

# Behaviour Support Unit (North East)

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132850
<b>Local Authority</b>	ESSEX LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	316037
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Smith

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	9
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Sue Collins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 January 2000
<b>School address</b>	71 London Road Copford Colchester CO6 1LG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01206 213704
<b>Fax number</b>	01206 213705

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Provision serves a number of mainstream schools as part of the North East Essex Behaviour Support Service. Students placed at the unit have been at serious risk of permanent exclusion and have a history of emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. A very small number of students are undergoing an assessment for a statement of special educational need. Student placements are for a maximum of one term and a half before returning to their school. On entry, attainment is often below average, usually due to absence from school and the various barriers to their learning. All students are White British boys and come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. Much of the work undertaken by staff (approximately 60%) is in mainstream schools where early intervention support for students, and staff training and support is carried out through an outreach programme.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. There are a number of outstanding features that ensure that most students achieve as well as they can. The headteacher, deputy and outreach manager (senior leadership team/SLT) have clear roles and responsibilities and work effectively as a team. Together with hard working staff they ensure that students' individual needs are well supported, resulting in most of them returning to school and learning with positive attitudes, enthusiasm and making the best of their opportunities. There are outstanding partnerships with secondary schools and with parents. Tutors supporting schools and students are highly thought of and make significant contributions to the prevention of student exclusions and the professional development of staff. Links with, and support for parents are very effectively coordinated by the home/school liaison worker and are a strength of the provision. Regular parent workshops in schools are hugely appreciated. One parent said, 'Thank you for such a useful course, it is the best I have ever attended and has changed my views on parenting skills'.

Overall, standards are average or just below. Given the starting points on entry the achievement and progress of most students is good or better. The progress many students make with their reading skills is outstanding and they gain tremendous confidence and self-esteem, which supports their progress in all areas. Many students go on to achieve GCSE qualifications in line with their peers after their return to school. An initial assessment on entry of students' needs, based upon previous attainment data and the unit's own assessment, forms the basis for individual target setting. Academic and personal development targets are set and reviewed weekly with the students, and most are successfully met. This is because strategies for success are discussed and consistently supported. Students say that they are helped to manage their own behaviour and attitudes very well. Good achievement is the result of the excellent relationships, the relevant curriculum, good teaching and the good care, guidance and support they receive for their individual needs. Although teaching and support is good overall, there is some outstanding practice that is not being shared as widely or as effectively as it might, particularly in the area of pupil assessment and planning.

Students' personal development and well-being are good overall. Attitudes are generally good and improve as students begin to realise that the unit has their best interests at heart. They are clearly aware of the importance of keeping safe and leading a healthy lifestyle. Students show respect and generally get on well with each other. The tracking of students' progress is developing well and students confirm they are clear about what they have to do to improve their work and personal development. A parent remarked, 'My son has been far more cooperative at home and now completes his homework without any fuss. I am really pleased with his progress'. The unit has created a very positive and rewarding climate for learning where the expectations are high and where students can thrive and make good progress. As the deputy remarked, 'We enable students to see, feel and hear achievement, which is a revelation to them'. Self-evaluation processes are effective in identifying what improvements are needed and developments are clearly linked to student achievement. Consultation and evaluation opportunities are used well and the unit knows what needs to improve and how to achieve success. However, the management committee has not effectively fulfilled its support and monitoring role. The unit has successfully managed and developed its services to schools and students without the direct support and direction from the committee. The newly appointed chair of the committee, a secondary headteacher, is very aware of the situation and intends to

improve matters. The local authority is currently undertaking a countywide review on similar provisions and the work of management committees, with a view of ensuring consistently good practice. Overall, leadership and management are having a positive impact on learning, and students are making good progress, which is supporting their successful reintegration into mainstream. The capacity to improve further is good.

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

- Ensure the best practice in pupil assessment, planning and lesson delivery is consistently applied across the unit.
- Ensure the management committee effectively fulfils its monitoring, support and strategic role.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are generally average to below average. This is a result of a number of previous factors, including non-attendance, poor attitudes to learning and the behavioural, social and learning difficulties that may have arisen. Considering their previous difficulties, the progress and achievement of students are consistently good. Importantly, their attitudes to learning improve as they begin to realise they can achieve, and their efforts are appreciated and rewarded. Reintegration rates are good and carefully planned and coordinated support and encouragement enables most students to positively re-engage with learning and achieve success back in their school. Most students successfully achieve challenging targets, supported by strategies and guidance. Assessment and progress tracking systems are developing well and the unit is aware of the need to ensure that information on students' progress is consistently used by teachers to plan and deliver their lessons.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of students are good overall. Students say they feel safe and secure in the unit and enjoy most of their learning. As one student put it, 'The small groups make it easy to concentrate and we support each other to improve our behaviour and work'. Students like the reward and credit system that encourages them to improve their attitudes and reach their personal targets. Students are confident that they can talk to an adult if they have any concerns and say they are treated with respect. Attendance is good and often shows an improvement from pre-admission figures. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is well supported through the curriculum, circle times and in the everyday social interactions between students and adults. Behaviour is generally good and students learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour and begin to appreciate the high standards expected of them. There is a clear sense of community in the unit and students are encouraged to have empathy and understanding for each other while exploring their rights and responsibilities. Students take part in fund-raising and have opportunities to join a variety of local community and school events and fetes. Students gain confidence and undoubtedly acquire useful and essential skills that support their return to school, further study, and future employment.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall. As a result, students make good progress. The management of student behaviour is consistently good, with high expectations, enabling positive learning to take place. Teaching groups are small and the excellent relationships and support for individual needs ensures students get the best out of all learning activities and make good progress towards their individual targets. Activities are relevant to students' learning needs and effort and achievement is rewarded at every opportunity. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored and support given to improve individual practice. Although the very best and outstanding practice has been clearly identified, it is not yet being shared most effectively across the unit to ensure a more helpful consistency in approach. Ongoing feedback, encouragement and support ensure students are clear about how they might improve. Teachers and assistants work very effectively as a team ensuring learning activities promote interest and enjoyment.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It effectively supports students in their return to school and is generally relevant to their individual needs. In addition to the core subjects, a wide range of creative and physical activities effectively motivates students. Students said they particularly liked the sport, art, design technology and drama activities and appreciated the emphasis on reading because they were making such good progress. Personal, social, health and citizenship education plays an important part in students' personal development, particularly in their understanding of the world around them and their awareness of a healthy lifestyle. Learning is well supported and enhanced by a range of outside providers and visits into the community. Although information and communication technology (ICT) is used to support specific curriculum activities and student understanding, it could be used more widely to support and motivate learning. The unit consults with the referring school on the specific and individual curricular needs of each student to increase the personalised aspect of learning.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support of students are good. All staff clearly show that they have the best interests of the students at heart. A parent wrote, 'Thank you so much for your patience, understanding and efforts with our son. You guys are the best'. There are clear procedures for safeguarding students, which are understood by all staff. Health and safety procedures are regularly monitored and reviewed and are supported by appropriate staff training. While informal support for new staff is good, there is no systematic and formal induction procedure in place. The unit works very well with external support agencies to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to supporting students' needs. Communication and support between the home and unit is outstanding and parents greatly appreciate the advice and support they receive. A parent said, 'I would like to say a big thank you for not giving up on my son and us. We really appreciate all you have done'. Students' needs are clearly identified and they feel they are effectively told how to improve their work in lessons. While this is so, it is not consistently made clear to them what they specifically have to do to achieve a higher national curriculum level. There are regular

opportunities for students to review their own, and others personal development targets, and set new ones.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy ensure the day-to-day organisation effectively supports the good quality care and education for all students. Staff roles and responsibilities are clear, their work is valued and consequently morale is high. The impact of everyone's work is clearly seen in the good care, guidance and support for pupils, which in turn leads to their good personal development and academic progress. The outreach support programme for schools is very efficiently coordinated. In an evaluation of the service, a headteacher remarked 'The outreach tutor has been effective, professional and has made a positive impact on students and staff'. The partnership with secondary schools is excellent, and mainstream headteachers and staff appreciate the professional manner, support and preparation, which accompany referral and reintegration. The unit has excellent links with external agencies that ensures the appropriate support is available to meet the specific needs of all students. The unit has not had the benefit of a fully active management committee, but has had, and appreciated the support and guidance from external consultants such as the school improvement partner (SIP).

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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?	1
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	2
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	2

### 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	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	4
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 November 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of the Behaviour Support Service (NE) Colchester CO6 1LG

I write to let you know my findings after my visit to you recently. A special thanks to those students I spoke to in the drama lesson who gave their time to tell me all about their experiences and impressions of the unit. I agree with you and your parents/carers, the unit is good and effectively supports your needs so you can make good academic and personal progress. All of you are aware of the need to take more responsibility for your own behaviour and attitudes if you are to continue to make good progress. Helping each other along the way is something you recognise as important, as is showing understanding for each other's difficulties.

I particularly liked the following things.

- Relationships are excellent. All staff care, guide and support you very well; they listen and treat you with respect.
- Most of you enjoy lessons and increasingly have positive attitudes to learning.
- You know how to be safe and healthy and can confidently talk to an adult if you have any concerns.
- You learn useful skills that prepare you for going back to school.
- The curriculum is relevant to your individual needs and you are taught well.
- There are excellent links with your schools.
- There are excellent links with your parents/carers and they greatly appreciate the support and training on offer.
- Schools really appreciate the support and advice they receive from the unit tutors.
- The unit knows how to improve further and has your very best interests at heart.

There are a few things the unit knows it can improve upon.

- It can make sure that the very best practice in teaching and learning is more effectively shared across the unit
- It can make sure the management committee takes a more active part in monitoring, supporting and evaluating the work of the unit.

I had an interesting and enjoyable two days and I wish you all every future success.

Yours faithfully Mike Smith Lead inspector