

Scarborough Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132027
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	301390
Inspection dates	9–10 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Ross Parker

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

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	23
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Miss Lesley Boyd
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2004
School address	Valley Bridge Parade Scarborough North Yorkshire YO11 2PG
Telephone number	08450 349479
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This pupil referral unit (PRU) was set up by the local authority, in consultation with secondary headteachers, as part of the authority's planned provision to prevent exclusion. The unit takes students, most of whom are in danger of being excluded from their mainstream schools. These students attend the unit for part of the week and their mainstream school, or, in the case of some Key Stage 4 students, college or work experience, for the remainder of the week. At the time of the inspection, there were 23 students on roll split into three groups across the week to maintain small group teaching and support. Attainment on entry is below average. Students have a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities: predominantly social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. At the time of the inspection, there were no students from minority ethnic backgrounds. The headteacher, who took up post in September 2006, also manages teachers providing outreach support for primary school pupils and off-site GCSE tuition at the Roscoe Street annexe. The unit has recently gained a School Inclusion Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This outstanding PRU is extremely successful in teaching young people how to become successful learners. Parents are extremely positive because students are, 'given a chance to begin to enjoy learning'. Attendance is good because students make rapid gains in self-esteem and enjoy challenging lessons and exciting activities. Many students really appreciate the way they are able to cope better in their mainstream school by using the skills they have mastered in the unit.

From their below average starting points students make outstanding progress both academically and in their personal development because of excellent teaching, a superb curriculum, and exemplary care, guidance and support. By the time they leave, standards are broadly average. Adults create a highly consistent and supportive learning environment and, whilst confident in its quality, are constantly seeking to improve it. Links with external agencies are good and have been significantly improved. However, the effective outreach support that has been established in some partner schools is not sufficient to ensure successful re-integration of all students. The great majority of students, who attend regularly two days a week, progress more quickly than would normally be expected in a mainstream school, helping them to make up for lengthy periods of underachievement. Older students gain a range of qualifications which enables the majority to go on successfully to further education or employment.

Teachers manage students' behaviour excellently with a combination of high quality relationships and superbly planned and engaging work. By emulating mainstream best practice they establish a positive working model for students. They include a sustained emphasis on individual personal targets so that students are constantly aware of their own progress. Adults have excellent knowledge of each individual student's needs, based on daily updates and very close and regular links with parents. Lesson-by-lesson assessment of key features of every student's attitude and approach to learning is collated in a highly effective way. This provides a clear picture of the progress that each student and the unit as a whole is making. Systematic public recognition of students' positive qualities supports the immense improvement in their self-esteem.

The headteacher's drive and commitment ensure that the unit's role and ways of achieving its aims is very clearly understood and other professionals hold the unit in high regard. Leadership and management are outstanding. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement to the curriculum, the learning environment and support for external partners, and this has ensured that the unit gives good value for money. Self-evaluation is broadly shared amongst the staff team and is wholly realistic. This underpins an excellent capacity for continued improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the outreach support available to mainstream schools so that they are better able to support students when they are re-integrated.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Attainment on entry is below average because most students have lost interest in learning. They settle quickly and in Years 7 to 9 make rapid progress in English, mathematics and science. One boy explained that they do as much work in a day as they did in a week before they came

to the unit. Students make substantial gains in reading and spelling. This is because lessons in English combine preparation for end of key stage tests with activities to reinforce basic literacy skills which have not been successfully mastered in Key Stage 2. During Years 10 and Year 11, students continue to make very good progress in English, mathematics and science. Students in Key Stage 4 also have extensive opportunities to gain recognised qualifications in areas ranging from key skills to plate tectonics and campfire cookery. The Roscoe Street annexe proves an effective last chance for excluded students to gain GCSE qualifications and in some cases re-establish their progress towards university.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The improvement in behaviour and attitude towards work of the students is outstanding. The school systems enable all students to behave well. They understand that they are learning how to behave in a classroom so that they can take these skills and apply them in larger classes in mainstream. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Spiritual, moral and social development are particular strengths as students gain a whole new perspective on who they are, how successful they can be and how they can cope with the challenges life has to offer. They very quickly learn to mix well together and to contribute to other's welfare. They follow the excellent examples set at the social gatherings at the start of the day, at break and at lunchtime, when all the adults in the unit model appropriate relationships. Students support each other's learning, show great respect for the environment and readily take their turns in managing the daily life of their community. With the unit's strong emphasis on developing basic skills, including information and communication technology (ICT), preparation for future economic well-being is excellent. Students quickly learn to collaborate, take responsibility for their own actions and to evaluate their own performance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching particularly supports students' huge steps forward in their commitment to learning. The small numbers within teaching groups, combined with an ethos of trust and respect, give every student a superb opportunity to overcome the barriers that have impeded their earlier learning. Students explain that all of the adults pick up on minor lapses in behaviour very quickly so that they are not left to drift out of control. Detailed and careful planning matches the demands extremely well to students' needs so that the work is manageable but they have a constant sense of achievement which motivates them to try harder. Marking is thorough and is clearly linked to carefully planned and challenging targets. As a result students quickly get used to being told that they are succeeding and are willing to risk failure more readily.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is very clearly designed to meet students' personal and academic needs. In Key Stage 3, students focus primarily on the core subjects in which they will be tested. This boosts their chances of success in mainstream schools and reinforces their commitment to learning. In Key Stage 4 there is an added emphasis on gaining recognised accreditation, including recently introduced qualifications in drugs awareness and nutrition and health. Because a

significant number of older students do not spend time in their mainstream school there is a consistent programme of physical education to contribute to their health and well-being. Additional physical and outdoor activities are provided to boost students' self-esteem and to develop teamwork and collaboration. These range from conventional games to surfing and mountain biking, and they add considerably to students' enjoyment. A recently developed independent living course supports a good understanding of healthy lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Exceptional care, guidance and support underpin everything that happens in the unit. Students know that there is always an opportunity for a fresh start and they can quickly put any mistakes behind them. They take a very close interest in lessons which provide highly relevant guidance on aspects of social and emotional development, such as the relationship between assertiveness and self-esteem. There is a strong emphasis on safety in the unit and students gain a good understanding on how to stay safe, for example, through assemblies which consider the day-to-day risks that they face on the street. Procedures for the safeguarding of students meet requirements. Each day, structured group discussions systematically capture every aspect of each individual's progress in a process which is positive but very realistic.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very effectively with other senior managers and staff to provide an outstandingly clear direction for the unit. The management committee is well informed and supportive but plays little part in the day-to-day working of the unit. There has recently been good improvement to an already good facility. Each teacher is developing close liaison with key staff in the different partner schools. In the most successful instances this includes spending time in the school to support students as they near the end of their time in the unit, though this practice is insufficiently widespread. The unit has become a leading provider of social and emotional education within the local authority. Classrooms have been refurbished to replicate the mainstream experience, additional funding secured and the headteacher has provided highly effective support for primary school and Roscoe Street providers as well as the local secondary schools.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

Thank you for taking time to talk to me when I came to visit the unit recently. The unit gives you an outstanding education. These aspects are especially good:

- those of you in Years 7 to 9 make exceptional progress and rapidly catch up lost ground from earlier years
- those in Years 10 and 11 make equally outstanding progress and have a wide range of opportunities to gain qualifications which recognise the skills you are developing
- you are really well prepared for life after school. Despite the difficulties you have experienced most of you go on to further education, training or employment
- you have made enormous improvements to your behaviour and in particular you learn to enjoy learning
- the small groups and excellent teaching help many of you to develop skills which then enable you to be more successful back in your mainstream schools
- the curriculum is extremely well designed to meet your needs
- adults give you excellent care, support and guidance
- all this is possible because of the first-rate leadership from your headteacher and deputy headteacher.

There is one thing I have asked the unit to improve:

- make sure that teachers in your mainstream school understand what works so effectively in the unit, so that they can give you similar support whilst you are with them.