

# The Old Hall Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106666
<b>Local Authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	309191
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ross Parker

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 category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5-18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	26
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Julie Warrington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Judith King
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	High Street Bentley Doncaster South Yorkshire DN5 0AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01302 875653
<b>Fax number</b>	-

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<b>Age group</b>	5-18
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small referral unit is situated on three sites. At the time of the inspection, it was catering for pupils in Nursery to Year 6. The unit initially undertook preventative work with pupils at risk of exclusion from Doncaster primary schools, but during the last year its function has changed. It has now expanded to provide education on one site for pupils who have already been permanently excluded. On a second site there are pupils who attend part-time to help them to cope in their mainstream schools. An outreach team, working from a third site, provides support for teachers and pupils in schools when pupils' behaviour puts them at risk of exclusion. All of the pupils who attend the unit have significant behaviour difficulties. Some have related learning difficulties, and all have fallen behind with their learning before they come to the unit.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The centre provides a good quality of education and has adapted well to the huge shift in responsibilities over the last year. It effectively lives up to its aim to give pupils a fresh start by providing good opportunities for all, no matter how resistant pupils may be at first. Local headteachers are highly appreciative of the outreach support. One described its effect as being 'like a magic wand'.

Pupils come to the centre with skills and understanding that are below expectations for their age. Because teachers manage behaviour with great consistency pupils are enabled to concentrate more effectively in lessons and make good progress; some make up lost ground very rapidly. Standards are still below average by the end of Year 6, but represent good achievement from these pupils' starting points.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The vast majority of lessons are planned very effectively to ensure that the work motivates pupils and challenges them while allowing them to experience success. The curriculum is good. It effectively replicates the mainstream curriculum in a way that prepares pupils well for reintegration. Pupils are well cared for. Adults ensure that all of pupils' time in the centre is structured and carefully supervised. This consistent approach gives pupils the confidence to break away from established patterns of inappropriate behaviour. Pupils say that this frees them to catch up with their learning. Academic guidance is good, and mirrors good practice in mainstream schools.

Pupils' personal development is good. The majority respond well to the very consistent behaviour demands in the centre and so their behaviour improves significantly. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good because the curriculum places a heavy emphasis on valuing pupils as individuals. Adults build on this so that pupils develop a good understanding of their responsibility as an individual in any social group. Within the closely structured environment at the centre pupils learn to show consideration for each other. Pupils are clear that they enjoy their learning. This is primarily because teachers manage their behaviour calmly, but also because they plan to make learning fun. Pupils show a good appreciation of ways to stay healthy, regularly discussing this at mealtimes and during social and play times. They say that they feel safe most of the time because teachers look after their needs very well. Some report feeling anxious on rare occasions when individuals lose control of their behaviour. The strong focus on helping pupils to catch up with basic skills, and improve interpersonal skills, provides a sound preparation for later success.

The centre is well managed so that the adults have a clear vision of how they can help pupils and track how well they are doing. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the centre's strengths and weaknesses, but the split site accommodation presents some challenges in addressing the latter. Leaders know, for example, that in a minority of cases teaching is satisfactory rather than good, but find there are limited opportunities to share best practice between staff across the different sites. Nevertheless, the centre has moved forward significantly over recent months. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection and the centre is well placed to continue this improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

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## What the school should do to improve further

- Provide sufficient opportunities for staff on different sites to share and develop their teaching expertise so that the best practice is evident everywhere.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

The centre's analysis of pupils' standards when they first arrive show that pupils' learning has been seriously impeded by their behaviour difficulties. All pupils are at least one and a half years behind where they might expect to be at their age and many have more significant deficits. The centre sets targets for each pupil based on these entry levels and in 2007 these were met in mathematics and exceeded in English and science. These were challenging targets, requiring pupils to make faster progress than is normally expected in primary schools. Almost half of the pupils made more than twice as much progress than is usual in a year. Pupils achieved well from their low starting points, though standards are still below average by Year 6. Pupils with particular learning difficulties, and those who are more able, achieve at the same good rate as others.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

In the centre pupils routinely exhibit politeness and consideration for others because this is consistently expected, acknowledged and rewarded by adults. They progress from, sometimes, chaotic relationships and control of their own actions to understanding what is expected in a school and in society and how they can make a good contribution. There are clear examples of pupils, who previously resisted adult attempts to manage their behaviour, accepting sanctions because they know they have done something wrong. They are also making good progress in learning to accept other people's success. One small group of Year 6 pupils frequently referred disputes in a ball game to a teaching assistant. In doing so they found that they were able to move on quickly from each dispute and so get more pleasure from the activity. Getting rid of conflict in such situations enables pupils to gain real enjoyment from the regular physical activities provided and helps them learn how to stay safe and healthy. They become more able to cope with making mistakes. This gives pupils confidence to take risks with their learning and so progress more quickly. When other pupils sometimes lose control, they are able to ignore the distraction and re-focus on their work. This enables pupils to achieve well and enjoy their time in the centre, which is reflected in their good attendance.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good quality teaching ensures that pupils make good progress in lessons or behaviour improvement activities. The high quality of the relationships that the adults build with pupils fosters trust and underpins good learning. Carefully focused praise builds pupils' self-esteem and motivation. This was evident when one Year 6 pupil showed pride in completing a lengthy piece of mathematics homework. Pupils are drawn into learning because typically teachers plan carefully and match work to individual needs. They set pupils clear personal and academic targets and give them continuous feedback about how close they are to reaching these. In

most lessons there is a strong sense of pace and challenge, whether pupils are working to develop basic skills or experimenting with painting techniques. Occasionally, teaching lacks these sharp features, resulting in learning that is satisfactory rather than good. Teachers and classroom assistants model appropriate communication and behaviour very effectively. They maintain firmly consistent expectations of pupils' behaviour, courtesy and work rate. Classrooms are skilfully organised to replicate mainstream environments and National Curriculum learning is clearly the focus in every lesson. Outreach support in local schools provides good help for individual pupils, and good guidance for teachers.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is effective in dealing with earlier gaps in pupils' learning. It runs parallel to the National Curriculum activities that pupils would experience in a mainstream school and prepares them well for reintegration. There is a comprehensive programme to support pupils' social and emotional development, which is complemented by a range of off-site activities such as swimming and boxing, which pupils enjoy a great deal. External expertise is also exploited; for example French and Spanish weeks help to promote pupils' cultural development. There are carefully structured social activities where pupils are given support in relaxing and unwinding while showing the same respect for others in these situations that they learn to show in lessons.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are clearly valued whatever difficulties they have. Arrangements to ensure their safety meet all requirements. Staff give a great deal of attention to building a clear picture of each pupil's abilities and needs. They then track pupils' progress frequently to assemble a profile of each pupil's personal and academic development. This serves as a map of pupils' journey towards reintegration into a mainstream school. It also allows senior staff to analyse the progress that pupils are making, and plan any adjustments that might be needed to improve this.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Senior leaders have quickly established good provision to meet the needs of the excluded pupils. They have sensitively prioritised the allocation of staffing and accommodation to match the differing needs of part-time and full-time pupils. The split site has, however, caused a few communication difficulties, which are also impacting on efforts to improve the quality of provision. These are being addressed through weekly whole-staff meetings and the local authority is exploring the possibility of alternative accommodation. There has been a good response to issues raised by the previous inspection. For instance, extending links with local partners has increased the opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology and take part in physical activity. These improvements have had a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment and achievement. The leadership team has also made good progress developing assessment and reintegration processes to cope with the increase in permanently excluded pupils. They have made good use of funds to improve the fabric of the centre, and to provide training to broaden the management experience across the staff team. There has been satisfactory support from the management board, which has recently been strengthened by the appointment of new members.

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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?	2
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	2
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

<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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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**

Inspection of The Old Hall Centre, Bentley, Doncaster, DN55 0AA

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave me when I came to visit The Old Hall recently. I really enjoyed meeting you and having the chance to talk to you.

The unit gives you a good education.

Here are some of the really good things about the centre

The centre gives everybody a chance of a new start, no matter how hard it is for some of you to control your behaviour. You say that your behaviour improves a lot and you are enjoying your learning and making better progress. We agree. The classrooms and the work you do are well organised to make it easier for you to settle back into school when you are ready. The adults look after you very well. They set you clear targets and discuss with you how well you are doing. They give you good examples of how to behave, and you follow them well. There are good opportunities to do active and interesting things like boxing and swimming, as well as to catch up with your basic skills.

I have asked the centre to do something that will make it even better

There is some really good teaching in the centre, but the team of adults is spread out over three sites and staff do not have much time to talk to each other and share their best ideas. The headteacher needs to make sure that this can happen so that all the staff are able to offer the same high standard of teaching to enable you all to progress really quickly back into school.