



Rawtenstall Cribden House Community Special School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119879
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291558
Inspection date 19 September 2006
Reporting inspector Eric Craven HMI

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Haslingden Road
School category	Community special		Rawtenstall, Rossendale
Age range of pupils	5-11		Lancashire BB4 6RX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01706 213048
Number on roll (school)	32	Fax number	01706 210553
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Nick Pilling
		Headteacher	Mrs Jackie Lord
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group 5-11	Inspection date 19 September 2006	Inspection number 291558
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

Description of the school

This is a school providing for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, with some having additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Each of the pupils has a statement of special educational need. All but one are boys and nearly all are White British; five are looked-after children. The school serves the area of East Lancashire. It has earned a number of national awards including Healthy Schools status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features and it has the capacity to become even better. It is highly valued by the parents who recognise the improvements their children make in academic, personal and social skills. One parent wrote, 'In the year [my son] has been at Cribden he has changed tremendously, he has worked hard and got an excellent report. I couldn't ask for a better school for him.'

From a start where most pupils are performing below the standard expected for their age, they progress well, with some pupils making outstanding progress. Staff are very positive about the pupils; they value and care for them greatly as individuals. They have high expectations that they will behave properly and learn well. Clear and fair boundaries are set and pupils fully understand what is expected of them. They thrive in this positive environment and some pupils report that, for the first time, they are able to enjoy their schooling. Challenging behaviour is managed well and unobtrusively by the staff team so that teaching and learning continue unimpeded. The quality of teaching is good overall and some of it is excellent. The best is animated and paced and pupils respond by working productively and being excited by the teaching. The curriculum is outstanding because it is so well tailored to the pupils' needs. It is enriched by good use of off-site educational visits and valuable inputs from visitors from the local and wider community. It is not common for a special school to provide after-school activities. However, this school manages to provide these extremely well. Exciting activities are available for three evenings a week for pupils in Year 3 upwards.

In the positive atmosphere, pupils develop confidence and self-esteem. Many show admirable maturity and are polite and courteous to visitors. A strong emphasis is placed on personal, social and health education. This promotes the pupils' emotional and behavioural development and they learn to keep safe, remain healthy and behave well. Pupils are keen to be involved in the life of the school and they are given opportunities to do so: the school council is well established, is taken seriously by staff and makes a positive difference. Pupils value the school. This is evident through the good relationships they have with staff, their very good attendance and the way they all proudly wear their uniforms.

All of this occurs because of good leadership and management. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are highly regarded by the staff. Some aspects of their work are outstanding, particularly in ensuring that staff work as a close-knit team and share a common vision for the school. The way the school evaluates how well it is doing is good; it seeks and acts upon the views of all those involved with the school, not least the pupils themselves. Subject leaders provide support and guidance for their colleagues and check that planning and the pupils' work are of good quality. However, they are not yet influencing the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. The headteacher and deputy headteacher monitor the quality of teaching and learning well. Teachers keep good records of the progress made by pupils, but this information is not drawn together in a form that managers and governors can easily use. The governors play an important role at the school. They fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They are well informed and trained in monitoring and evaluating how the school performs. The

inclusion of pupils is a prominent feature of the school's work. Strong links have been established through the Rossendale Inclusion Partnership to help pupils to socialise and work with others from mainstream schools on shared projects. As a consequence, the school has a positive profile in the local community.

What the school should do to improve further

- Collate the progress data held on pupils so that they can be used more effectively as a management tool.
- Develop the roles of subject leaders so that they exert more influence in developing the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Because their potential has been unlocked by the removal of barriers to their learning, the standards achieved by some of the pupils when they leave the school are in-line with what is expected nationally for their age. This was particularly the case for those pupils who took the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2006. Challenging targets are set for each pupil in literacy, numeracy and personal and social development and these are reviewed frequently. The pupils know their targets and work hard to achieve them; these personal goals mean a lot to them and they are one of the reasons why pupils make the good progress they do.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school is highly successful in removing the barriers to pupils' learning. The pupils have positive attitudes and, as a consequence, their behaviour is at least good and some of it is excellent. Their moral and social development is outstanding and their spiritual and cultural development is good. The school is graffiti and vandalism free. Along with their good attendance, which is well above the average rate in similar schools, this is testimony to them liking the school. Those spoken to during the inspection unanimously said they enjoyed this school better than any other they have attended.

The positive ethos in the school and the excellent behaviour management arrangements mean that there have been no fixed-term or permanent exclusions for five years. This demonstrates the 'can do' belief of the staff and their commitment to meet the needs of pupils no matter how challenging. Another parent wrote, 'When [my son] started at Cribden House he was out of control but all of the staff at Cribden have worked with [my son] and now he's a mature pupil. He has gone on to be on the school council.'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There is togetherness in the school exemplified by the manner in which teachers and support assistants work in harmony. Teachers praise pupils frequently, which helps to maintain a positive atmosphere in lessons. The youngest pupils quickly learn the routines and rise to the expectations teachers have of them. Very good checking on progress means that staff can respond quickly and effectively when pupils fall behind or have gaps in their learning. These pupils receive good quality additional support, mainly from support assistants, and as a consequence they make good progress. The school has invested heavily in information and communication technology (ICT) and this is being used extremely well to motivate the pupils and to develop their skills in ICT.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is very well matched to the needs of the pupils by being kept under review. All occasions are viewed as teaching and learning opportunities. Break times and lunchtime are well supervised and are used to promote social skills. Older pupils are encouraged to play cooperative games such as chess and the youngest pupils learn valuable play skills in the well equipped play room. The school's links with local specialist colleges for languages and sport have resulted in French lessons for Year 6 pupils and opportunities for trampolining.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The pupils can readily identify a member of staff they can turn to if they are worried about anything. They also say that staff listen to them. The school gives a high priority to safeguarding pupils and they feel safe and secure. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the pupils as their work and development are assessed thoroughly and regularly; staff make good use of this information in planning work. The school gets good quality support from outside agencies, notably the school nurse.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are the driving force behind the school. They have a very clear appreciation of the staff's strengths and weaknesses. They have worked effectively to focus the school not only on the pupils' personal and social development but also on their academic skills. This is the reason pupils now make the good progress they do. The professional development of all staff is nurtured well and

the school has achieved the Investors in People award. The school improvement plan is a well constructed document with a series of relevant priorities. It is supplemented by action plans for each subject taught. These planning documents guide the school's development effectively but they could be enhanced further by the use of crisper targets to help measure the school's achievements. Communication between home and school is good because it is made a priority. The 'chat' books in particular keep parents well informed. The school has successfully dealt with the area for development identified at its last inspection by increasing the number of teaching assistants. Its record of improvement and the good quality arrangements for self-evaluation mean that its capacity to improve further is good.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

To the Pupils of:

Rawtenstall Cribden House Community Special School

Haslingden Road

Rawtenstall

Rosendale

Lancashire

BB4 6RX

19 September 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to see how well you were getting on. I was delighted to be able to sit in on part of the school council's meeting and to meet with the group of pupils in the library. Thanks for sharing your views with me.

I think yours is a good school and some of the work that goes on is excellent. The school is a very calm and happy place. The staff really care a lot about you and they work very hard to help you learn and to help you to deal with any problems you may have. I think you behave well. When someone does have a behaviour problem, the staff deal with this very well indeed so that lessons can carry on and you can continue to learn. Teaching is also good and some that I saw was brilliant. Because of this, I saw you being really excited by the things you were being asked to do. You have a lot of interesting things you can do at school and these include visits you make using the minibus and the extended day activities – no wonder your attendance is so good. You told me how you are aware of healthy living and keeping as safe as you can. The school council does a good job and did particularly well in helping to develop your adventure playground. I think the work done by the headteacher is really good in making sure that you progress as well as you do. Your parents and carers also told me how highly they think of the school.

There are a couple of things I think might help the school get even better. I have asked the headteacher to think about how she could make even better use of all the information she has about how you are progressing and I've also asked teachers who are responsible for subjects to sometimes watch other teachers teach so they can give them some feedback.

Thank you again for being so friendly and helpful and do keep up the good work.

Eric Craven

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools