

# Pine Lodge

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134766
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328976
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Hunt

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>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	13–17
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	11
Sixth form	2
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Fintan Bradley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sian Thomas
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 November 2005
<b>School address</b>	79 Liverpool Road Chester Cheshire CH2 1AW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01244 364660
<b>Fax number</b>	01244 364659

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional inspector.

## Description of the school

The unit is the education provision for in-patients at the Regional Adolescent Psychiatric Unit for the north west region. At any one time, there are between 7 and 14 students in the unit, whose abilities range from the very small number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to others capable of high GCSE and A level standards. Students remain on the roll of their mainstream schools. To ensure continuity, schools provide much of the students' coursework, although because of their complex mental health needs, the unit's staff modify approaches to students' learning. All students are White British. Students' time at the unit varies from around three weeks to stays that can last over one year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Pine Lodge is an outstanding pupil referral unit. 'We are not just a statistic at Pine Lodge, we really matter', and, 'they educate the whole of you here!' are typical of the comments made by students summing up their feelings for the unit. Standards attained reflect the student's abilities and health. Overall, this is generally above what would be expected nationally. Achievement is outstanding. Expectations are high and students rise to this challenge. The majority of students, whatever their starting points, make excellent progress. The unit encourages and supports extremely effectively the very small minority of students with extreme mental health needs.

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 includes very effective guidance for academic achievement, although the headteacher and her staff are investigating a more sophisticated and speedier way of collating data to support this process. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely strong. Students love the unit and this is reflected in good attendance and enthusiasm in lessons. Students contribute very well to the running of the unit through the giving of their views, which are listened to closely. Their 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 and support staff have a calm yet purposeful approach and know the students very well. This results in a highly effective ethos for learning, which is underpinned further by very strong working relationships between staff and students. The curriculum is outstanding because it enables students to achieve high academic success and contributes significantly to their personal development. It is enriched and enlivened by a wide range of activities both within the unit and off site such as theatre visits and ice-skating. These activities help provide students with the experience and personal skills necessary for them to succeed beyond the unit. High quality care, guidance and support for students are particularly effective because staff support students individually in ways designed specifically for them.

Leadership and management are outstanding at all levels. There is now a full management committee which was not in place at the last inspection. Members of the committee take a full part in the rigorous and accurate self-evaluation which has resulted in very well focused and effective development planning. This has ensured that the unit has continued to improve very well and develop further since the last inspection. Pine Lodge does all it can to promote community cohesion, involving all students in the local and wider community. It offers outstanding value for money.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 1

Work with the very small proportion of sixth form students is just as effective as with the younger learners. The individualised way the students' health and educational needs are met is outstanding. The unit employs part-time specialist staff who are experienced and very effective in teaching advanced subject courses. This is a very cost effective way of meeting students'

needs. No sixth form students were present in the unit during the inspection but evidence of their coursework showed high achievement.

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

- To put into place a more sophisticated method of recording and analysing data to make the working of the unit even more efficient and sharper.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Students' attainment on entry is very variable; some are high achievers whilst a very small proportion has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, it does not matter what their starting point is, they all achieve extremely well because of the outstanding and empathetic teaching given. All students within the unit are entered for accreditation at Key Stage 4, the majority sitting GCSEs and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) courses. The results for the past two years are extremely impressive. For example, in 2008, 45 students sat examinations, with 43 gaining A\* to C, GCSE grades, 19 students attained straight A\* grades and eight attained A grades in all subjects taken. All students reached their target grade at GCSE. When their medical needs are met, the majority of students successfully integrate back into their home schools or go on to college or university.

## **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 unit. However, because of a very carefully planned induction programme and the excellent individual support they receive, students improve their self-esteem and independence; they interact positively with one another and the adults who support them. This rekindles extremely successfully their enjoyment of education. They appreciate the opportunities to follow their examination courses and want to succeed. Considering their clinical appointments and mental health issues, their attendance is good. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their personal development are outstanding. For example, students are involved in 'Global Communities' via the internet with schools and units in Tibet, Greece, France and Africa. They run an allotment locally producing their own food. These opportunities help them very well in the promotion of community cohesion and with their future economic well-being. Physical exercise is much improved since the last inspection. Students take part every week in swimming, badminton and the multi gym at a local special school and sports centre. For those students who are too weak for these activities there is Boccia, a game they can play sitting down. Students contribute very well to the running of the unit by giving their views at their weekly 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 to the next stage of their career.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Consequently, students make excellent progress and achieve substantially more than they might have expected before coming to the unit. Students themselves comment positively on the effectiveness of the help and support they receive and that they can learn and express themselves because there are so few distractions. In a Year 11 English lesson, students discussed the merits and history of 'the comic strip'. They listened and interacted with the teacher when she used ICT extremely well to introduce the art of the comic hero; they completed a 'linear narrative' to a very high standard. 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 next targets and are very involved in their own learning. This involvement helps their sense of worth and independent 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, more teaching space has been made available in the unit and within the hospital campus. This has improved the curriculum choices staff now offer and the number of staff the unit employs. Consequently, the unit has extended the number of GCSE courses and now provides more on-site education. An excellent focus on personal, social and health education, careers education, work placement opportunities and very strong community cohesion further broadens students' curriculum experience. Every student has a 'Personal Learner Journey' file compiled by staff which provides them with tailor made personalised education plans linked to their targets.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The unit 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 the students make. The unit 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, these are called 'Learner Passports.' The headteacher and her staff are investigating a more sophisticated and speedier way of collating data to support this process. Parents think very highly of the unit. Safeguarding procedures are in place and meet current government requirements.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 1

Leadership and management are exceptional. The headteacher has ensured the good and excellent practice noted at the last inspection has improved even more. Robust monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are used to identify and share excellent practice. The unit ensures that every student really does matter and, therefore, makes excellent progress. All staff

benefit well from continuing professional development opportunities and new staff, who have joined the unit since the last inspection have settled into their roles extremely well. Governance is highly effective and focused, supporting the work of the unit very well. In light of the 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 unit 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	<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>	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**

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

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<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.

### 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	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

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

These are just some of the things that make your unit outstanding:

- You enjoy your lessons and achieve really well.
- During your stay at the unit you achieve superbly in the external examinations you take.
- The staff work as 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.
- The Pine Lodge Unit is led and managed very well.

There is just one thing the unit could do to make it more efficient:

- Put into place a more sophisticated method of recording and analysing data to make the working of the unit sharper.