

Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100876
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	323364
Inspection date	23 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Greg Sorrell

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	30
Sixth form	16
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Isobel Morris
Headteacher	Dr John Ivens
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2005
School address	Monks Orchard Road Beckenham BR3 3BX
Telephone number	020 8777 1897
Fax number	020 8777 1239

Age group	4–19
Inspection date	23 September 2008
Inspection number	323364

© Crown copyright 2008

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 Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School provides for students with psychological difficulties. Students are enrolled once admitted to the hospital and leave the school following discharge. Students attend the school whilst receiving treatment on three child and adolescent wards on the hospital site. The school also supports young people of school age on other hospital wards as required. Students can be admitted to the school at any time, sometimes at very short notice. They stay on roll for varying lengths of time from a few weeks to over a year. The school provides education for boys and girls aged 4 to 19 years but there have been no children in the Foundation Stage for more than five years. At the time of the inspection, the age range was 8 to 19. Some students, aged above 16, are dual registered and also attend local colleges of further education. The school is subject to re-organisation planning which will lead to an expansion of numbers on an additional site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School provides a good education for its students whose personal development is outstanding. Multi-disciplinary work is of a high quality and ensures the aim of being a 'team around the child' is successfully met. The good quality of teaching and the curriculum provided makes the students feel secure and as a result they make good progress.

Despite inevitable difficulties in engaging them on a daily basis, the school surveys parents' views regularly and know that the school's work is valued. Students, too, recognise the positive impact the school makes on their personal development and achievement. Their attendance is much improved compared to previous settings and their comments in surveys indicate they enjoy what the school provides.

The students arrive at the school with a wide range of educational experience and attainment. Overall attainment is well below average on entry due to a wide range of factors including significant absence from schooling due to illness. By the time they leave they have made good progress in literacy, numeracy and other key skills. Students in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form gain passes in GCSEs and Entry Level examinations.

Teachers and students enjoy excellent relationships. This enables students to become more confident and independent learners. The curriculum is well planned although occasionally learning objectives in lessons and individual education plans are too broad and difficult to measure. This can lead to some lessons being less well matched to students' needs as seen in better lessons. The curriculum is good overall and close attention is paid to ensuring equality of opportunity irrespective of how ill students may be at any given time.

The quality of care, guidance and support provided is good. School procedures, including those for child protection, ensure their well-being is appropriately safeguarded. All activities are thoroughly risk assessed to promote students' safety in school and the community. Students receive significant additional support to improve their access to the curriculum and readiness for re-integration. Targets in individual education plans are not always sufficiently clear or easily measured.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. They have a good understanding of the school's effectiveness and regularly gain the views of its stakeholders. Subject specialists support teaching throughout the school although their use of students' progress data and their leadership role is underdeveloped. The school's expertise is highly valued by its community both locally and nationally. Improvement since the last inspection has been good as is the capacity for further improvement and expansion. The governing body gives good support on all aspects of school life although their role in monitoring school improvement is underemphasised in the school development plan.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The sixth form does not operate as a separate entity to the main school. Its leadership and management are the same as the school as are the conditions for entry and the outcomes achieved.

What the school should do to improve further

- In order to make sure students make maximum progress, extend specialist teachers' use of progress information by developing opportunities for subject leadership across the school.
- Improve the quality of learning objectives in lessons so that students are clear about what they are expected to learn.
- Ensure all targets in students' individual education plans are specific and measurable.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The majority of students arrive with academic standards that are well below those expected nationally as a result of their illness, individual special educational needs, exclusion and erratic attendance. On leaving school, standards are still well below national expectations. Nevertheless, their achievement is good as they gain ground in all subjects of the curriculum. At the end of the last academic year, students in Key Stage 4 and sixth form achieved passes in GCSE English, mathematics, science, citizenship and sociology with grades ranging from B to G. Other accreditation awards include Entry Level English, mathematics and science. All students show evidence of improving their readiness for re-integration scores (RRS) which represents considerable achievement in light of their needs on entry to the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The reason students' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are outstanding, is due to the high level of care and support they receive. Their enjoyment in lessons and activities is reflected in their good attendance and improved punctuality. This is a significant improvement for some students in comparison with their attendance at previous schools. The welcoming and positive ethos in the school ensures that students feel safe and secure in the well organised and attractive learning environment. Students' confidence in the school was exemplified by the obvious enjoyment of a younger student on entry to the school and the cheerful greeting to staff. Learners' behaviour in lessons is considerate and polite. They have positive attitudes to learning and are well focused on tasks even where tasks are less engaging. Some older students work well independently and show a good sense of responsibility for their own work and achievement. The excellent relationships between adults and peers enable them to explore and express their feelings in lessons and group discussions. Students demonstrate trust and confidence in staff. At break times, students socialise well and even take time to look after the school rabbit. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and participate enthusiastically in the sporting activities available. Students make a positive contribution to the community through their involvement in differing activities such as the school garden and fundraising activities. The contribution of post-16 students through the user group discussion that airs and resolves any issues that have arisen is especially effective. Learners are well prepared for the future through their good progress in acquiring key skills in addition to their very well supported re-integration to mainstream schools when possible.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in enabling students to settle into school as quickly as possible and in a relatively short time establish strong relationships and appropriate expectations. All adults offer positive role models to which the students respond well. In lessons, most students show willingness to learn and when difficulties arise, situations are managed calmly and learning resumes at the earliest opportunity.

On occasions, the learning objectives given for the lesson merely describe what the lesson will cover and do not clearly specify what the students are expected to learn. Equally, planned lesson objectives are not always the same as those that are communicated to the class. This can lead to some activities not being so well matched to the students' abilities. In some lessons there is an overuse of worksheets. Nevertheless, there are many good examples of practical investigations in mathematics, expressive creative writing in English and creativity in art and music. Most lessons promote the development of literacy and numeracy skills effectively.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and increasingly good use is made of the 'assessment for learning' initiative whereby students are encouraged to reflect upon what they learned. Good use is also made of visiting specialists, for example, in performing arts. Teaching staff liaise well with ward managers to maximise the support for learning, for example, enabling the students to complete homework and promoting good attitudes to study and regular attendance.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is successful in enabling the students to continue or resume their education whilst receiving treatment from the hospital. There is a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy, and key skills for all students. For those at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, opportunities are provided to access or complete accredited learning. Work experience is offered at Key Stage 4 and beyond when possible. The provision for students' development in PHSCE underpins much of the school's work and has a significant impact on all learners' personal development.

In addition to programmes based on the National Curriculum, a good range of imaginative enrichment activities are provided. For example, Black History week and holiday activities after examinations are completed. Following comprehensive risk assessments, visits to the community, local schools and colleges, are provided to support the curriculum. In order to ensure equality of opportunity, a wide range of visitors come to the school when students are too ill to leave the school. Sensitive arrangements are made to co-ordinate teaching and treatment requirements, for example, the structured Individual Learning and Therapeutic programme (ILAT).

Good use is made of the hospital grounds for outdoor physical activity, scientific investigations and horticulture. The current closure of the gymnasium reduces students' opportunities for indoor physical education, however, regular use is made of other facilities including horse riding and the hospital swimming pool.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school works very well within the multi-disciplinary team to enable the students to access learning whilst at the hospital. Treatment is well managed to ensure time out of lessons is minimised. Relationships with other agencies are excellent, for example, hospital consultants, nursing staff, medical staff, students' advocates, social services and Connexions. Sometimes, students arrive in a distressed emotional condition at very short notice and the school is sensitive to their needs to feel safe and secure. Good use is made of existing assessment information. This is variable in quality and the school promptly conducts its own testing to assess the students' emotional needs and readiness for academic study.

Significant preparation is undertaken to ensure smooth transition between the school and the student's next educational setting that may include a return to mainstream schooling. Annual reviews of statements of special educational needs keep all parties well informed as do care reviews for looked after children.

Academic support and guidance is good overall, although sometimes learning objectives in lessons and education plans are too general and not easily measured. Academic reports for parents are useful and give a rounded picture of progress, attitudes and behaviour. Few parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, however school surveys support the view that parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. Since the last inspection, the school has been most successful in improving attendance at school. Meticulous monitoring and liaison with hospital staff have led to significant and sustained improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher is very well supported by his deputy headteacher and together they have a good overview of the school's effectiveness. They regularly survey the views of parents, students and other professionals and use the feedback to secure improvement in the quality of its provision. They have recently identified even more precise ways of gauging individual students' academic progress. These processes have not yet been shared with all subject specialists who do not routinely use progress data to evaluate the teaching of their subject's effectiveness. Nevertheless, they do offer good subject support across the school.

The school's expertise is sought and valued by the local authority and other schools locally and nationally. Links with other agencies, notably hospital staff, are very well managed and some of these partners also serve as governors. The school's management and governance have responded well to the need to expand its provision and have a good understanding of the requirements for further expansion, including off-site departments located at another hospital. The governors are very well qualified in their own fields and their expertise is used to good effect in areas such as personnel, premises, curriculum and finance. Minutes of meetings show they are involved in all aspects of school life, although their monitoring role is not clearly identified in the school development plan. Inevitably, due to the short tenure of most students, parental representation poses difficulties, however, the school retains the services of former parents. Finances are well managed and appropriately audited.

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	16-19
---	----------------	-------

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	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2	

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	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	
The extent to which 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 learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

06 October 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School, Beckenham, BR3 3BX

Thank you for helping my colleague and me to get to know your school this week and for giving us such a warm welcome. I am pleased to say that you go to a good school! The quality of teaching and all other support you receive is good and this helps you to make good progress while you are at the school.

The headteacher leads the staff well and they all work very hard for you. The teachers, teaching assistants and ward managers work well as a team to help you keep up with your studies whilst preparing you to resume learning in other schools. We enjoyed seeing you in lessons and it's clear that you gain confidence during your stay. It is good to see that you help others in the community when given the chance, such as in fund-raising.

We looked at your work and could tell that you are keen to keep up and take exams to show just how well you can achieve with the right support. You relate well to staff and your behaviour is good. We were impressed by your improved attendance, and that is another way of showing you enjoy being at school. We know that for some of you it is difficult to try when you don't feel good, but the way you keep trying is a credit to you and the staff.

You have a good range of things to do and I know you like all the clubs and trips you go on. You have lots of lessons, including swimming, games and horse-riding to keep you strong, fit and healthy. Your meals are healthy and you have good guidance about how to keep yourselves safe at school and in the community.

In order to improve the school even more, I am asking the headteacher to do a few things. One is to see that teachers make it very clear to you exactly what they expect you to learn in lessons and secondly, to make sure all your individual targets are more easily measured during the time you are in school. Finally, I am asking subject specialists to make even better use of the information they have about your progress so that they can improve their subjects even more. I wish you lots of luck in the future.

Yours sincerely

Greg Sorrell

Lead Inspector