



Reintegration Service

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131067
Local Authority West Berkshire
Inspection number 293699
Inspection dates 8–9 March 2007
Reporting inspector James Bowden

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

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|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Type of school | Special | School address | Moorside Community Centre Urquhart Road, Kennet Heath Thatcham RG19 4RE |
| School category | Pupil referral unit | | |
| Age range of pupils | 5–16 | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01635 865573 |
| Number on roll (school) | 57 | Fax number | 01635 871584 |
| Appropriate authority | The local authority | Headteacher | Ms Stacey Williams |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected | | |

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|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Age group | Inspection dates | Inspection number |
| 5–16 | 8–9 March 2007 | 293699 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The Reintegration Service, established in September 2005, is made up of three separate units. The Oaks is for learners in Years 5 to 7, Kingfisher for learners in Years 7 to 9 and The Key for learners in Years 10 and 11. The Home Education Service is based at The Key. The service provides planned, short-term placements for learners who are either excluded from mainstream school or are at risk of exclusion, and home tuition for those who are unable to attend school for medical reasons. Some of these learners also attend in the afternoons, in small groups, for their education. On occasion the service caters for learners who may be new to the area and are having difficulty being placed in a school immediately.

There is a high turnover of learners throughout the service, which affects group dynamics and the stability of groups. Many join the service with a history of non-school attendance. Those catered for by home tuition tend to be dual registered with the service and the home school whereas the majority attending the units tend to be registered solely with the service. The great majority of learners is of White British origin and there are almost three times as many boys than girls. Currently twelve learners have a statement of special educational need (primarily for social, emotional and behavioural needs) and twenty have mental health concerns.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The service provides satisfactorily for learners and has some good features. Though it is a new provision, bringing under one umbrella four previously independent areas, and has had problems of staff recruitment, it is improving its effectiveness. It is meeting its aims of enabling young people to maintain or return to mainstream school or, in some instances, other appropriate education. This is as a result of the dynamic and purposeful direction set by the head teacher and the ethos for improvement she has created. The service is effective in supporting each learner in very specific ways, meeting their personal and learning needs. This includes a developing outreach service. It works very well with outside agencies to support learners and has strong partnerships with others to promote learners' well-being. At Kingfisher a multi-agency approach is being used for the delivery of personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons to a targeted group of learners who have complex needs and attendance problems. Parents are very supportive because of the help the service gives them and the difference it makes to their children. One parent wrote, 'Staff communicate in a friendly compassionate way and have opened many other avenues of help and information.'

Prior to admission, many learners have had negative experiences of mainstream school, have social, emotional and behavioural needs and, in many instances, mental health concerns. Standards are variable. Those who attend the units make satisfactory progress and are enabled to be reintegrated after a relatively short stay. Older learners supported by the home education service are entered for a range of GCSEs, and many of these achieve as well as expected.

Learners' personal development and well-being are good. The difficulties they arrive with diminish as their confidence and self-esteem improve and their interest in learning is re-kindled. As a result, learners stay with the service a relatively short time before reintegration to their home school, a planned move to another school, or a move to other specialist provision. Outreach work by the service has limited the numbers of those being permanently excluded from their primary schools.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Although there are strengths, there remain inconsistencies across the service. Behaviour management is effective and teachers ensure classroom behaviour rules are followed. Good planning ensures the work is matched to the needs of learners, including extension work where appropriate. However, learning support assistants (LSAs) are not always deployed effectively and in some lessons the pace is too slow. The good curriculum supports learners effectively, eases their reintegration and, for the afternoon group at The Key, enables them to be entered for a range of examinations. A good variety of other activities enhances overall provision and supports learners' academic and personal development well. Care guidance and support are good. As a result, learners develop their personal qualities, improve their motivation and make good progress towards the targets set for them in this respect. Progress towards targets set in their individual education plans is regularly monitored and evaluated and, when appropriate, annual reviews take place for those with statements of special educational need. Although the service uses baseline testing of

learners when they arrive, the ongoing analysis and use of data to track academic progress and judge the effectiveness of its work is not sharp enough.

Leadership is well aware of the service's strengths and weaknesses as a result of improved monitoring and evaluation, particularly at unit level. A dedicated management committee is about to replace the present advisory group overseeing the work of the service. Self-evaluation is generally accurate and areas identified for improvement are realistic and appropriate. Development planning is complex and does not always reflect well enough the bigger picture for the service as a whole. Because of the short time the service has been established it is not yet possible to judge the outcomes of measures put in place to move it forward. However, in the light of its developing track record of successful reintegration, developing outreach work, the support provided by the home education service, and the very strong leadership of the new headteacher, the service has good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen the use of evaluation of learners' assessment data to judge the effectiveness of provision and inform planning for future intervention work.
- Simplify development planning in order to provide a bigger picture for improvements needed for the service as a whole.
- Ensure the new management committee becomes an active and effective critical friend in order to support further improvements in performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Because of their social, emotional and behavioural needs as well as additional learning needs and mental health concerns, some learners arrive at the service with well below average attainment and poor learning skills. The service works hard to settle them, improve their behaviour and rekindle their interest in learning. As a result, many are successfully reintegrated into either their home school, have a managed move to another school, or move to other specialist provision. Others, particularly in the home education service, are capable of taking GCSE examinations and achieve as well as expected. Those with learning and other disabilities make satisfactory progress towards the academic targets set for them on their individual education plans. Most of those who took GCSEs in 2006 continued into further education, work, or training.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. At The Key, for example, they explore spirituality through their ceramics lessons and in the other units younger learners have ample opportunities to consider moral, social and cultural matters. Behaviour is good. Although there are occasional outbursts, learners respect the rules and get on well with one another, their teachers, and the other adults they

work with. Attendance is satisfactory. For many this represents an improvement on their previous attendance in mainstream provision. Learners enjoy their education, say they feel safe and have an adult to talk to should they feel this is necessary. One commented, 'The Key made me feel more confident and more comfortable around people.' Learners are quickly developing healthy lifestyles as a result of weekly 'fruit salad' days, a total smoking ban, and opportunities to take part in planned physical activities. The nature of the service's provision makes it difficult for learners to contribute positively to the community. However, they willingly contribute their views on their experience in the service before they move on and are involved in charitable activities when appropriate. All follow a skills-based curriculum and older learners have opportunities for work experience, which helps them prepare well for their future economic well-being. The quality of their key skills of literacy, numeracy and use of information and communication technology (ICT) contribute satisfactorily in this respect.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Though there are strengths in the quality of teaching and learning, the service has identified inconsistencies across the units. Positive working relationships between teachers, other adults and learners underpin the quality of learning. Teachers' good class management and a calm approach set a positive tone in lessons and careful planning ensures work is matched to the needs of learners, including extension work where appropriate. Learning intentions are made clear at the start of lessons, thus learners are aware of what is expected of them. Rewards are used effectively to motivate learners and keep them on task. When their attitudes need to be challenged this is done calmly and effectively. In a primary lesson at The Oaks both the teacher and the LSA were very effective in this respect. Consequently, learners were kept on task and met their individual targets. However, the use of LSAs to support learning in lessons is variable; sometimes they are not involved enough in supporting all learners. On occasion, the pace is too slow and learners are not involved quickly enough, which means some switch off. Learners are encouraged to work both independently as well as collaboratively in many lessons and there is a good focus on speaking and listening skills. Work is generally marked well and comments indicate what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum provides a framework for learners to make progress during their stay with the service. There is good breadth and balance with a focus on skills-based activities and school links sessions where the focus is on individuals' home-school targets and reintegration issues. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons help promote personal as well as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. At

Kingfisher the curriculum is enhanced further by opportunities for learners to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities off site. At The Key there are drama workshops, and outside visitors to offer health advice. The curriculum provided for learners supported by the home education service eases their return to their home school. Those in the afternoon group are enabled to follow examination courses, including an art accreditation. Provision for ICT resources is good, and these are used effectively to support teaching and learning in most subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The service provides a strong caring and supporting environment where learners feel safe, develop their personal qualities and make good progress towards the targets set for them. Those with learning difficulties and those with mental health concerns who attend the afternoon group at The Key are really well supported. The use of morning group time and PSHE lessons is very effective in offering high quality pastoral and personal support, adding considerably to the progress learners make whilst attending the service. A parent commented, 'The Key has been a big part of my daughter and myself. It was needed to get her back to where she is now.' Learners also receive effective support from the service during their settling-in period on reintegration programmes. Provision for ensuring health and safety is very strong. Child protection and risk assessment procedure are securely in place and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. When appropriate, support is enhanced further by the effective involvement and multi-agency approach of outside professional agencies.

The service uses baseline testing of learners when they arrive in order to ensure its provision matches fully their learning needs. However, its analysis and use of data to track academic progress and judge the effectiveness of its work is not sharp enough. Older learners benefit from good quality advice in helping them decide the next stage of their education from the on-site Connexions office.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. As a result of the headteacher's dynamic approach her leading teachers have a clear focus on improving the quality of provision for learners. Weaknesses identified at the Kingfisher unit, for instance, have been successfully addressed and there has been a recent review of aspects of teaching and learning in the three units. All staff are highly committed to ensure every learner really matters and to improving their motivation for learning. This ensures good progress is made by all in terms of their personal development and self-esteem. Formal procedures have been implemented to monitor and evaluate the work of the service and appropriate areas for improvement have been identified. Development planning is helping the service to move forward, but it is complex and doesn't always reflect well enough the bigger picture for the whole service. The budget is well managed and present outcomes represent satisfactory value for money. The advisory group from

the Education Otherwise than at School Service (EOTAS) has acted as a critical friend and is about to become a dedicated management committee for the service.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | NA |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 3 |
| 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.

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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

You may remember that I visited you for a couple of days recently. I saw some of you working in lessons, in other activities and I had a chat with groups of you to seek your opinions on the education provided for you. I also had the opportunity to talk to individuals throughout the course of the day. Thank you all very much for being friendly and making me feel welcome. The quality of education you receive from this new service is satisfactory and improving. On the whole, you behave well, you like the quality of teaching and value the support you are given. I have prepared a list of what is good about your education and another with some things that could be better.

The things that are done well for you are these:

- the staff make sure you are safe and very well cared for
- the staff really have your best interests at heart and make every effort to make sure you will be able to do well in the future
- your personal development is good
- most of you are successfully reintegrated to mainstream schools quite quickly
- the curriculum and other activities make your education interesting
- the headteacher and the staff have plans to make things even better for you.

These are the areas where I have suggested improvements are needed:

- the service needs to use assessment information on you as individuals in a better way
- the headteacher needs to simplify development planning to ensure the focus is on improving the whole service
- the new management committee needs to make sure it supports the service to make sure it continues to improve.

Once again, many thanks for your welcome and I would like to wish you all the best for your future.

James Bowden

(Lead inspector)