

Bristol Hospital Education Service

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133689
Local Authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	316193
Inspection date	19 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Sarah Mascal

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	5-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	145
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Carolyne Searle
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bristol Hospital Education Service Wigton Crescent Southmead Bristol BS10 6DR
Telephone number	01173 772377
Fax number	01173 772380

Age group	5-16
Inspection date	19 September 2007
Inspection number	316193

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Service caters for pupils who are unable to attend school because of their medical needs. They have a range of health problems, including physical and mental health difficulties. Pupils' potential for achievement varies considerably because of their very wide range of special needs. The Service consists of five centres located on three different sites across Bristol and pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The Service is registered as a pupil referral unit (PRU) but is known within the Bristol area as a service rather than a PRU.

The headteacher has been in post since the start of this term.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Bristol Hospital Education Service offers a satisfactory education to its pupils. It has a number of strengths, particularly in the very high quality of care provided by staff. Pupils recognise this and greatly value what the Service has done for them in enabling them to develop confidence and join in with everyday activities. As a result they make good progress in their personal development. The Service has established excellent partnerships with a range of professionals and this has contributed greatly to the support provided to pupils. Many parents comment on how much they appreciate the hard work of staff in supporting their children and recognise how much they have gained from this.

Pupils' attainment is broadly average and they make satisfactory progress in their learning. Many pupils gain passes in GCSEs by the time they leave, although several do not achieve the predicted grades set by the Service. Progress for younger pupils is satisfactory overall, but sometimes good. Pupils comment on how much they enjoy their lessons because they like their teachers and enjoy the work they do. The relationships that teachers establish with pupils are excellent and are effective in improving pupils' confidence. Teachers' lesson planning, though, does not always take into consideration the wide range of abilities of the pupils in each class. This is because assessment procedures are not always effective in enabling staff to ensure that the targets set for pupils are challenging and regularly used to support pupils' learning. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' enjoyment and there are very good opportunities for extra-curricular activities, but it is currently limited by the poor accommodation in some centres.

The Service's effectiveness is impaired by a lack of clarity about its role and purpose, particularly in terms of the nature of the special needs of pupils it caters for and its scope for returning pupils back to mainstream schools. For example, in some centres pupils remain with the Service for over a year. The local authority recognises that the role of the Service needs to be clarified in order to ensure it meets the needs of all its pupils.

The new headteacher has already, in a very short period of time, recognised what improvements are needed. For example, she has rightly identified as a priority the need to ensure that procedures and systems are consistent throughout the Service. At present, senior staff do not have systems to collate and analyse all the information they have on pupils' progress across the whole Service. This means there is not a clear understanding about how well pupils are doing, and has led to the Service having an unrealistic view of its effectiveness in some areas. The headteacher is well supported by a staff team who are very committed to bringing about improvements and are keen to develop their practice further. As a result the service has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

-
- Make more effective use of information collected on pupils' achievement so that there is a better understanding of the strengths and areas for development within the Service.
- Put in place procedures and policies that will ensure consistency of practice throughout the Service.
- Improve systems for assessment to enable staff to set pupils challenging targets for learning and make better use of these when teaching.
- With the support of the local authority, clarify the role and purpose of the Service.

A small proportion of the 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

Pupils' standards are broadly average and their achievements are satisfactory. It is difficult for the Service to accurately judge the progress of pupils because it does not analyse the information it has gathered about pupils' achievements over time, but evidence from pupils' work and the school's information indicates that pupils generally make satisfactory progress. Pupils gain passes in a range of external examinations and many achieve passes in GCSEs. Results for 2007 show that in English, pupils achieved their predicted grades whilst in art many exceeded them. The Service recognises that achievements in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are not as good, and too many pupils did not meet their predicted grades in GCSE. A number of pupils gained appropriate passes in ASDAN (Awards Scheme Development and Accreditation Network). Younger pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well and this is reflected in their confidence to contribute to discussions about a range of topics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils talk openly about the problems they face and are rightly very proud of the huge strides they have made in moving away from being taught at home to going to one of the centres each day. They develop into young mature adults who have a very good sense of self-worth and a much developed confidence in a variety of settings. This is reflected in their confidence to catch public transport and their excellent understanding of how to keep safe. This, together with the improvements in their social skills, contributes greatly to pupils' preparation for life when they leave school.

Behaviour is excellent. Pupils clearly feel safe and comment on how approachable all staff are if they have concerns. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and although recognising the need to keep fit, the poor accommodation in some centres prevents pupils from improving their fitness. There are good opportunities for pupils to be involved in the community and many work at a local primary school. Attendance for many pupils is good, but this is not consistent throughout all centres despite, in most cases, a high level of support from other agencies to encourage pupils to attend.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The very good subject knowledge of many teachers is used well to support pupils' learning. This is particularly evident in subjects such as art and English where teachers' knowledge effectively extends pupils' skills. All teachers are very successful in establishing good relationships with pupils and encourage them to be involved in lessons. This results in a very positive learning environment in which pupils feel confident to contribute. Teachers work well with pupils on a one-to-one basis and their lesson planning often builds on previous learning. Where there are larger groups of pupils, teaching is less effective. Teachers do not always

consider the different needs within the class and work is often the same for all, regardless of ability. ICT is used particularly well to capture and engage pupils' interest. Most teachers ensure that the pupils know what they are to learn but this is not consistent and not all teachers provide pupils with an opportunity to consider what they have learnt at the end of a lesson. As a result pupils do not always know how well they are doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The Service has worked hard to ensure that pupils have as wide a curriculum as possible. The range of subjects offered is good and for many pupils, taught time is well above that which is recommended. Not all centres, however, monitor this closely and for the very small number of pupils with a statement of special needs the teaching time allocated is inadequate. The Service is aware of these concerns and is already taking action to address them. There is an exceptional range of activities that support the curriculum and staff make very good use of the local community to extend pupils' experiences in areas such as art and music. Visits to a variety of places including museums, art galleries and local mosques greatly contribute to pupils' understanding of different cultures. In some centres the accommodation restricts what the centres can offer; this is particularly the case for physical education and design and technology. There are plans to move the service to buildings that are more appropriate but these are at an early stage.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The level of care and support for pupils in terms of their special needs is excellent. Staff make very good use of their experience and understanding of pupils' special needs to ensure that pupils are supported in gaining in confidence and in developing effective social skills. Their work is enhanced by the extremely good links that have been established with outside agencies, whose contribution is greatly valued by staff. Procedures for child protection and the vetting of staff are appropriate. Whilst there are good systems in place to follow up when a pupil does not arrive for lessons, the Service has no clear overview of the level of attendance or any systems for checking any patterns of absence. These weaknesses have been recognised and a start made to rectify them.

Arrangements for assessing the progress made by pupils are inconsistent. There is not yet a system for checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments and practice varies considerably throughout the Service.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

A strength of the headteacher is the recognition and understanding of how much needs to be done to improve the Service. She is well supported by senior staff, who are quickly developing a better understanding of the strengths and areas for development. Until recently the Service operated as five different centres, and because of this there is a variety of approaches to many aspects of its work. Improvements in the structure of the management team last year have enabled staff to start looking at practice across the Service and to begin to develop a better understanding of what goes on in each of the different settings. They are working towards

setting challenging targets that will enable them to bring about change and improvement in the Service. Staff have welcomed the opportunity to develop their roles and some good work has been started such as the improvements to individual education plans.

The management committee have a satisfactory understanding of the work of the Service. They have been effective in making recent staffing appointments, but recognise that they are not yet fully effective in providing support and guidance to the Service.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	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?	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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?	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

21 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bristol Hospital Education Service, Southmead, BS10 6DS

Thank you very much for the time you gave to talking to us. We very much enjoyed meeting you and looking at your work. We feel that you are getting a satisfactory education at the Service and these are some of the things that we particularly liked:

- You receive excellent care and support from your teachers and the specialist staff from outside agencies.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- You have a good understanding of staying healthy and keeping safe, although the accommodation in some centres prevents you from having opportunities to keep fit.
- The curriculum provides you with lots of activities that support your learning well.
- Your teachers establish very good relationships with you all and you told us how much staff have done for you in increasing your confidence.

The things we think it could do better are:

- Make better use of information teachers have about your achievements so that they have a better understanding of the strengths and areas for development within the Service.
- Put in place systems that are the same in all the different centres so that everyone is consistent in the way they work.
- Improve the way teachers assess how well you are doing so that they can set you challenging targets. This will help make sure teachers ensure work is matched to the different abilities in the classes.
- With the support of the local authority, the Service needs to be sure about what its role is, especially in terms of getting you back to your mainstream school.

We hope you will continue to develop your confidence and try to find ways to have more opportunities to keep fit.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Mascall Lead inspector



21 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bristol Hospital Education Service, Southmead, BS10 6DS

Thank you very much for the time you gave to talking to us. We very much enjoyed meeting you and looking at your work. We feel that you are getting a satisfactory education at the Service and these are some of the things that we particularly liked:

- You receive excellent care and support from your teachers and the specialist staff from outside agencies.
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- You have a good understanding of staying healthy and keeping safe, although the accommodation in some centres prevents you from having opportunities to keep fit.
- The curriculum provides you with lots of activities that support your learning well.
- Your teachers establish very good relationships with you all and you told us how much staff have done for you in increasing your confidence.

The things we think it could do better are:

- Make better use of information teachers have about your achievements so that they have a better understanding of the strengths and areas for development within the Service.
- Put in place systems that are the same in all the different centres so that everyone is consistent in the way they work.
- Improve the way teachers assess how well you are doing so that they can set you challenging targets. This will help make sure teachers ensure work is matched to the different abilities in the classes.
- With the support of the local authority, the Service needs to be sure about what its role is, especially in terms of getting you back to your mainstream school.

We hope you will continue to develop your confidence and try to find ways to have more opportunities to keep fit.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Mascal
Lead inspector