

# Wirral Hospitals School and Home Education Service Community Base

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105139
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	324165
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Saleem Hussain

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	53
Sixth form	2
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs C Muspratt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Anne Cunningham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 February 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	157 Park Road North Claughton Wirral Merseyside CH41 0EZ

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<b>Age group</b>	2–19
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2009
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**Telephone number**  
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school provides for pupils who are unable to attend mainstream school for health reasons. The Joseph Paxton Campus, the main base, provides part-time education for pupils between the ages of 11 and 16 who have school phobia, are emotionally frail, are vulnerable, are looked after by the local authority, or have eating disorders. There are also places for a small number of pregnant schoolgirls or young mothers. Adcote House provides six-week assessment for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils with severe psychological problems or other barriers to their learning in need of investigation. All pupils, except those in Year 11, remain on the roll of their original school as the main aim is for them to return to mainstream education. All pupils are of White British Heritage. A small number have a statement of special educational need. Around half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school also oversees the education of pupils or sixth form students who are short-term patients at Arrowe Park Hospital. At the time of inspection, there were no pupils or students at this location. The school also manages the local authority's home tuition service. The school has achieved the National Healthy Schools Award, Recognition of Quality Award for Work Experience and Careers Education and Financial Management Standards in Schools Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding aspects. It provides good value for money. Parents have a positive view of the school. They praise the staff for their understanding of their children's needs. They credit the school with keeping their children in the education system. Because of their emotional, social and psychological difficulties most pupils have had many interruptions to their education. Their standards are below those expected for their age. However, their achievement is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. Some lessons are outstanding. In these, teachers motivate their pupils very well, offering them work which captures and sustains their interest. As a result, pupils develop excellent attitudes towards learning. In a few lessons, however, teaching is adequate rather than good because the pace of work is too slow. This slightly reduces the progress made.

The school has established particularly effective relationships with welfare, medical and therapeutic specialist support agencies. An excellent range of in-house support and expertise is available for pupils at Adcote House to ensure that the best future educational setting for pupils is chosen.

Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that pupils develop very high levels of self-esteem and confidence from low starting points. Teaching assistants and learning mentors provide sterling support in and outside of the classroom. The curriculum is outstanding. It is very closely matched to pupils' individual needs. Pupils love the imaginative and creative learning opportunities that are offered. The wide range of school clubs, educational visits and visitors provide shining additions to their classroom experiences. The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is very impressive and helps to bring about outstanding personal development.

Pupils are very thoughtful, caring and respectful of others. Behaviour is outstanding because pupils are managed extremely well. Pupils enjoy school life very much and this is reflected in good levels of attendance. Most pupils make remarkable improvements in their attendance as compared with their former schools. Pupils develop very positive attitudes towards healthy and safe living. They participate very enthusiastically in sports such as football on the excellent all-weather sports area. Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding. The school council has made many excellent suggestions leading to school improvement including to important aspects of the curriculum. In view of pupils' good achievements and excellent personal development, their preparedness for the future is outstanding.

Leadership and management are good. The impact of good leadership is evident in the outcomes achieved and the quality of educational provision. Inclusion lies at the heart of the school's work. The school has successfully established a very safe learning environment. Pupils say that they feel valued and free from discrimination or bullying. Leaders and managers at all levels work effectively together, playing on each other's strengths well. The governors hold the school to account well and play a good role as 'critical friends'. The school knows itself well and what it must do to become the outstanding school it aspires to be. The school was good with outstanding features at the last inspection. It has addressed the issues raised well and improved the curriculum to outstanding, demonstrating a good capacity for improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

A very small number of sixth form-aged students are being taught at the main base along with pupils who are slightly younger. They are catching up with learning normally undertaken in Key Stage 4. These students are achieving well and their personal development, including preparation for future economic well-being, is outstanding. The quality of provision for these students matches that for pupils. The leadership and management of the sixth form are effective in monitoring and improving the provision. The school has excellent links with colleges and Connexions which benefit the students very much.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. There were no children in the Early Years Foundation Stage on the roll of the school at the time of this inspection and there have been no referrals recently. Adcote House has a fully equipped outdoor area, and general resources are in place, including in the classroom. When Early Years Foundation Stage children attend for assessment, the school engages them in appropriate learning activities related to the early learning goals. Arrangements to ensure children's health, safety and well-being are outstanding.

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

- Increase the pace of work in lessons where necessary, so that pupils make even more progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievements are equally good, regardless of their learning difficulties, gender, or if they are looked after by the local authority. Pupils attend the school part time but achieve as well as pupils in full-time mainstream education. Achievement in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT) is good. Work seen in art and in design and technology during the inspection was stunning. This is because pupils especially enjoy these subjects, saying, for example, that they find them to be 'very therapeutic'. Pupils reach standards that are broadly average for their age and most gain a good number of external accreditations by the time they leave. For example, a significant number gain good passes at GCSE level. Other accreditation includes Entry Level GCSE and basic skills courses in subjects such as personal, social and ICT skills. A small number of young mothers recently passed a nationally recognised vocational qualification entitled 'parents with prospects'.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Personal development makes an excellent contribution to learning. Pupils are very eager to learn and use a great deal of initiative in lessons. Pupils rightly take immense pride in their achievements. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils' social development is very striking. For example, in lessons they work together very effectively and are keen to help and support each other. Pupils have very strong feelings about discrimination, equality and the need for good race relations. They appreciate that diversity in society brings richness to life and this is a credit to the school's good work on community cohesion. Pupils

believe passionately in human rights, saying, for example, that everyone should enjoy freedom of expression, so long as this does not cause offence to others.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Strong features of teaching include the effective use of learning resources, presentation that captures and sustains pupils' interest and the offer of chances to learn through practical experience. These are present in most lessons. Consequently, pupils are engaged well in learning and achievement is good. Relationships between adults and pupils are very strong and this helps pupils to feel confident and secure as they learn. Teachers keep their pupils informed about how well they are succeeding and point out what they must do to improve. All the best characteristics of teaching were evident in an outstanding design and technology lesson in which pupils took part in a 'design challenge'. Pupils loved working in pairs to design ball-bearing games. This activity extended their practical understanding of the scientific principles that they had to take into account to ensure that the ball completed the course. In a very small number of lessons, however, not enough is expected from the pupils. Planning does not clearly indicate the time to be allowed for each activity. As a consequence, the pace is too slow and lesson time is not used to the full. In these lessons pupils do not always achieve as much as they could. Assessment procedures are strong. The information collected about pupils' attainment is in most cases used well by teachers to plan future lessons.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum provides pupils with a wide variety of enjoyable and imaginative chances to learn. There are many opportunities to gain external accreditations for pupils and students of all abilities. Personal, social and health education is very effective and is woven into all aspects of the curriculum. Work-related experiences and careers education are very good. These factors prepare pupils extremely well for the future. Provision for art, and design and technology is excellent and pupils attain very good skills in these areas. Education for health and safety is excellent. For example, there are many chances to improve health and fitness through sports. There is a very rich variety of extra-curricular activities on offer. Lunchtime activities include badminton, basketball and table tennis. Trips are plentiful and include visits to museums, residential weekends at outdoor pursuit centres, ice-skating and hill walking.

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

#### **Grade: 1**

Adults are very committed to encouraging enjoyment and achievement. An outstanding family ethos enables pupils to feel secure and highly valued. All pupils, including those most at risk are supported very effectively. The school has very effective strategies for promoting everyone's well-being within an atmosphere of equality, free from bullying. Procedures for health, safety and child protection are robust and regularly reviewed. Current government safeguarding requirements are met. In this safe and supportive environment, pupils reach challenging targets. They know how well they are doing and know what steps to take to improve their work and personal development. Systems to improve attendance and behaviour are based on rewards, which pupils like, and are very effective.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The leadership of the school is successfully focused on raising standards and achievement. Leaders have created a common sense of purpose among staff, at each school site. Self-evaluation takes into account the views of all major stakeholders including parents and pupils. A significant strength of the school is the quality of its procedures to ensure that pupils enjoy their learning within a very caring and safe environment. The curriculum is very carefully monitored to ensure that it is responsive to pupils' interests and needs. This has resulted in the development of an outstanding curriculum. Resources are well used to support learning. For example, ICT helps pupils to make progress in many subjects and pupils receiving home tuition are involved in activities at the main base whenever possible. The school has a good strategy and action plan to promote community cohesion. Pupils' understanding of and contribution to the community of their school is notable and provides a firm base from which they can develop their awareness of the diverse cultures within our society. Parents are very appreciative of the school's work. The school acknowledges that, although accommodation is excellent in many respects, better use can be made of this to further promote parental involvement in their children's learning. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis with administrative and other staff all playing their part.



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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	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	2	
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	IE <sup>2</sup>	
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	IE <sup>2</sup>	
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2	
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1	
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2	

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	3
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	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.

<sup>2</sup>IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	1
The attendance of learners	2	2
The behaviour of learners	1	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and you were all very helpful. This letter is to tell you some of the things we found out about Wirral Hospitals School.

Your school is good with some outstanding features. The teachers and other adults make sure you achieve well. The care, guidance and support you receive are outstanding. Your curriculum is outstanding because it provides you with many enjoyable chances to gain certificates for your work and supports your personal development magnificently. You know what you need to do to be healthy and safe. Your behaviour is outstanding and you are becoming excellent young citizens. I was very impressed with the work of the school council and their suggestions to make the school even better. I was also very impressed with how well you work together in school and support each other.

The headteacher, staff and governors all work very hard indeed to make sure you all keep learning well. To make the school even better, I have asked teachers to hurry some lessons along a little more so that you can get through more work and make even better progress.

I know that everyone is proud of your achievements. Keep up all your hard work.