

Restormel EOOS Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134752
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	301273
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Andrew Redpath HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	19
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Gary Owens
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2006
School address	16 Carlyon Road St Austell PL25 4AJ
Telephone number	01726 61003
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Age group	11-16
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Restormel EOOS Centre provides education for students who are not attending mainstream school, often due to exclusion. Historically, the centre has provided education for students aged 14 to 16 years but has recently admitted several students aged between 11 and 14 years. A higher than average proportion of students have a statement of special educational need. Many come from homes experiencing economic hardship and challenging circumstances. Following a local authority review of education in pupil referral units, it has been agreed that younger students aged 11 to 14 years should return to a mainstream school following a period of intensive work at the centre. Exceptionally, the centre may admit older primary age pupils, although none currently attend. The premises are currently being extended to provide additional rooms for teaching specialist subjects. It is anticipated that the new accommodation will be available for use from the beginning of September 2007. The centre was deemed to require special measures in March 2006 and has since been subject to regular monitoring visits.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Since the last inspection, significant improvements have been made and Restormel EOOS Centre now provides a satisfactory quality of education. Hard work by a committed staff team and strong external support have combined to secure the centre's improvement.

Students' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are below average since many students have a history of disrupted schooling. However, the trend in standards shows improvement each year and students now leave the centre with a suitable range of examination passes. This represents better progress than at the time of the last inspection. Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Students value the work of the centre, have positive attitudes, and their behaviour is good. Attendance has improved due to the rigorous procedures for following up absences.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staff are successful in managing students' behaviour and establish a calm and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. The inadequate resources and accommodation limit the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in practical lessons. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. Good links with community providers have helped to extend the curriculum. The centre has only recently admitted pupils aged 11 to 14 years and the curriculum for this age group is not fully in place. Balance between subjects is not secure and insufficient taught time is provided for some students. The centre has appropriate plans to provide a fuller curriculum from the beginning of September 2007 when additional accommodation and resources will become available.

The quality of care guidance and support is satisfactory. Students value the mentoring system which enables them to discuss their academic progress. The centre has not put in place procedures which set out how students might return to mainstream school. Currently the centre does not have a site manager and there is no trained member of staff responsible for health and safety. As a result, routine safety checks of the premises and regular fire drills do not take place.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff have continued to provide education under difficult circumstances whilst building work has been in progress. Some staff are taking on new areas of responsibility and aspects of planning are currently being developed. However, the changes to date demonstrate the centre's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Complete curriculum planning for students aged 11 to 14 years.
- Ensure that improvements to the accommodation and resources are successful in raising the quality of teaching and learning and in extending the curriculum.
- Establish procedures for supporting students' return to mainstream school.
- Put in place arrangements which ensure the safety of those using the premises.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Standards are below average due to the history of disrupted schooling experienced by many students. However, many re-engage with learning during their time at the centre due to the individual support and encouragement they receive. Since the time of the last inspection, the number of qualifications gained by students has increased and they now typically pass five subjects at GCSE or Entry level. Recent mock examination results and centre data show that students in Year 11 are likely to achieve their predicted grades in examinations in 2007. Most also gain an Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) qualification to recognise their achievements on vocational courses provided at the local college or a training centre. Evidence suggests that most students move on to a suitable destination in employment, education or training when they leave the centre. Students aged 11 to 14 years, who have recently joined the centre, and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The good systems for assessing students' attainment on entry, checking their progress and setting targets have had a positive impact on raising students' achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Students enjoy coming to the centre and, although their attendance is below the national average, data shows many improve their attendance. This improvement is due to the centre taking swift action in chasing up absences and recognising the efforts of those who attend more regularly. The centre has a history of not permanently excluding students and the few students who do not settle have generally been found suitable alternative provision. There is a small number of fixed term exclusions which are not always recorded appropriately.

Students' behaviour is good and it is encouraged by the system for monitoring and rewarding appropriate behaviour. The centre regularly seeks the views of students and encourages them to make a positive contribution. For example, the student council helps make decisions about whole school trips and activities earned through the behaviour and reward scheme. It has suggested how rules can be improved. Students are encouraged to eat healthily and to drink water rather than soft drinks. Students visit a local leisure centre for physical exercise, although there is little space for outside recreation at the centre. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is adequate. Staff provide good role models and explain to students the difference between right and wrong. Social development is promoted through group outings, in the vocational centres, and by the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme run by the youth service. In the centre, there is little opportunity for students to eat together socially or to engage in group activities. Also, there are few opportunities for students to develop spiritual awareness or an understanding of their own and other cultures. There are suitable plans to improve these areas. Students who leave the centre at the end of Year 11 are well prepared for future employment through the mathematics, English, information and communication technology (ICT) and vocational courses. Younger students who are intending to return to a mainstream school are less well prepared since the curriculum for this age group is incomplete.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features. There are clear procedures for managing behaviour which help to create a calm and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Staff form good relationships with students and use praise and encouragement which help them to try hard and maintain concentration. Expectations are usually high and work is generally neatly presented and marked well. Occasionally, there is insufficient focus on what it is that students are expected to learn and too little time allowed to review this in the lesson. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge, although some staff are developing their knowledge of new areas for which they have recently assumed responsibility. Teachers are creative in planning their lessons, but the lack of resources and equipment to support the teaching of practical subjects limits the quality of teaching and learning. The centre has appropriate plans for improvement when the newly equipped classrooms for teaching specialist subjects become available in September 2007. Assessment information is used well to plan in most lessons and data on students' progress is updated regularly. The centre does not have a homework policy. This results in inconsistent practice between classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum for students aged 14 to 16 years is sufficiently broad and balanced and contains a good range of vocational and accredited courses. Courses provided at the centre include GCSE and Entry level in mathematics, English language, English literature, science, ICT, art, and child care. The centre makes good use of provision in the community to extend the curriculum for older students. Vocational and PSHE courses are taught at local centres and a college and they are accredited appropriately through the ASDAN.

The centre has only recently admitted pupils aged 11 to 14 years and the curriculum for these students is not fully in place. Balance between subjects is not always appropriate and insufficient time is allocated to teaching literacy skills, history and geography. The curriculum is currently limited by the lack of facilities for teaching the practical aspects of design and technology, science and art. Staff are developing appropriate plans to extend the curriculum from the beginning of September 2007, when new specialist classrooms for teaching art, design and technology and science will become available. The taught time provided for some pupils aged between 11 and 14 years is less than the recommended minimum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Good relationships between staff and students ensure that students feel safe and respected. Students appreciate the patient and calm manner in which staff respond to difficulties. They also value the mentoring system which enables them to discuss their academic progress and any other concerns. The impact of this system is limited by the lack of set times for meetings. The system to reward good progress, attendance and behaviour has had a marked impact on improving students' attitudes, attendance and behaviour. The centre has yet to put in place formal procedures for supporting students' return to mainstream school.

Robust procedures are in place for ensuring the suitability of staff to work with children and appropriate child protection arrangements are in place. The centre works closely with a range of other agencies to support students who are experiencing difficulties. It is particularly successful in working with parents to improve students' attendance. The centre does not have a site manager and there is no trained member of staff responsible for health and safety. As a result, routine safety checks of the premises and regular fire drills do not take place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has been successful in involving staff at all levels in raising the quality of provision. The improved systems for checking students' progress has created a sharper focus on learning and helped to improve students' achievement. Together with the improved range of courses on offer at Key Stage 4, this has helped to raise standards.

The centre has established satisfactory systems for self-evaluation and has a secure understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. Data are used effectively to monitor students' progress and identify those who are falling behind. A programme of regular lesson observations is in place, although senior leaders have not yet benefited from recent training in this area which limits the scope of their advice on how teaching might be improved. Aspects of the centre's planning are in outline since some staff are taking responsibility for new subject areas and are still developing their roles.

The centre has established good relationships with parents and a wide range of other partners. It has worked closely with the local authority and made use of other external support to improve the curriculum and to plan the new accommodation. The centre is currently working with local mainstream schools to refine admission criteria and establish ways of supporting students with behavioural difficulties in their mainstream settings. The management committee provides a satisfactory level of support. Several members of the committee have visited the centre to consider different aspects of its provision. Changes are planned for September 2007 to strengthen the role of the committee.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	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	3
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	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
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

13 July 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Restormel EOOS Centre, St Austell PL25 4AJ

As you may know, I inspected your centre on 11 and 12 July. I am writing to let you know the judgements I made about it. I thank those of you who talked to me about your work at the centre, both during this inspection and on previous visits.

I have been visiting your centre for over a year since its last inspection, when it was placed in special measures. This was because there were concerns at the time about the standard of education and the progress you were making. I am pleased to say that the centre has improved and now offers a satisfactory standard of education. It no longer requires special measures. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to bring about these changes and many of you have helped by trying harder.

The centre now provides a suitable range of examination courses which helps to prepare you for future training and employment. Many of you particularly benefit from attending the vocational courses provided in the community. You told me how the individual support you receive helps you work harder. As a result, you make satisfactory progress. You enjoy attending the centre and your behaviour is good. Attendance has improved, in part because the centre works closely with your parents and follows up any absences quickly.

There are still some areas where the centre needs to get better. More planning is needed to make sure those of you aged 11 to 14 years are taught a wide enough range of subjects. There need to be clear procedures to help some of you to return to a mainstream school. The centre needs to make sure that the new accommodation is adapted carefully to make sure it improves teaching and learning. You can help by taking good care of the new classrooms. Finally, the centre must improve arrangements to ensure your safety; for example by holding regular fire drills.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Redpath Her Majesty's Inspector