

Cloughside College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105376
Local Authority	Bury
Inspection number	324214
Inspection dates	13–14 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Sue Hunt

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	12–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	30
Sixth form	20
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sally Claydon
Headteacher	Mr Norman Cooke
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2006
School address	Bury New Road Prestwich Manchester Lancashire M25 3BL
Telephone number	0161 772 4625
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

Cloughside caters for students with psychiatric illnesses. There are two separate units. The Gardener Unit is a 10-bed secure male adolescent forensic psychiatric unit. The McGuinness Unit is a 20-bed mixed adolescent psychiatric open unit which is a more local provision. Both units have separate school provision integral to them and share the same teaching staff. However, provision within the Children Act and child protection matters preclude the students in the two units from mixing. The admission and reintegration of students back to mainstream or on to adult mental health provision is determined by a multi-disciplinary team (of which the school is a part), led by a consultant psychiatrist. All students are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities because of their current mental health needs. Currently, three have a statement of special educational needs. Most students remain on the roll of their mainstream schools. A small proportion of the students come from minority ethnic backgrounds, but none are at an early stage of learning English. The social and economic backgrounds of the students are very varied. Students' time at the college varies from around three weeks to stays that can last for over two years. A new build is proposed for the McGuinness Unit. The college has the School Achievement Award and the Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Cloughside is an outstanding college. 'They care about you here, you are not just a number' and, 'They want you to do well,' are typical of the comments made by students summing up their feelings for the college. Standards are broadly average and reflect students' individual starting points and health. Achievement is outstanding. Expectations are high and students rise to this challenge. Most students make excellent progress. The college encourages and supports students, all of whom have mental health difficulties, extremely effectively.

Students' personal development and well-being are exceptional because they receive such outstanding care, support and guidance from a highly dedicated and skilled staff. This aspect of provision is particularly effective because staff support each student in ways designed specifically for them, reflecting the school's outstanding success in promoting equal opportunities. The Cloughside Assessment Profile System (CAPS) ensures very effective guidance for academic achievement. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely strong. Students greatly enjoy their time in the college, and this is reflected in excellent attendance and enthusiasm in lessons. They make an excellent contribution to the running of the college, for example, through giving their views, to which staff listen closely. Their excellent understanding of their own and others' health needs and how to develop healthy lifestyles is impressive.

Teaching and learning are outstanding because teachers plan their lessons to ensure that the individual needs of all students are met. Teachers have a calm yet purposeful approach towards all students. However, non-education staff who are present during some lessons have not been trained in the skills and approaches needed to enhance students' learning. The curriculum is outstanding because it enables students to achieve academic success and contributes significantly to their personal development. It is enriched and enlivened by a wide range of activities within the college and many visitors to the college such as artists in residence and poets. Occasionally, with official permission, students go on educational visits off site. These activities add to the excellent preparation of students for success beyond the college by extending their experience and personal skills effectively.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and his two deputies are instrumental in the college's continuing success. They provide very clear direction to all staff. Particularly impressive are the assessment systems that have been devised for tracking each students' academic and personal progress. The information from the tracking feeds magnificently into the curriculum and then into reports to parents and profiles all aspects of the student. This is all held electronically and is able to be accessed by both students and is available to parents. The governing body is very supportive and holds the college to account extremely well. Improvements since the last inspection have been excellent and the college is extremely well placed to improve still further. It provides excellent value for money.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The provision is outstanding. At the time of the inspection, most the students in both units were in the sixth form. Numbers within both units, however, can change daily with new admissions coming into both the open and secure units. Students have largely had huge gaps in their education before admittance, many in the secure unit have been in custody, and all

have very complex mental health difficulties. The flexible curriculum and accreditation opportunities available to students are excellent. As a result of the exceptional provision, many begin to believe in themselves and the vast majority are able to achieve extremely well. However, because of the seriousness of their mental health needs, some regress. Whenever possible, students whose mental health improves return to school or go on to college and achieve even more success. Those who are very ill may remain at Cloughside, awaiting a place in an adult mental health provision. The sixth form is extremely well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Train all non-education staff to support students' learning within the classroom.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Students' attainment on entry is very variable; some are high achievers while some have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Students' complex mental health issues and medication can adversely affect their achievement; it often varies from hour to hour and from day to day. Regardless of their individual starting points, all students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve extremely well because of the outstanding and empathetic teaching given. After a very short time in the college, students achieve external accreditation, for example, through the AQA Unit Award Scheme and by gaining the St John's Ambulance First Aid Certificate. Where appropriate, students are entered for either GCSE or the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) courses. The results over the past few years have been impressive, improving each year. For example, during the last academic year students gained 748 external accreditations, an increase of 268 from the previous year. A number of students achieve very creditable GCSE results; from A* to C grades. An imaginative and flexible approach allows all students to experience success. Some students in the secure unit who have previously had disruptions to their education excel in art, music and sport as well as achieving accreditation in basic literacy and numeracy. All this enables them to express themselves openly and contributes significantly to their emotional well-being and success. Male and female students achieve equally impressively as do the few from minority ethnic groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Many have had negative experiences of education before arriving at the college. However, because of the excellent individual support they receive as soon as they arrive, students improve their self-esteem and, if applicable, their independence. They interact positively with one another and the teachers who support them. This rekindles extremely successfully their enjoyment of education and helps them to feel very safe. They really appreciate the opportunities to continue with their examination courses and to start new ones. They want to succeed. Considering their clinical appointments and mental health issues, students' attendance and behaviour are excellent. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their personal development are outstanding. For example, there are many themed days within the college and recently the Member of the European Parliament (MEP) for the North West visited the college to explain his role and that of the European Union. Students are involved in enterprise education, for example designing and selling Christmas cards. Income for some students from the Education Maintenance

Allowance (EMA) is placed into their hospital account and they are supported and encouraged to spend their money wisely. A number tend an organic vegetable garden, producing their own vegetables. These opportunities help students contribute to making the college a highly cohesive community and to their future economic well-being. As far as they are able, students take part in physical exercise in the college. They particularly enjoy using the fitness suite observing that they benefit from the 'work out' every day. Their enthusiastic response to personal trainers and dance classes further enhances students' participation in healthy lifestyles. Students contribute very well to the running of the college by giving their views at their regular council meetings. In addition, the excellent progress they all make in improving the key skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) eases their successful transition into the next stage of their life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of the teaching and learning is outstanding. Consequently, students make excellent progress and achieve substantially more than they would have expected before coming to the college. All teachers take part in a two-week induction period during which they familiarise themselves with the rules and routines of working in both open and secure units. This process not only helps the teachers, but familiarises the students with a 'new face'. Students comment positively on the effectiveness of the help and support they receive and say that they can learn and express themselves because of the general peace and quiet around the college. From time to time, however, both teachers and students are required to cope with unnecessary interruptions from non-education staff. Staff plan opportunities that enable students to develop new skills and interests. In an art lesson, students discovered abilities they did not know they had. For example, one boy was painting a portrait of himself while another made a very attractive cushion using the sewing machine expertly under supervision. All teachers use ICT very effectively to enliven and support learning. Teachers' marking of students' work informs them of what they need to do to achieve the next grade. All students are very aware of their targets and are very involved in their own learning. This involvement helps their sense of worth and independence skills to develop extremely well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding because it fully meets the needs of all students. Since the last inspection, there are more varied courses on offer. For example, the students in the secure unit take part in the Koestler Award Scheme and the Young Lifesaver Award Scheme. The timetable is written weekly and is tailor-made for each student. It is constructed to match individual needs, making full use of assessment information. The college has links with other colleges and these enhance the provision, especially in art, science and drama. There is an excellent focus on personal, social and health education, careers education and work experience (where and when appropriate). Every student has a personalised file compiled by staff which describes their particular curriculum and provides them with individual education plans linked to their targets.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The college provides outstanding care, guidance and support. Highly effective working relationships with a range of other specialist agencies and professionals also contribute extensively to the excellent progress students make. The college is able to track very effectively students' academic and personal progress, including the progress made towards achieving targets set out as part of their individual education plans. All students in the secure unit have access to the 'independent visitor' and to their solicitor. In addition, the chaplaincy for the local hospital trust has an active role in the life of the units. Parents think very highly of the college. Safeguarding procedures are very securely in place and meet current government requirements. Child protection procedures have a very high profile. The quality of the accommodation is good and the grounds are well kept and pleasant, all contributing to the well-being of every student.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are exceptional. The headteacher has ensured the excellent practice noted at the last inspection and has improved upon it. Robust monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are used to identify and share excellent practice. The college ensures that every student really does matter and, therefore, makes excellent progress. The training of non-education staff within the college has been recognised by the headteacher as a necessity. However, despite his best efforts, this has not yet taken place. All teaching staff benefit well from continuing professional development opportunities, and new staff who have joined the college since the last inspection have settled into their roles extremely well. The very rich multiculturalism, the excellent community links and the way the college promotes equal opportunities so successfully all help make community cohesion extremely strong within the college. Governance is very effective and extremely well focused, supporting the work of the college well. In the light of the continued improvements and developments since the last inspection, the clear direction set for further improvement and continuing success in enabling students to make excellent academic and personal progress, the college has excellent capacity to continue to improve.

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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	16-19
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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?	1	1
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	1	1

Achievement and standards

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

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	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	1	1
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1	1
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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	1
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 very much for making me so welcome when I came to your college recently. I enjoyed talking with you and watching you working hard in your lessons. I particularly enjoyed watching the scientific experiments in the Gardener Unit when two of you in your science lesson separated liquids and mixed sand and salt with water.

These are just some of the things that make your college outstanding.

- You enjoy your lessons and achieve really well.
- During your stay in the college you achieve superbly in the external examinations you take.
- The staff work hard as they can to keep you safe and to offer you the support you need.
- Your teachers make lessons very interesting and make sure you know how you can improve your work even more.
- Cloughside College is led and managed extremely well.

There is just one thing the college could do to make it more efficient.

I have asked the college to encourage all non-education staff to help you progress as much as you can with your school work while you are in your classrooms.

Once again, thank you for the welcome and I would like to wish all of you the very best for your future academic successes and happiness in life.