

Moorbridge

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108565
Local Authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	288128
Inspection date	7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Noreen Buckingham

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	25
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mrs Felicity Andreasen
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2002
School address	Earsdon Road Shiremoor Tyne and Wear NE27 0HJ
Telephone number	0191 2008813
Fax number	0191 2008810

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Moorbridge is currently in a transition phase, being subject to local authority reorganisation. There are 17 boys and 8 girls. Key Stage 4 pupils are identified as vulnerable or emotionally fragile and find it difficult to attend a mainstream school. Key Stage 3 pupils have been excluded from mainstream school and can present very challenging behaviour. The majority of these pupils move on to other specialist provision. On entry, pupils' achievements are low because of their disrupted education which is often associated with poor attendance. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A very small minority of pupils are in the care of the local authority and a high percentage is eligible for free school meals.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Moorbridge offers pupils a good education and provides good value for money. Inspection evidence confirms the unit's own judgement of its effectiveness. Parents say it improves their children's confidence and gives them opportunities to succeed where they have previously failed. Due to the continued commitment of the headteacher and her team, the unit has improved well since the last inspection and changes have been managed effectively. The headteacher knows the unit and pupils well; she works hard to provide the best possible education she can for the pupils. The school improvement plan shows that the unit is aware of what needs to be done to improve the provision and the need to formalise the systems for monitoring teaching and learning has been recognised. Due to the poor attendance of some pupils, achievement and progress are only satisfactory overall. However, pupils who attend regularly achieve well and make good progress. All have the opportunity to gain externally accredited awards, which increase in difficulty as they move through the unit, giving them a solid base from which to move forward. There is scope to extend the range of accreditation and the unit has recognised this.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team. All staff know the pupils well and monitor progress via examination results and annual reports. Assessment procedures are not rigorous enough to give the school a sufficiently accurate picture of how well pupils are doing and pupils do not have enough involvement in the process to enable them to know what they have to do to improve. The curriculum is good and the unit prides itself on having a measure of flexibility within the delivery of the curriculum to enable it to meet individual needs effectively. Work related learning skills are taught well but most pupils, because of the nature of their difficulties, find it hard to take up offers of practical, work-based learning. The care, guidance and support for pupils are good and, as a result, personal development is generally good. Behaviour during the inspection was good. There are a high number of fixed-term exclusions recorded.

Relationships between staff and pupils are good which significantly contributes to the unit's positive ethos. Pupils are taught in a safe and secure environment in which all safeguarding arrangements are well established. A wide range of external professional agencies supports pupils. This enables them to take advantage of what is available to them and to make the best choices on leaving. The management board supports the unit well, ensuring that all statutory requirements are in place.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the attendance and punctuality of pupils so that their achievement and progress improves.
- Formalise the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Develop more rigorous assessment procedures which will involve pupils in reviewing their own progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall, although pupils whose attendance is good achieve well and make good progress. However, poor attendance and punctuality by some pupils mean that their opportunities to achieve are limited. Attainment on entry is lower than would normally

be expected, but this is often because of the disrupted education the pupils have experienced. Pupils can begin to gain Unit Awards, building towards higher level examinations. Pupils gain many Unit Awards in basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, as well as in motor vehicle, health and social care and anger management courses. Pupils gain accreditation in Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3 in literacy, numeracy and ICT. In 2006, all pupils who sat Level 1 and Level 2 examinations passed. All pupils have individual education plans which are reviewed termly or earlier if completed and new targets set. Girls' achievement is similar to that of boys and pupils in the care of the local authority achieve as well as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good overall. Although attendance is low, many pupils' attendance improves during their time in the unit and staff do everything they can to encourage pupils to come to school. Some pupils travel quite a distance and do this independently which promotes their personal development. However, many arrive late. The unit promotes a healthy lifestyle and has the Healthy Schools Award. Physical activities are offered at the nearby community centre and pupils say they enjoy badminton and table tennis. They learn about safety in the home and basic hygiene. Although there are a high number of exclusions in Key Stage 3, behaviour during the inspection was good and pupils concentrated well on their work, displaying positive attitudes. They have increasing opportunities to contribute to the immediate community. They like the new building and take pride in keeping it litter free. Lots of examples of colourful art work show how pupils have studied other cultures and other displays show what pupils have learnt in personal, health and social education. This contributes to the positive ethos within the unit.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning is good. Staff know pupils very well and positive relationships support pupils' learning. Classrooms are bright welcoming places with a constructive working atmosphere. Secure subject knowledge coupled with a good use of questions enables pupils to show what they know and understand. Tasks are made clear at the start of lessons and teachers and teaching assistants work well together to support pupils' learning. Teachers have appropriate expectations of pupils both in terms of behaviour and work. Praise is used well to encourage pupils to remain on task and complete the work, but they are not always sure what they need to learn next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the individual needs of pupils well. Staff are skilled at making the curriculum flexible so that work is tailored to meet particular needs at specific times, for example, finding time for pupils to catch up on course work. Work in literacy and numeracy promotes the skills pupils will need when they leave, and ICT is used well across the curriculum. The unit has recently introduced food technology which helps to develop pupils' basic life skills. Displays of pupils' work show the good range of experiences they are offered with some

particularly colourful art work. Three pupils are currently on a phased return to mainstream school. Work related skills are well promoted and accredited although many pupils find it difficult to take up offers of practical work experience.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Safeguarding arrangements are secure and risk assessments are carried out. The unit works in partnership with a wide range of other agencies to give pupils every available support and parents are very appreciative of the support staff give to them as a family. Connexions staff advise pupils about their next steps, which helps prepare them for their future economic well-being. Staff are good role models and make every effort to enable pupils to benefit from what the unit offers. They are prepared to go that extra mile if it will make a difference in pupils' lives. Pupils are assessed when they arrive to establish a broad baseline of their attainment, but more rigorous assessment procedures are needed to measure their progress more easily and accurately. Currently, pupils' progress is tracked via examination results and annual reports. Staff know pupils well and quickly pick up any issues relating to lack of progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is very experienced and committed to providing the best she can for the pupils. She is well supported by a very able deputy and together they work hard to give pupils another chance to succeed. They are good role models for the rest of the staff. Because of this, and the strong teamwork with other agencies, the capacity to improve is good. Performance management is established and the recent school improvement plan identifies the most important targets for improvement. Although the headteacher is very visible around the unit and observes lessons, the formal monitoring of teaching and learning is in the early stages. School self-evaluation is largely accurate and the school improvement plan targets the most important areas for development. The management board are an experienced team and meet regularly giving good support. The new buildings are beautifully maintained and good quality work by pupils enhances the learning environment. The unit gives good value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

7 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Moorbridge, Tyne and Wear, NE27 0HJ

I enjoyed my visit to Moorbridge and thank you for making me so welcome. I was pleased to see how you are keeping your lovely new building so clean and tidy. I also liked the displays of your work which gave me an indication of the range of work you do. Staff work hard to ensure that you have every opportunity to gain examination success and they try to make lessons as interesting as possible. However, it was disappointing to see that the attendance of some of you is not as good as it should be. I have asked everybody involved to try even harder to encourage you to improve your attendance and to arrive on time. You can then take advantage of everything that is on offer so that when you leave to go back to mainstream school or college you will be well equipped to do as well as you can. I was pleased to hear that a few of you are returning to mainstream school soon. I have asked that the unit looks more closely at how your lessons are taught and how well you learn. I have also asked the staff to continue to try to ensure that you know what to do to improve your work.

All the best for the future

Noreen Buckingham

Lead inspector