

White House Unit

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117701
LEA Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number 280133
Inspection dates 24 January 2006 to 24 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr David Smith

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit	School address	Saltshouse Road
School category	Community		Hull
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		HU8 9HJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01482 701334
Number on roll	24	Fax number	01482 786919
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Barry Dibnah
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Gill Garnett

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 24 January 2006 - 24 January 2006	Inspection number 280133

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

The White House is a pupil referral unit providing education for up to 25 boys and girls. At the time of the inspection there were 21 boys and three girls on roll. There are eight part-time pupils in Years 1 and 2 who are also on a mainstream school's roll. One of these pupils has a statement of special educational needs and one is undergoing assessment. The 16 pupils in Years 4 to 6 attend full-time. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs, one is undergoing assessment and six pupils have draft statements. All pupils are white British and no pupils speak English as an additional language. One pupil is in public care. A high percentage of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The unit currently supports 57 pupils in mainstream schools who are at risk of exclusion.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The overall effectiveness of the unit is inadequate, rather than the satisfactory indicated by their own evaluation. The unit's self-evaluation has accurately described the strengths and weaknesses but judgements were too optimistic in some aspects. Significant improvement is required in relation to attendance, behaviour and target setting for pupils' performance. The level of challenge for pupils' writing, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects, education for sexual health and reducing the length of stay for some pupils also require significant improvement. The school has not made enough progress in tackling some of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. A strong leadership team is now in place which has the capacity to lead continual improvement, placing learning at the centre. Provision for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is at least satisfactory in all aspects, however, taking all factors into account, pupils do not achieve well enough in Years 4 to 6 so the unit provides unsatisfactory value for money. Mainstream schools appreciate the support provided by the unit.

The unit is therefore given a Notice to Improve. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this unit requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less than in all circumstances reasonably expected to perform.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the attendance and behaviour of pupils in Years 4 to 6 and, as a result, ensure they achieve well.
- Provide greater challenge through: rigorous target setting, higher expectations for pupils' writing and the consistent use of ICT in other subjects.
- Ensure pupils in Years 4 to 6 are provided with an appropriate school placement that meets their learning needs, within a reasonable timescale.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are below average because pupils have experienced considerable disruption to their education. However, achievement overall is unsatisfactory, rather than satisfactory as evaluated by the unit. There is no evidence to suggest differences in achievement between boys and girls or those in public care. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. They work towards appropriate targets and make satisfactory progress in their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and many of them return to mainstream schools on a full-time basis. Achievement in Years 2 to 4 is inadequate. The achievement of pupils that attend regularly is, in general, at least satisfactory. They make adequate progress in their reading, speaking and listening and numeracy. However, achievement in writing and ICT is inadequate. Achievement of pupils with poor attendance and those presenting particularly challenging behaviour is a major weakness as they do not make

enough progress in any aspect of their learning. It is inappropriate that some of the older pupils are placed in the unit for prolonged periods.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 4

The unit evaluates pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as satisfactory but the inspection judges it as inadequate. Attendance overall is unsatisfactory but has improved significantly recently when compared to last year. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 attend well, thoroughly enjoy their learning and are proud of their work. Staff work well together, developing pupils' confidence and good relationships and, as a result, they behave well. The extensive outside play area is used effectively to develop pupils' social skills. They are aware of the importance of staying safe and warned the inspector of the dangers linked to current building work. Some pupils in years 3 to 4 attend regularly and enjoy their time at the unit. However, too many do not attend regularly enough and have negative attitudes to learning. As a result, they make inadequate progress in their achievement and personal development. Recently, staff's ability to manage challenging behaviour has improved considerably due to training, but the number of exclusions and serious incidents are still too frequent. In addition, too few opportunities are provided to extend pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures. The unit successfully encourages pupils to take regular exercise and eat fruit. However, too many older pupils stay too long at the unit. This contributes to their negative behaviour and affects their achievement and does not prepare them well enough for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Inspection findings confirm the unit's view that teaching and learning are satisfactory. Strong teamwork between teachers and support staff is a major feature in all lessons. This, in particular, helps to develop positive relationships and gives pupils the confidence to take an active part in discussions. Effective communications between staff and their mainstream colleagues ensure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are working at the right level. Activities are varied and engage pupils in their learning. The adequate resources are well organised, but many of them need to be replaced. In Years 4 to 6, those pupils that attend regularly make satisfactory progress. However, teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough and tasks do not always challenge the full range of abilities. Many pupils are reluctant learners and require greater urgency from staff to motivate them. In particular, pupils try to limit the extent of their writing and recording. They respond best when teaching is confident and expectations are high. An effective focus is placed on the development of pupils' use of subject specific words, for example, types of joints in the body during a science lesson. Also there is a strong focus on the development of pupils' numeracy skills and they make best

progress when learning is made relevant to their everyday lives. However, pupils make insufficient progress in ICT because they have too few opportunities to use their skills in other subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Inspection findings confirm the unit's view that this aspect is satisfactory. There is an appropriate focus on the development of pupils' basic skills of literacy, numeracy and personal, social and health education. However, too few opportunities are provided to extend skills in ICT. The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is well managed and ensures pupils are well prepared for their return to full-time mainstream education. Their curriculum is enriched by play and practical activities that help to develop their skills and confidence. The curriculum in Years 4 to 6 meets the requirements of the local authority's policy. Staff focus on promoting pupils' decision-making skills and, for example, they help set their day-to-day targets. Pupils respond well to practical activities such as puppet making. Also, visits, for example to the Humber Bridge, make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Visitors also enrich the curriculum and pupils enjoy the opportunity, for example, to take part in musical activities. The provision for pupils' health education is satisfactory. They are made aware of the dangers of smoking and substance abuse but are not educated about sexual health.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The unit evaluates this aspect as good, but the inspection judges it to be satisfactory. In particular the formal reports to parents, an issue identified in the last inspection, provide insufficient information about what pupils know, can do and understand. Adequate care is taken of pupils within an improving ethos. The unit is very well staffed and the team are committed to pupils' welfare. Parents report that their children feel safe and are well cared for at the unit. Child protection and risk assessment procedures are well established and understood by staff. Serious incidents are decreasing and are carefully recorded to ensure the care and well-being of pupils and staff. The number of pupils who abscond has dramatically reduced and this has helped to improve pupils' safety and well-being. Pupils have clear behaviour targets but the unit has not developed systems to set challenging long-term performance targets. Consequently, targets are not set to focus on their performance in national tests at the end of Year 6 and achievement is inadequate. Pupils easily engage in conversation with staff and are confident that they have staff to talk to if they have concerns. The unit is developing its work with other agencies to more effectively meet the need of the pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The inspection agrees with the unit that leadership and management are satisfactory. Parents and carers have confidence in the leadership. The unit has been through a challenging period following the last inspection. Improvements since then have been inadequate rather than satisfactory as evaluated by the unit. However, recent improvements have begun to have a significant impact on the quality of education. The acting headteacher is very experienced with the skills and drive to lead continual improvement. She is fully committed to the unit and has quickly established a focused and cohesive team of leaders. The staff team share an ambition for success and the unit now has the capacity to improve. Self-evaluation is open and honest and clearly identifies the unit's strengths and weaknesses. For example, subject co-ordinators need to be more involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning to boost pupils' progress. The unit development plan is a robust working document that links performance management and continuing professional development for staff. The management committee are supportive and share the team's determination to drive forward continual improvement.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	4	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4	NA
The behaviour of learners	4	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	No
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	No
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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Mrs Gill Garnett

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24 January 2006

Dear Pupils

I enjoyed my visit to your unit. You made me feel welcome and I enjoyed watching you play football during the break. Also particular thanks to the younger pupils for showing me your lovely work.

This is what I found out about your unit;

Your headteacher, in particular, is very determined for the unit to improve.

Everyone works well as a team.

The pupils in Years 1 and 2 come to school regularly and work hard.

You are provided with some interesting activities that are added to by visits to places of interest and visitors to the school.

You are encouraged to exercise regularly and eat healthy food.

I thought that there are quite a few things that could be improved at the unit. However, I am convinced that improvements will continue and I have asked the headteacher, staff and management to concentrate on the following areas;

I would like to see improvements in the behaviour and attendance of pupils in Years 4 to 6. This combined with more challenging work would ensure that you make better progress.

I think that you are capable of doing more writing.

You should have more opportunities to use computers in all subjects.

I understand that teachers are busy, but they need to spend more time looking at the subjects they are in charge of when taught by other teachers.

It is important that the next stage of your education is organised within a reasonable timescale.

Teachers need to ensure that they teach you all topics that help you to be healthy.

I hope that everything continues to improve and that you help the headteacher and staff to make the unit good in every way.

Best wishes

David Smith

Lead Inspector