



Include Bristol

Independent Special School

Inspection report

DfES Registration Number 801/6023
Unique Reference Number 134441
Inspection number 296829
Inspection dates 17 - 18 January 2007
Reporting inspector Mr Thomas Smith AI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

Age group 14-15	Published 12 February 2007	Reference no. 296829
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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Include Bristol is an independent pupil referral unit (PRU)¹ part of a charitable trust managed by the CfBT Education Trust. It provides education for up to 30 pupils, aged 14 - 16 years, who have been excluded from their previous schools or PRU. They have been persistent non-attenders at those schools. All are characterised by disaffection with education. Bristol City Council has referred 27 pupils to the school. Six of these have statements of special educational need. The school was established in 1996 and registered by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in 2005. It is located in two premises, in the Bedminster and Easton areas of Bristol. The aims of the school include the provision of a broad curriculum that develops personal and social skills and which enables pupils to increase their self-esteem and participate as full members of their communities. This is the first time the school has been inspected.

Evaluation of the school

Include Bristol PRU is successful in meeting its main aims. Its quality of care and its teaching and curriculum provide a satisfactory education for its pupils. Staff are successful in reversing the negative attitudes to education of some pupils but low attendance rates mean that too many remain disaffected. Pupils make satisfactory progress because the staff are unfailingly positive towards them and use appropriate skills to encourage their achievement.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils have the opportunity to study a range of subjects based on the requirements of the National Curriculum. These include English, mathematics, geography, art and design, citizenship, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and information and communication technology (ICT). There is no separate provision for science. Pupils experience diverse activities, such as planned studies at a local 'city farm' and engage in outdoor activities programmes. There is an appropriate emphasis on the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills and these are used effectively

¹ Throughout the report the term 'school' is used to denote 'pupil referral unit'.

in other areas of learning. Pupils also have other opportunities to develop healthy lifestyles through their participation in sports sessions and outdoor activities.

Curriculum planning is satisfactory. However, it varies in the depth to which subjects are planned. Much is derived from the Assessment and Qualifications Authority requirements for Unit Awards and Entry Level accreditation. Better examples of planning indicate not only the intended outcomes for pupils' learning but also contain details of method, resources and opportunities for assessment. Schemes of work do not always indicate cross-curricular links between subjects. For example, ICT is mostly planned in isolation from other subjects and these do not always anticipate opportunities for its use.

Aspects of the curriculum are directed appropriately at the personal and social needs of the pupils. These include life-skills, which introduce pupils to facilities in the community, such as the library and a local college where some will go for further education. Too few pupils take up the latter option. PSHE provision is good and supports the main aim of the school, to boost pupils' self-esteem. Pupils receive individually planned drugs awareness education through the services of a visiting drugs counsellor. The PSHE curriculum is most effective where it is planned and provided as part of other learning.

Considerable effort is made to prepare pupils for the world of work. The school has active links with the local Connexions service that provides facilities and advice for pupils throughout their time at the school. Pupils are involved in 'Plan-it' sessions that enable them to identify and work towards potential career choices.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The greatest strength is the relationship which all staff build with each pupil. These relationships are characterised by respect and tolerance. Pupils make satisfactory progress because they are encouraged to learn. Staff are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of all pupils and use this knowledge to adjust the ways in which they teach. One teacher commented that she 'had to be flexible in my planning and I often change this as the lesson goes on.' In some cases pupils extend their span of concentration because staff skilfully vary the methods and pace of learning. Teaching is most effective where teachers have high expectations of their pupils and where the content of lessons is challenging. Good examples of this are to be seen in the art work produced by pupils. Where activities are closely matched to pupils' attainment they respond by becoming engaged and therefore achieve more.

There is little collaborative or cooperative work undertaken. Pupils also have weak skills in oral communication. This is an area that is insufficiently developed in all lessons.

Initial provision for pupils with learning difficulties is compromised by the absence of information relating to their statements of special educational need. Records indicate that this information is not available when pupils are first admitted and staff are unable to draw up effective individual education plans (IEPs). The staff plan termly learning targets for all pupils. Many of these are general aims and they lack the precision which would enable more accurate tracking of progress. The wider provision for pupils with learning difficulties is appropriate but, in individual cases, progress against the requirements of their statement is not monitored rigorously enough.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory. The provision for cultural development is inadequate. The school recognises this as an issue. Pupils occasionally exhibit very challenging behaviour but the relationships that they have with staff are respectful. Staff use these relationships to promote pupils' social and personal development effectively. In lessons pupils continue working, despite distractions, because staff have asked them to continue to concentrate. Staff arrange frequent and well-planned visits to local amenities. These encourage pupils to take initiative and use skills of independence, such as travelling by public transport and the planning of more adventurous outdoor activities.

Pupils are encouraged to play their part in the school as a community. For example, on the occasional open days, pupils are encouraged to look after their guests, show them around the school and explain what it is they do. Letters of thanks and commendation have been received from guests who have attended such days.

A majority of pupils have had disaffected views of learning. The school has challenged these successfully in many cases and those pupils now enjoy learning. Where disaffection continues to be an issue, staff provide an effective PSHE programme that is directed appropriately toward the needs of individuals. Pupils generally enjoy being at the school and their behaviour is satisfactory.

Provision for pupils' cultural development is weaker. They have insufficient understanding of the multi-cultural nature of British society. The school agrees that it could do more to introduce its pupils to the wide ethnic diversity and traditions within Bristol.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is satisfactory. The school makes this aspect of its provision a high priority. All pupils say that they feel safe at the school. Staff show considerable concern for their pupils. The school keeps appropriate records of attendance and, where a pupil is absent, an immediate follow-up is made to seek reasons for this. Where non-attendance becomes persistent, two staff visit the pupil at home in order to encourage him or her to come to the school. The school recognises that these efforts have had limited success. However, when compared to data that relates to their attendance at previous schools, individual pupils make significant improvement.

Each day begins with a breakfast club. This is a positive feature that ensures pupils begin their day with some nourishment and introduces them to the need for healthy eating. It also enables the staff to provide individual tutoring for pupils in a low key but effective way. The impact of this arrangement is that staff can more easily anticipate and manage pupils' behaviour. Pupils' behaviour also improves because staff use these non-confrontational methods in skilful conjunction with other incentives.

The school's provision and planning for health and safety is about to be reviewed by CfBT. Some of the provision needs strengthening in order to meet requirements. The school has a written first aid policy. This does not have a nominated lead first aider, even though most staff have undertaken recent training for this. Fire drills are carried out and fire safety equipment is subject to annual check. Some electrical equipment was last checked in 2001 and there is no record of subsequent checks. This issue is in need of immediate action.

Provision for safeguarding pupils is secure. There is a nominated child protection coordinator and all staff are familiar with the responses they should make in the event of a pupil making any disclosure. All staff have undertaken recent training in order to make themselves aware of situations of potential child abuse. The school has put in place a single central register of staff, in line with the most recent guidance provided by the DfES.

Appropriate arrangements are made for visits away from the school. These include secure risk assessments that follow the guidance offered by the parent organisation.

There is no action plan in place which would indicate how the school intends to implement the access arrangements required by the Disability Discrimination Act (2002).

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The procedures for employment of staff are satisfactory. All staff, including occasional staff, have been subject to clearance by the Criminal Records Bureau before they take up employment at the school. Interviewing procedures are carried out appropriately and outcomes are maintained as a record. Where the school employs staff from overseas the correct procedures to establish their suitability are also implemented.

School's premises and accommodation

The school is situated on two sites. The Bedminster site is in a shopping precinct and located in rented premises above retail outlets. Internally the accommodation of both premises is suited to the purpose. The premises at Easton are shared with other commercial tenants, but their activities do not conflict with pupils' learning. Pupils have sufficient space in which to learn. The school's locations mean that there are no external facilities, such as a garden or play area, in which pupils may relax during breaks from lessons. The noise insulation quality of the Bedminster building is very poor. This means that there is constant noise intrusion from the retail premises below, as well as from adjacent rooms. Washroom accommodation at both premises is unsatisfactory as there is no separate facility for staff. There is no appropriate accommodation for pupils who may become ill during the course of the day.

Despite the physical disadvantages of the buildings, staff and pupils have made considerable effort to create stimulating learning environments. Pupils' work is displayed throughout, indicating the value staff place on celebrating their achievements in attractive surroundings.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

Parents and others are given a good range of information, which informs them of the various opportunities offered to their children. The school actively seeks the cooperation and involvement of parents through visits to homes and invites their views on the provision it offers.

The school works as a sole partner with Bristol City Council and offers its provision at negotiated rates. However, it does not provide the local authority with annual information relating to its income and expenditure in relation to each pupil.

Procedures for handling complaints

The procedures for handling formal and informal complaints are clear and easily understood. The school also provides pupils with a leaflet written in pupil-friendly language. The policy states that where complaints are received these will be followed up promptly. No formal complaints have been received within the last year.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

- provide opportunities for pupils to experience scientific study (paragraph 1(2)(a)(ii))

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (standard 2) and must:

- improve pupils' respect for, and appreciation of, cultures in addition to their own (paragraph 2(e))

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- provide sufficient washroom accommodation for staff and pupils (paragraph 5(k))
- improve the facilities for pupils who may become ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l))
- ensure that the sound insulation and acoustics allow effective teaching and communication (paragraph 5(o))
- make appropriate arrangements that provide outside space for pupils to play (paragraph 5(t)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

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- provide particulars of the annual income and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of each pupil and submit this to the local authority and, on request, to the Secretary of State (paragraph 6(7)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- Devise more effective strategies to improve pupils' attendance.
- Increase the number of pupils who continue to further education or training.
- Develop more secure links between subjects which capitalise on pupils' interests and attainment and which also develop skills of collaborative working.
- Put in place IEPs for pupils with learning difficulties that contain achievable targets against which their progress can be monitored more rigorously.

School details

Name of school	Include Bristol		
DfES number	801/6023		
Unique reference number	134441		
Type of school	Pupil Referral Unit		
Status	Independent Special		
Date school opened	1996		
Age range of pupils	14 - 15		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 22	Girls: 5	Total: 27
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 6	Girls: 0	Total: 6
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 5	Girls: 1	Total: 6
Annual fees (day pupils)	£10,033		
Address of school	Include Bristol 150 -154 East Street Bedminster Bristol BS3 4EW		
Telephone number	01179 665427		
Fax number	01179 632559		
Email address	aellifon@csbt.com		
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Macnaughton		
Proprietor	CfBT Education Trust		
Reporting inspector	Mr Tom Smith AI		
Dates of inspection	17 - 18 January 2007		