

Leicester Secondary Behaviour Support Service

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131535
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	331618
Inspection dates	3–4 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Burdis HMI

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Broadhead
Headteacher	Shaun Whittingham
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2008
School address	The Wayne Way Leicester LE5 4PP
Telephone number	0116 2766268
Fax number	0116 2703208

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a pupil referral unit for secondary-aged students. It is based on four sites. Each has a specific role. Permanently excluded students are placed on the full-time roll of the service's Individual Learning Centre. Millgate Lodge provides a range of short-term practical programmes for both permanently excluded students and students who are at risk of exclusion. The Short Stay School provides a 24 week part-time placement for pre-excluded students who spend half the week at their home school. The Specialist Learning and Assessment Centre provides a 12 week full-time, personalised programme for pre-excluded students where behaviour is addressed with the aim of successful return to mainstream school. The majority of students have emotional and behavioural difficulties and some have additional learning difficulties. The majority are boys from White British backgrounds with only a small number of girls and students from other minority ethnic backgrounds at each site. It was issued with a notice to improve when inspected in March 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The service is providing a satisfactory standard of education and some aspects of its provision are good. Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing the issues identified in the previous inspection report. Leadership and management are now satisfactory overall with the senior management group providing good leadership. Teaching has improved, is consistently satisfactory and sometimes good. Better use of assessment to plan lessons is helping students to make progress and find success in external examinations although inconsistency in setting individual learning targets and marking continues. Good systems have been introduced to track attendance, behaviour and students' progress. This information is used well to evaluate how well individuals and groups at each site are doing but insufficient attention has been given to assessing the impact of the provision on the small numbers of girls and those from minority ethnic groups.

Students make satisfactory progress. Because of missed or troubled schooling, standards in comparison with national expectations are low but the service is successful in devising individual programmes that re-engage students with learning and their rate of progress increases. Most have opportunities to gain accreditation in literacy, numeracy and vocational skills and many are supported to complete entry level and GCSE courses. Provision for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has improved and they make satisfactory progress. The curriculum is satisfactory with good opportunities to engage in sport, leisure and vocational activities. The varied packages of full- and part-time provision have a positive impact on reducing exclusions and improving attendance. Attendance rates are now satisfactory for those at risk of exclusion. They are good for students attending vocational courses but, although improving, attendance rates continue to be low for students who were permanently excluded from their mainstream school.

Teachers and non-teaching staff provide a strong team and create a positive environment where students say they feel safe and are confident that any member of staff would listen to their concerns and help them solve their problems. Consistent management of behaviour almost always ensures classrooms are calm and orderly. The wide ethnic diversity of the staff team provides excellent role models and promotes positive awareness of others' backgrounds and beliefs. There have been continued difficulties in recruiting a mathematics teacher; however good arrangements have been made for a highly effective mathematics teacher from another school to model best practice and develop staff skills.

Good partnerships with outside agencies including the fire service, police and health agencies extend curriculum opportunities. This increases students' understanding of healthy lifestyles and how they can take responsibility for their own behaviour and personal safety. Students talk confidently and with a depth of understanding about how they have been helped to understand and manage their behaviour. Well supported vocational placements prepare students well for their life after school. Students have good opportunities to discuss and agree their own programme; however there are too few opportunities for them to shape and influence changes to service provision.

Monitoring the impact of the service's provision is now consistent across all sites and the management committee is increasingly effective in holding the service to account for improved

outcomes. However insufficient attention has been given to the development and evaluation of the impact of key policies such as those for community cohesion and equality of opportunity. Systems and procedures for a whole service approach for future improvements are secure and well understood. Because of this, capacity for further improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Explore and evaluate alternative approaches to improving attendance of students attending the Individual Learning Centre.
- Extend the approach to target setting by identifying what is to be learnt in the short term and ensure marking identifies what the student has to do next to improve their work.
- Implement a programme of development, review and evaluation of key policies promoting equality of opportunity and community cohesion.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards overall are below national expectations. However, improved target-setting arrangements provide students with clear understanding of grades expected of them in external accredited courses and they receive the support needed to attain them. Targets set reflect prior attainment, so all students including the most able and those with learning difficulties make at least satisfactory progress. Good progress in personal development and improved behaviour has a positive impact on achievement as students choose to take part more willingly in educational opportunities. Individualised work programmes allow students of all abilities to progress at an appropriate rate. Better attendance for many students improves their capacity to achieve although high absence continues to have a negative effect for some students at the Individual Learning Centre. Teaching in English and mathematics has improved, positively promoting students' knowledge, understanding and skills in these areas. Many students are supported to attain expected GCSE grades and others follow externally accredited short-term courses achieving qualifications in basic literacy, numeracy and workplace skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

As a result of good, personalised support and engaging curriculum opportunities many students improve their attendance, learn how to manage their behaviour and return successfully to mainstream schools. The effectiveness of the provision for promoting personal development and well-being was accurately summed up by one headteacher who said 'The individual needs of the child and his/her best interests always drive the decision making.' Students respond very positively to the daily monitoring of their behaviour and talked confidently of their new found understanding in how to manage their own behaviour. Students say they feel safe in school and those spoken to reported that there was no bullying. Students express their appreciation of the support they receive from both teachers and support staff recognising that they make better progress as a result. Attendance levels vary at different sites, but trends overall illustrate that for most students attendance is improving.

The broad curriculum both on and off site, and well supervised social times promote good opportunities for students to develop socially and morally although there are fewer planned opportunities to promote cultural and spiritual awareness. Although students have not enjoyed school previously there are some good examples of them enjoying and re-engaging with learning through the interesting range of activities. They are reminded of safe practices in practical

workshop situations and develop a good awareness of how to keep themselves healthy through sport and lifestyle choices. Students are often supportive of each other and contribute willingly to their community although there are limited opportunities to influence changes they would like to see to service provision.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Students of all abilities make at least satisfactory progress because teachers and support staff usually plan lessons which reflect the different levels of ability and needs in each group. Teaching is particularly good where clear planning is coupled with positive relationships and good humour. In these lessons students respond well and produce work they can be proud of. In most lessons behaviour is good, as teachers and support staff apply the agreed behaviour management strategies consistently. Support staff effectively lead lessons and provide valuable support for learning across all sites. Teachers actively involve students in agreeing their targets each week. However these are often tasks to be completed rather than what has to be learnt. Rarely does marking identify what the student has to do next to improve. Occasionally work is insufficiently challenging and resources do not ensure students are motivated enough to engage with the lesson. Not enough use is made of information and communication technology as a tool for learning. The regular programme of monitoring teaching has appropriately identified where there are weaknesses and good support is provided to increase the proportion of good teaching.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is adequately designed to meet students' behavioural needs and helps them to raise their academic aspirations. Flexibility in the design and content of curriculum provision offers individual students access to a range of age- and interest-appropriate activities. This often helps them to re-engage with learning, increasing the opportunities for accreditation and developing skills for future economic well-being. A good personal, social, health and citizenship curriculum develops awareness of health and safety and personal development. The curriculum at the Short Stay School and the Assessment Centre is designed to address personal development and behavioural needs in preparation for successful reintegration to mainstream schools. The curriculum at the Individual Learning Centre provides an appropriate range of opportunities for students to engage with National Curriculum subjects, complete GCSE and engage in vocational courses. However, the curriculum is not always well enough resourced or planned to meet the full range of needs in any one group.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Well understood and agreed procedures for admission to the service ensure that the individual needs of students are well known and appropriate support strategies and learning programmes put in place. Good communication with the home schools of pre-excluded students ensures links are maintained, increasing the potential for successful return to mainstream schooling. Good systems have been introduced for regular monitoring of students' attitudes and success in meeting behaviour targets. The focus on academic targets has improved and all students are aware of their predicted grades for externally accredited courses. Effective systems and improved

curriculum opportunities are beginning to have a positive impact on improving attendance and further improvement remains a priority for the service. Arrangements for safeguarding are robust and reviewed regularly, and health and safety in all settings is carefully monitored. One parental response was received to the inspection questionnaire; however surveys undertaken by the Service illustrate parents' and carers' high levels of satisfaction with the provision.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Under the leadership of the headteacher the service has addressed the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection and made a significant contribution to the strategic development of local authority provision for students with social, emotional and behaviour difficulties. The self-evaluation accurately reflects the current provision and illustrates effectively the distinct role and impact of each part of the service. Improved systems for monitoring and evaluating behaviour, attendance and attainment across all sites have been implemented well. Performance data have steadily improved and are used well to compare outcomes for groups at different sites. However insufficient attention has been given to evaluating the impact of provision of the low number of girls and Black and minority ethnic students. The management committee brings a good and appropriate range of skills to support and challenge further improvements. However, arrangements for evaluating key policies, such as those for equality of opportunity and community cohesion are underdeveloped.

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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
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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	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

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

5 June 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Leicester Secondary Behaviour Support Service, Leicester LE5 4PP

I wanted to write to thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school this week. It can sometimes feel strange arriving at a new place for the first time but at each of the four sites your friendliness and willingness to talk about your work made me feel at home.

I enjoyed talking to you and observing you at work. I am sorry that I had so little time at each centre but with your help I have been able to see that there have been many improvements to Leicester Secondary Behaviour Support Service in the last year.

I thought you might be interested in what I thought of your school.

- Staff offer you good support to help you with any problems, and whenever possible support your return to mainstream school.
- There are good opportunities for you to complete examination and vocational courses that will help you do well when you leave school.
- Most of the time you behave well.

I think there are some things that could be improved and I have asked the senior management group and the management committee to tackle the following things.

- Your learning targets should make it clear what it is you need to learn next to improve your work – not just tell you what work you have to do.
- Some documents the school has, like the one for equality of opportunity, need updating and I have asked the management committee to see to this.
- Find ways of improving the attendance of some students at the Individual Learning Centre.

You can help by making every effort to get to school as often as possible and working as hard as you can to achieve your goals. I wish you all every success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Kathryn Burdis Her Majesty's Inspector