfactory in mathematics and ICT, where expectations of pupils could be raised further. The fact remains that nearly all Year 11 pupils achieve results in GCSE or Entry Level, often exceeding the expectations that they, their parents and others had of them when they were referred to the unit. The destinations of Year 11 pupils when they leave the unit confirm this picture and show how they have overcome significant barriers to success.

4. Patients at the adolescent psychiatric hospital achieve very well. Those taking GCSE examinations last year achieved high results in the subjects they sat. The supportive ethos, the good quality of the curriculum, the carefully tailored programmes and very good teaching all contribute to the very good progress pupils make in their work.

5. There is a significant number of permanently excluded pupils for whom, in spite of the unit's best efforts, reintegration to mainstream school or other specialist provision is just not happening, even when they are ready to move on from the unit. Although these pupils are clearly benefiting from the time they get at the unit, the progress they are able to make across the whole curriculum is limited by what the unit can offer. In some cases the needs of those pupils with extreme behavioural or mental health problems means they are inappropriately placed at the unit and stay there for too long. This problem looks likely to worsen as more pupils move up the age range and transfer to the site catering for older pupils. The LEA has yet to find a solution to this.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The improvement in pupils' attendance is good. The improvements in their attitudes, behaviour and personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The unit makes a good job of improving pupils' attendance.
- The unit is helping pupils to develop more positive attitudes to learning, and to trust and respect adults in authority.
- Some teachers find it difficult to manage the extremes of challenging behaviour of some pupils.
- There has been an over-use of fixed-term exclusion as a sanction.

Commentary

6. Whilst unauthorised absence is quite high, particularly in Year 11, attendance levels improve significantly during pupils' time in the unit, thanks to the effective procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. The unit's strategies for chasing up non-attendance are thorough – parents are swiftly contacted if their child fails to attend. There is good support from the education welfare officer when a pupil's attendance is causing concern. This is paying off.

7. It is clear from records that pupils have come to the unit with a history of disaffection and significant behaviour problems, some of them deep-seated. The unit provides a safe and secure environment where each member of the community is consistently respected and valued. Staff have a clear understanding of individual pupils' personal histories and circumstance and are committed to helping them to overcome their previous difficulties. Because of this, most pupils have made progress in their personal development. They are gaining in self-confidence and self-esteem, and are learning to respect and trust adults in authority. The pupils learn to take their work seriously, to persevere and to apply themselves. This is helping them prepare to move into their next stage in life with a greater chance of success.

8. Although pupils do improve their behaviour, some with extreme behavioural difficulties still struggle with their problems. There is a significant number of pupils with very challenging behaviour. Occasionally, in Years 10 and 11, unacceptable language and behaviour are too easily condoned. In Years 7-9 also, many of the pupils are very volatile and prone to aggressive and abusive outbursts. Most staff are skilled in handling such behaviour and in forestalling or defusing challenging situations. On many occasions they know when and how to intervene so that those pupils can be helped to change. However, this is not consistent and not all staff effectively use the strategies which pupils are being encouraged to adopt in order to manage their frustration or improve their behaviour.

9. The staff on both sites have recognised that using short fixed-term exclusions, as a sanction is not working for some of the most challenging pupils. Rightly, they have significantly reduced the use of this sanction over the past months. They have yet to appropriately revise the current programme of rewards and sanctions.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6
National data	N/A

Unauthorised absence	
School data	26
National data	N/A

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
27	80	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE UNIT

The quality of education provided by the unit is good. The unit is successful in helping to keep pupils in education. Teaching and learning are good overall, and the recording and use of assessment is good. The curriculum is satisfactory, but there are weaknesses in the accommodation which are holding back developments, and some pupils are not getting a full-time education. There are weaknesses in ICT in Years 7-9. Opportunities for enrichment are good for the older pupils and satisfactory for the others. The unit enjoys the support of pupils and parents. Good links with parents and good levels of care, together with good support and guidance, help pupils to overcome the barriers that have faced them in the past. However, some pupils stay at the unit for too long.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall, and consequently learning is good. Assessment of pupils' work is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good deal of good and very good teaching spread across a range of subjects, for pupils of all ages.
- Teaching and learning are best in science, in mathematics in Years 7-9, in English and design and technology in Years 10-11 and at the adolescent psychiatric hospital.
- For the most part, teachers manage challenging behaviour effectively.
- Good assessment is used to help pupils improve their performance.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8 (18%)	13 (30%)	21 (47%)	2 (5%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

10. Teaching and learning are good. Past work and the way that pupils have performed in public examinations show that good teaching is usual in the unit. Most teachers have a good command of the subjects they teach and find ways of making it interesting, accessible and yet challenging for pupils who are often only too aware of their past failures. Teachers are generally good at encouraging their pupils and building their confidence and self-esteem, valuing their contributions, recognising and praising their achievements. They find a range of ways to keep pupils actively

involved and maintain the pace of lessons. Because teachers know their pupils well, thorough planning usually takes account of what different individuals need to tackle next. Most work is well structured to ensure success, but without spoon-feeding. In the best teaching, expectations are high and pupils sometimes surprise themselves with what they achieve. Teaching is best in science, in mathematics in Years 7-9, in English and design and technology in Years 10-11, and at the adolescent psychiatric hospital. Where teaching and learning were satisfactory rather than good during the inspection, this was usually because the level of challenge could have been higher; pupils made satisfactory, but not good, progress in their work.

11. Pupils' difficult or reluctant behaviour undoubtedly presents a particular challenge to teachers. In most cases this is well managed, sometimes with considerable resourcefulness. In the majority of lessons, teachers are good at modifying work to overcome reluctance and difficulties. However, in a few cases during the inspection, teachers struggled to handle more extreme behaviour effectively and this slowed down pupils' learning. On rare occasions, unsatisfactory teaching and learning were the result of difficulties in managing behaviour and engaging pupils' attention and cooperation.

12. Assessment procedures are generally good. Most staff are well aware of what pupils know, understand and can do and the recording and tracking of academic progress is good overall, although it varies between subjects and between teachers, from very good to satisfactory. In many, but not all, subjects, good use is made of baseline assessment information to determine pupils' starting points in their learning. However, learning targets are not as sharp as they should be, particularly for the younger pupils. In the best practice, for example in science for all pupils, in mathematics in Years 7-9, and in English and design and technology in Years 10-11, the daily evaluation of how pupils have performed in lessons has a clear influence on subsequent planning and is a key factor helping teachers to spur their pupils on.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**. Opportunities for enrichment are **satisfactory** overall – but good for older pupils. Accommodation and resources are **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Educational provision at the adolescent psychiatric hospital is of high quality.
- Some pupils are not getting a full-time education.
- Accommodation problems restrict what the unit can offer and are holding back developments.
- Older pupils have a good range of opportunities beyond normal classroom lessons.

Commentary

13. For patients at the adolescent psychiatric hospital, the hospital education team, working in a close, multi-disciplinary partnership with other professionals, makes a very good job of minimising the disruption to the education of young people of statutory school age. In fact, it provides an effective, high quality education. The curriculum here is very good because it is flexibly and sensitively matched to the needs and circumstances of individuals, helped by good liaison with the pupils' mainstream schools. Pupils' individual programmes (as well as individual lessons) are meticulously planned, the work is very well taught and pupils achieve very well – last year's GCSE results, for example, were very good. The curriculum at the hospital is suitably broad and balanced, with particularly good opportunities in the creative arts – recognised by the *Artsmark* award – and a wide range of cultural, sporting and other activities. The school rooms are in attractive, purpose-built accommodation, which, together with the very good level of care and support, creates a high quality learning environment.

14. Older pupils attending the Woodside site of the Bridge Centre PRU are offered a package of academic lessons in the centre (with a proper emphasis on the core subjects), supplemented by a programme of additional off-site activities, as well as the opportunity to take vocational courses at a

further education college and, where appropriate, extended work experience. This programme works well in some cases. However, in practice, for a variety of reasons (including the lack of availability of suitable further education placements) too many pupils are not on vocational courses or extended work experience – and there is no other educational provision to make up for this. For them, the overall “package” does not constitute a full-time education. This is unacceptable.

15. This weakness is linked to deficiencies in accommodation. The LEA has been aware for some considerable time that the Woodside site (for pupils in Years 10 and 11) has not had enough accommodation to take pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 at the same time – a barrier to providing full-time education. (Only very recently has some additional temporary accommodation been brought to the site.) The Eastleigh site (for younger pupils) lacks adequate specialist facilities for design and technology, art and science, restricting the range of subjects the unit can offer effectively. The continued uncertainty over plans to develop the accommodation at Eastleigh and to bring all pupils together on one site has hampered development, making more difficult the tasks of curriculum coordination, efficient staff deployment and best use of curriculum expertise.

16. Staff work hard to overcome these evident constraints and to provide pupils with a suitable curriculum. Older pupils in particular have a good range of opportunities for enhancement to the curriculum they receive. There are curriculum related visits (the recent theatre visit being a good example), cultural days and special projects, including, for example, music workshops, video making and participation in a local motor vehicle project. The programme of off-site activities is wide ranging, including not only sports, outdoor pursuits, team-building and leisure options, but also creative activities, first aid training and preparation for vehicle ownership and driving, for example. Such activities undoubtedly benefit the pupils – but the fact remains that some of these same pupils are short of overall teaching time.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils’ care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. Support, advice and guidance are **good**. The involvement of pupils in the work and development of the unit is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know pupils well and are committed to providing a safe, supportive environment.
- Good tracking arrangements help keep the focus on improving learning and behaviour.
- The support given to pupils in mainstream schools is helping prevent exclusion.
- Individual education plans for the younger pupils do not include academic targets.

Commentary

17. Staff in the unit, as well as at the adolescent psychiatric hospital and in the behaviour support team, have a good knowledge of their pupils’ backgrounds, circumstances and needs. They are good at helping their pupils to form trusting relationships with them and work hard to provide an environment in which pupils can feel secure, supported, accepted and valued. Even in the face of the extremes of behaviour which sometimes arise, staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils’ safety and always show a high level of commitment to promoting their well-being.

18. The unit has good arrangements for tracking pupils’ progress in their work and behaviour. There is a good system of lesson-by-lesson review with pupils against the targets set for each individual, with careful monitoring of trends, weekly one-to-one sessions with tutors and regular formal reviews (to which parents are invited) where progress is assessed and, where appropriate, new targets and strategies are agreed. This clear tracking framework (which is under continual review and refinement) and the consistency in following it through help both staff and pupils keep the focus on improving learning and behaviour.

19. The behaviour support team, which is managed from the unit, works in mainstream primary schools and provides a good level of support to pupils and their schools. Thanks to effective initial

assessment, clear planning and target-setting, rigorous tracking and review and the strong emphasis on working in partnership with school staff, parents and other agencies, the support programmes bring about measurable improvements in pupils' behaviour. The support is well regarded by schools and is helping to keep pupils in school who would otherwise be at risk of exclusion. Although there is no parallel behaviour support team working with secondary schools, headteachers value the advice and guidance offered by the head of the unit in dealing with particularly challenging cases, in their efforts to reduce exclusion.

20. Whilst the unit's individual education plans (IEPs) for pupils in Years 10 and 11 include both behavioural and academic (literacy and numeracy) targets, IEPs for younger pupils focus solely on behaviour targets. In some subjects, individual teachers do helpfully identify specific targets for improvement, but these are not subject to the same regular review.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The unit has good links with parents. Links with the community are good. Links with schools and colleges are satisfactory.

- The unit successfully involves parents with their child's learning and has particularly strong relationships with parents of pupils in Years 10-11.
- The unit makes good use of community links and partnerships to extend opportunities for pupils.
- Whilst the unit works hard with schools to try to help pupils reintegrate, there are difficulties finding accepting schools.

21. The unit makes good efforts to ensure that all parents and also carers of looked after pupils are kept well informed and involved with their child's personal and academic progress. The tutor system works well and the daily staff briefing and debriefing meetings at both sites are thorough and detailed so that staff are aware of pupils' personal and home situations. All contacts, actions and concerns are scrupulously logged and updated. The unit's brochure goes to parents at the time their child is referred to the unit and this written information is reinforced through the induction meeting and the completion and signing of home-school agreements and other consents forms. Importance is placed on the rights and responsibilities of parents and pupils from the outset. The regular review meetings that involve parents and pupils track progress well and involve parents with decision making.

22. Staff on the Woodside site (for Year10-11 pupils), which has been in existence for longer, have built particularly strong relationships with parents through parents' evenings and certificate evenings that are popular with both parents and pupils. Attendance at these events has improved to the extent that a recent parents' evening was attended by the parents of every pupil. The unit has also sought to set up a School Council involving parents, pupils and the local church. Although this initiative has struggled (and the council is not currently operating), it demonstrates the unit's commitment to encouraging involvement. The plans to increase parental initiatives at Eastleigh during 2005 and to improve the overall use of feedback from parents are positive developments.

23. The unit is outward looking and seeks opportunities for joint working with local agencies and the community on projects that bring benefit to pupils. The 'In Touch' project has particularly benefited Year 8 and 9 pupils through an imaginative approach bringing together professionals from social care, behaviour support and play. Pupils have improved in their social communication and gained confidence to participate in daily home and school life. Parents are positive about this project as a real help for their child to integrate. A number of established links at the Woodside unit have enabled pupils at the unit to participate, for example, in fund raising events for cancer relief, arts and music projects with Winchester Arts Council, involvement with a counselling project and the wide range of pursuits organised with Hampshire Youth Options. Pupils also have opportunities for visits, such as those to the local theatre and to the Houses of Parliament and the London Eye following a visit to the unit by the local Member of Parliament.

24. Schools and the local college have a good regard for the work of the staff at the unit and individual relationships are well established. However the LEA has no agreed protocol with secondary schools for the reintegration of permanently excluded pupils. This has resulted in a piece-meal and case-by-case approach, with some pupils remaining in the unit too long because of the lack of a suitable placement. Pupils' access to courses at the local college is also limited.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. Both the leadership and the management of the unit are thoughtful and evaluative. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Self-evaluation strategies are robust, well embedded in the unit's practices and underpin planning – the unit is managed reflectively.
- The work of the behaviour support team and the education provision at the adolescent psychiatric hospital are well led and managed.
- The LEA's continued failure to address the accommodation inadequacies by implementing its agreed plan is preventing the unit from achieving its planned improvements and from providing full-time education for some pupils.
- The LEA's failure to ensure that pupils have exit plans is resulting in the unit being used as an alternative provision rather than for short-term placements.
- Progress has been slow in establishing consistency of practice across the unit's two sites, which still operate too much as two separate units.

Commentary

25. The unit is well led and managed. There is a positive culture of reflection and self-evaluation, with action being taken to address identified issues. Self-evaluation permeates the work of the unit and provides a secure foundation for improvement plans, which are good. The head has a secure understanding of what is happening across the various aspects of provision, including education at the adolescent psychiatric hospital and the work of the behaviour support service. Observation of teaching is regular and well supported by the LEA's link inspector. The head has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and manages the outcomes of performance management to promote the continuing professional development of staff in order to tackle weaknesses and to meet the improvement objectives of the unit. The LEA has in place effective arrangements for monitoring the quality of provision and the link inspector's support and guidance in this area is valued by the head. Improvement planning is of high quality, with challenging yet realistic targets.

26. The work of both the primary behaviour support team and the teaching staff in the adolescent psychiatric hospital is of high quality. Clear and effective procedures and strategies are in place to meet the varying needs of the pupils with whom they work. Under the leadership of the head, the team leaders work successfully to make high quality provision for these vulnerable pupils. The primary behaviour support team monitors and evaluates very successfully the improvements in individual pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and is effective in helping pupils to modify and improve their behaviour, helping to reduce exclusion.

27. The accommodation on the Woodside site (for Years 10-11) was identified in the last inspection as one of the issues for improvement in order for the unit to meet the requirement to provide full-time education for all pupils. A new temporary classroom has just been put into use. However, this has not solved the accommodation problem, merely eased it somewhat. The LEA has set aside "new build" monies and has drawn up plans for alterations to enable the Eastleigh site to provide accommodation for all pupils on a single site. This has been the agreed expectation by unit managers since 2002. However, the unit is still no nearer to seeing the plans become a reality. The year-on-year postponement of the implementation of the plan has resulted in some pupils still not receiving full-time education, has had a cumulative effect of demotivating staff and has hindered the unit from achieving some of its planned improvements, including functioning as one unit, rather than

two. In addition, the failure to move ahead as planned has prevented the LEA from providing a clear educational direction for the unit's development.

28. In spite of the unit's best efforts and the personal efforts of the head, pupils remain too long in the unit. Too few pupils, particularly the younger ones, return to mainstream schools or move on to other appropriate provision, including special schools. The LEA does not have an agreement with head teachers on where and how pupils from the unit should be reintegrated. This is creating a logjam in the unit, forces it to become an alternative provision, and prevents it from working in a preventative capacity with secondary schools. It is too readily accepted by the LEA that some pupils in Years 7-9 may remain in the unit for the remainder of their schooling. This is not the purpose of a PRU as defined by the LEA itself.

29. Even recognising all the difficulties the unit has had in terms of constantly deferred hope in moving to a single site, senior managers have been too slow in creating a coherence and consistency of expectation and practice across the two sites. While relationships between staff on both sites are cordial and communication is regular, the two sites are still operating largely as two separate units. For pupils who look set to move from the Years 7-9 site at Eastleigh to the Years 10-11 site at Woodside, this separateness is not helping them in their transition.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well thanks to effective teaching.
- There is some very good teaching of pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- Younger pupils need more help in developing extended writing.

Commentary

30. Achievement in English is good overall. For pupils in Years 7-9, achievement is satisfactory; for pupils in Years 10 and 11, it is good – and very good for those who start out as the most disaffected lower attainers. Whilst attainment is below average for pupils' ages, reflecting their starting points and disrupted education, pupils improve while they are at the unit. Younger pupils steadily improve in their reading and spelling, thanks to structured support, and make sound progress in their speaking and listening and in their writing – benefiting from the increased attention they enjoy in the small teaching groups and the boost they get to their confidence. Older pupils are inspired to work hard and tackle all aspects of the subject with increasing interest and commitment, thanks to the quality of teaching. They cover a good deal of work and examination results at GCSE and Entry Level show good achievement. Some pupils in Years 10 and 11 with low prior attainment and a poor previous experience of the subject make particularly marked progress in improving their language skills as well as the maturity of their thinking and response to the texts they study.

31. While the teaching of English is good overall – and is never less than satisfactory – there is some very good teaching in Years 10 and 11. In the best lessons, rigorous planning of the programme of work and high expectations of what even the most challenging pupils can achieve go hand in hand with enthusiastic, lively teaching to grab pupils' interest and attention. Pupils are challenged to get below the surface of what they read, to think about the writer's intentions and to explore their own reactions and response – and the reasons for it. They learn to identify the devices the writers use and to assess their impact. They take the work and their own achievement seriously. Some younger pupils do not have enough encouragement and opportunity to develop sustained writing. They benefit from structured work and from using writing frames, but need more help – for example, through "modelling" by the teacher, talking through the process – in order to develop their independence.

32. The leadership and management of the subject are handled well on each of the two sites, with planning, organisation, assessment, administration and development being particularly strong on the Woodside site. However, what is lacking at present is coordination between the two sites and overall leadership and management, in the interest of progression and continuity.

33. Provision has changed considerably since the last inspection (when the unit catered solely for pupils in Years 10 and 11) – but the improving trend has been maintained.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

34. Teachers in most subjects contribute to the development of pupils' language and literacy, helped by the fact that pupils' needs are well known within the small team of teachers on each site. All teachers make a point of teaching key vocabulary specific to their subject.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subject expertise, coupled with carefully planned lessons, is helping pupils in Years 7-9 to make good progress and become more confident in their mathematical abilities.
- Some mathematical activities for pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not as challenging as they could be.
- Good behaviour management is helping younger pupils to develop trust and respect for adults in authority.

Commentary

35. Pupils' standards are below what is expected nationally, but their achievement is satisfactory overall, and for younger pupils it is good. In Years 7-9, lessons are well planned with clear learning outcomes. The teacher has an in-depth knowledge of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses and uses assessment well in planning the work. There is an appropriately strong emphasis on supporting pupils' numeracy skills. They handle simple data confidently, interpreting bar charts and identifying the mode and range from a given set of numbers. All of this is helping pupils to become more confident about their mathematical abilities and to become more positive about the subject.

36. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 make satisfactory progress overall. However, they achieve less well in mathematics in terms of examination results than they do in other externally accredited courses. They also achieve less well in terms of achieving their predicted grades than they do in other subjects. The lack of information about how well pupils are attaining in mathematics when they start at the unit makes it difficult for the teacher to be confident about their mathematical ability, to identify gaps in their knowledge or to make secure predictions about their potential in terms of GCSE grades. Sometimes, the activities given to the pupils lack sufficient challenge and this restricts their achievement. With higher expectations of pupils' standards and work rate, their achievement could be better than satisfactory.

37. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall, but is good for pupils in Years 7-9. For pupils of all ages, staff consistently show respect for pupils and maintain a calm approach to them, frequently in the face of difficult and challenging behaviour. In Years 7-9, however, the skilful managing of disturbed and difficult behaviour, defusing situations and helping pupils to re-focus quickly on their work and to experience success, is helping them to improve their behaviour. The successful maintaining of a clear focus on work is key in reducing their challenging behaviour. Through the support they receive, through being treated with respect and through becoming more confident and competent in their work, pupils are learning to respect and trust adults in authority. This is preparing them to progress more confidently into their next stage in life.

38. While there is no overall leadership of mathematics across the unit, the leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory on each of the two sites.

Mathematics across the curriculum

39. The development of numeracy across the curriculum has not yet been planned systematically, although pupils do use mathematical skills effectively in other subjects such as science and cooking.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop a positive attitude to science thanks to enthusiastic and energetic teaching.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good.
- Assessment is good.

Commentary

40. Pupils come to the unit with a wide range of attainment in science. Overall, attainment is below average, although a few older pupils achieve standards in line with what is expected nationally. Results at GCSE and Entry Level reflect this picture. Given pupils' starting points, achievement is good. Pupils' work and teachers' records show that most pupils have made noticeably good progress over their time in the unit, and in some cases have made very good progress. Often starting from a point of disaffection and disadvantage, pupils overcome a reluctance to become involved in science, and they are developing more positive and sometimes even enthusiastic approaches to the subject. They are attentive during the teacher's explanations and they respond positively to questions and occasionally raise some of their own. Pupils are learning to evaluate the effect that man has on the environment, and relate this to their own behaviour and interests.

41. Teaching is very well planned and prepared for pupils of all ages and lessons are energetically and enthusiastically taught. Learning is often fun. There is a good focus on practical investigations, which interests and motivates pupils to take part in the lessons. There is a good emphasis on using appropriate scientific terminology and most pupils use it accurately. They are being taught to use their scientific knowledge and understanding to make predictions and draw conclusions. Teaching has an appropriate level of challenge and takes account of the national curriculum and the national strategy. Pupils cover a lot of content in all three sciences, and as a result make good gains in scientific skills knowledge and understanding.

42. Leadership and management of the subject are good and improvement since the last inspection has been good, particularly over the past year. Assessment is thorough, pupils are clear about their individual targets and they know what they have to do to improve. In both planning and teaching, good attention is given to meeting individual pupils' needs and to ensuring that each pupil makes best possible progress. Very occasionally, the extreme behavioural difficulties of some pupils make this impossible to achieve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**, because of a weakness in Years 7-9.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory, leading to satisfactory achievement.
- Pupils in Years 7-9 have not achieved enough because the ICT programme is not yet well enough developed.

Commentary

43. Although attainment is below average for pupils' ages, pupils in Years 10 and 11 make sound progress and, given their starting points, achievement is satisfactory. This is reflected in pupils' Entry Level results. Pupils who complete the chosen units of work show that they are well able to meet the standard required – for example, in use of word-processing, spreadsheets, databases or graphics. (As yet, higher attaining pupils have not had the opportunity to take GCSE in the subject, but this is being considered for the future.) In Years 7-9, standards are also below average, but achievement is unsatisfactory. Although pupils make sound progress in individual lessons, they have not covered enough or made enough progress over time in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject in a systematic, progressive way. This is because the programme of work is not well enough established and developed. The unit is aware of

the weakness in this aspect of the curriculum and plans are included in the unit's improvement plan to tackle the situation.

44. In spite of this, teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well managed, based on clear plans with activities that engage pupils and keep them involved. Explanations and demonstrations are usually clear and pupils receive a good level of individual encouragement and support. In some lessons, the emphasis on teaching specific skills by getting pupils to follow closely prescribed, step-by-step instructions is at the expense of helping pupils to understand exactly why they are doing what they are doing – and to see how they will be able to apply and use these skills for themselves.

45. Although ICT has not yet had the emphasis it deserves in Years 7-9, the unit has drawn up a development plan for the use of ICT within the unit. This provides a good basis for improvement. However, arrangements for the leadership and management of ICT the across the two sites are weak.

46. Since the last inspection (when the unit catered only for Years 10 and 11), ICT facilities have improved, but there remains some way to go in bringing achievement up to the level of that in other core subjects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

47. Although ICT is used to help pupils with their work in a number of other subjects, this is not as well coordinated or promoted as it should be. The unit's plan recognises that improvement is needed in this respect.

OTHER AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM

48. Work was sampled in other subjects. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards and achievement.

49. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 take **design and technology**. (Pupils in Years 7-9 do not take the subject, because of the lack of facilities on the Eastleigh site and the difficulties in spreading the subject expertise across the two sites.) The lessons seen were good. Planning was thorough and lessons had clear aims, which were made explicit to pupils. Good use was made of assessment to inform the next steps in teaching and pupils were aware of how to improve their work. Work was carefully sequenced in small steps so that pupils were able to make progress. They generally responded well to this, worked with interest and stayed on task. Teaching made good use of the newly installed interactive whiteboard to demonstrate a range of new knowledge such as the extrusion of plastics. Most pupils listened and followed complex instructions and explanations well, and there were high levels of motivation and interest in design and technology practical activities. Occasionally, some pupils with extreme behaviour difficulties were allowed too much leeway and their learning suffered as a result. Their end products, for example boxes, tables and cabinets, are appropriately designed and well finished. In general, pupils have more difficulty with the design element than with the making element of the course. Nevertheless, results in GCSE have been good and demonstrate the progress that pupils make.

50. Pupils in Years 7-9 have the option to have one-to-one tuition in **modern languages**. At present, one pupil is taking French and one pupil, Spanish. In the French lesson seen, the pupil showed interest and perseverance in practising and consolidating language he had acquired previously and in learning new language on the topic of daily routine. The work is developing his confidence and giving him some useful building blocks for future language study.

51. The programme of **off-site activities** gives pupils a wide range of opportunities over and above those they receive in the unit itself. In the two sessions seen, most pupils responded well (although records show that, for some pupils, this is not always the case) and they benefited from what was on offer. Both sessions were handled well. In a simulation game based around owning and driving a car, Year 10 and 11 pupils became increasingly reflective in the decisions they took,

as the consequences of actions and choices began to sink in. Year 7-9 pupils enjoyed the outdoor activities provided and showing growing team work and consideration for others in the course of the session.

52. In lessons in **personal, social and health education (PSHE)**, pupils' interest was captured, thanks to effective teaching. Pupils were clear about where they were heading and what was expected of them. They were actively involved and worked at a good pace. The teachers' enthusiasm and knowledge of their subject were key factors in motivating pupils. Relationships and behaviour management were good. Due attention was paid to the health issues related to smoking, and, in the case of older pupils, to understanding how lives are influenced by the emotions of love and hate. There was a good emphasis on thinking about ethical and moral issues.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the unit	3
How inclusive the unit is	3
How the unit's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the unit	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	3
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the unit	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the unit seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the unit's links with parents	3
The quality of the unit's links with the community	3
The unit's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the unit	3
The governance of the unit	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).