



# Alderwood

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 134918  
**Local Authority** SUFFOLK  
**Inspection number** 294218  
**Inspection dates** 5–6 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ian Naylor

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit	<b>School address</b>	Raeburn Road
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit		Ipswich
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8–14		Suffolk IP3 0EW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01473725860
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	13	<b>Fax number</b>	01473724620
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Rev R Tobin
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms D Morcom
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected		

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<b>Age group</b> 8–14	<b>Inspection dates</b> 5–6 December 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 294218
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Alderwood Pupil Referral Unit is part of the Suffolk Behaviour Support Service, serving the south of the county. It opened in September 2004. It provides preventative and assessment services for pupils with social, emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties who have been permanently excluded or who are at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream schools. Attainment on admission is lower than the national average. Two-thirds of pupils have learning difficulties, although relatively few have statements of special educational needs. Many come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and most are of White British background. There is a usual stay of two terms and therefore a high rate of pupils returning to mainstream schooling. The school also provides an outreach support service to local schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

Alderwood Pupil Referral Unit provides a highly effective education for its pupils. It succeeds extremely well in its primary aim of returning pupils successfully to full-time mainstream education. The exceptional leadership and management have, in the short period of time since the unit was established, created an outstanding learning community in which pupils thrive and experience success. Pupils make remarkable progress in their basic skills, knowledge and understanding. This is because the unit is sensitive to their individual needs and promotes learning in a non-confrontational manner. Pupils make exceptional progress in their personal development in a very short space of time. They achieve the learning and behavioural targets set for them. This is the result of outstanding teaching, a creative and relevant curriculum, and very high quality care and support. As a result most are able to return to mainstream education within two terms, where records show they attend regularly and achieve well.

The warm relationships and caring environment quickly embrace and motivate pupils. The unit provides the security and confidence they need. Pupils' behaviour is supervised and managed extremely well. Relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves are excellent. Teachers and behaviour support assistants work well together to create exciting and engaging lessons. The best feature of the curriculum is the way that it is tailored to the learning needs of individual pupils. Staff are in the process of making the curriculum even better by focussing more on supporting pupils' emotional behaviour. A modern foreign language is not taught which would help pupils to adjust more quickly to the secondary school curriculum on re-integration.

Pupils think that the staff are 'fantastic'. They really enjoy coming to Alderwood. They love the exciting lessons and think that they learn a lot. Most of all they learn how to control their own behaviour. One pupil wrote, 'Alderwood is the best thing that could happen to me!' These excellent attitudes are reflected in very high attendance. Pupils learn extremely well how to stay safe and to eat healthily - they love fruit! They take part in a range of healthy physical activities including ball games and trampoline, but miss out on swimming. They help in the local community and learn about teamwork, helping others in the unit and in the wider world through lessons and projects. Parents are delighted with the results of the unit and are full of praise for the staff.

The headteacher has an excellent vision for the aims and ethos of the unit and has communicated this very well to staff, so that they all contribute to its success. Areas for improvement are identified very accurately and planned extremely well. The unit has excellent partnerships with local schools and other agencies. The Outreach Service is very effective. The leadership has demonstrated outstanding capacity for further improvement and the unit provides very good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide opportunities for swimming and for learning a modern foreign language.
- Continue work to develop the emotional and behavioural curriculum.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy are very good. Their writing skills improve dramatically in a short period of time and they develop good handwriting and spelling that help them with the presentation of their work: they therefore take great pride in this. They make exceptional progress in reading through guided reading activities. This gives them confidence to apply their knowledge across many other activities. For instance, they make good progress in science. They show a particular strength in art, where they find they are good at expressing their emotions through painting and making plaster-cast models. They make outstanding progress in personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) lessons and in group discussions or 'circle time'. Pupils' excellent achievement is reflected by the extremely successful rate of return to mainstream school for most of them within two terms.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils feel safe and are made well aware of how to keep themselves safe and healthy and to make the right lifestyle choices. They thoroughly enjoy school and, as a result, from previously being poor attenders or school refusers, pupils' attendance is excellent. They feel at ease and participate very well in daily circle time, where, for example, one pupil shared his family heritage, showing photographs of his visit to Bangladesh, answering questions and establishing his identity and self-esteem. In these meetings, in lessons and at mealtimes, pupils express their feelings, share experiences, develop their social skills and a moral perspective. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is consequently excellent. Pupils grow in self-confidence and maturity. They learn to control their behaviour very well. They take part in numerous community activities, such as helping primary school pupils with their art work. Through fund-raising for worthy causes, they are very aware of the needs of others. Pupils improve their literacy, numeracy and general life skills extremely well, giving an excellent preparation for the transition to mainstream school and their future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teachers plan lessons meticulously, using assessment information very well to meet the needs of individual pupils. They select activities that engage pupils' interest and challenge their thinking. They take particular care to support pupils' emotional development by establishing very good relationships and making very effective use of the behaviour management system. Pupils understand and value the clear boundaries and the rewards for good behaviour. These give them the incentive to control their behaviour and responses so that they become acceptable. As a result, teaching instils

self-confidence and supports successful learning. Above all teaching makes learning fun. For example, pupils thoroughly enjoy making plaster figurine sculptures in art or preparing fruit in the shape of animals in food technology so that it looks attractive to eat. Lessons are often led by behaviour support assistants, who use their talents and skills very effectively. Teachers provide highly effective learning opportunities and pastoral guidance during less formal times outside lessons.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

A good range of relevant activities are provided that have a powerful impact on pupils' learning. Activities are usually full of fun and excitement to hold their interest and stimulate motivation. Very careful attention is given to promoting pupils' awareness of safety and healthy living. Extending each pupil's personal development is a key feature in the successful PSHCE programme. There are very effective strategies to support reading. The curriculum is enriched extremely well through events such as visits to a Shakespeare play or residential trips on a London barge. Theatre groups and artists in residence visit the unit to bring learning to life. Physical development is supported by regular physical education lessons at a local sports college, although no opportunity is offered for swimming. The curriculum for 11 to 14 year olds does not include a modern foreign language. Work has begun to develop an emotional and behavioural curriculum, but is not yet complete.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Staff provide excellent support for all aspects of pupils' learning and personal development. There is outstanding pastoral welfare. Excellent procedures are in place to help control and manage pupils' behaviour. Very good, comprehensive assessment and recording systems track pupils' academic progress, behaviour and personal development. Outstanding attention is given to safeguarding pupils, through rigorous personnel checks, risk assessments and health and safety procedures. An extensive network of partnerships and contacts with local schools provides very good support for pupils' personal development and learning. Close liaison with health and social services agencies, professionals and volunteer groups supports pupils' care and welfare very effectively. The Outreach Service gives excellent support, training and advice to a large number of schools in meeting pupils' behavioural learning needs.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The leadership of the unit provides outstanding direction and support to staff and pupils. It has a huge impact in making the unit an effective and stimulating learning environment. The headteacher inspires staff to work as a team. There is a very effective school development plan that ensures that the whole thrust of the curriculum, care, and learning is centred upon the principles of enjoyment and achievement, staying

safe and healthy, contribution to the community and economic awareness. The work of the unit delivers these extremely effectively. This enables pupils to thrive and grow in self-esteem; it gives them confidence in learning and ultimately ensures their successful re-integration into mainstream school. Through very good monitoring and extensive staff training, the leadership has significantly improved the quality of teaching and learning. It utilises the talents and expertise of each member of staff and brings together successfully the unit team and the outreach staff to the overall benefit of pupils. There is as yet no governing body and the staff feel rather distanced from the work of the management committee. However, the committee has steered the unit successfully through its early stages of development.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
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**

7 December 2006

Dear Pupils

Alderwood Pupil Referral Unit, Raeburn Road, Ipswich. IP3 0EW

Thank you very much for letting me see the work that you do and for your friendly welcome when I visited your school this week.

I was extremely impressed with the hard work you do in your lessons, where you achieve extremely well, and by the way in which you improve your own behaviour and attend school regularly. You are prepared very well for when you go back to a mainstream school, so that you can be confident that you can succeed and enjoy the rest of your time at school. Your excellent behaviour and hard work help to make the unit as successful as it is.

Your teachers and support staff work hard too. They provide interesting lessons that make you think! There are lots of activities for you to participate in and many of you now realise that learning can be fun! You have lots of opportunities to improve your behaviour and to learn how to become responsible young people. You like your headteacher and think she does a good job. So do I!

Alderwood is an excellent school and it is helping you all to make really outstanding progress in your personal development and social skills.

I have suggested to the headteacher that you should have opportunities for swimming and learning a foreign language. Staff should keep working on the good things that they do to help you improve your behaviour.

I wish you all the best of luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ian Naylor

Inspector