

# Maple Medical PRU

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135502
<b>Local Authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	331625
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ross Parker

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>	5–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	51
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Miss Julie Warrington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kath Formby
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	PO Box 266 Council House College Road Doncaster South Yorkshire DN1 3AD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01302 736238
<b>Fax number</b>	01302 736238

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

Maple Medical Pupil Referral Unit provides education for pupils with a broad range of medical needs which prevent them from attending mainstream school, either temporarily or permanently. It is a split-site school with four locations. It currently caters for 60 pupils spread across four sites: the Young Parents' Centre for school-age mothers or mothers-to-be; JASP Education Centre for children and adolescents with mental health needs; the Hospital Teaching School for children who are in hospital and the Link Education Centre for children who are too ill for school but not requiring hospitalisation. Pupils come from the whole of the Doncaster Borough, and from a range of social and economic backgrounds. All of the current pupils are from White British backgrounds and an average proportion is entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs is below average, but a significant number are coping with short-term disabilities. The unit opened in April 2008.

## 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 pupil referral unit. It provides a good education for pupils coping with a range of very challenging circumstances. Pupils and parents value Maple highly, particularly the good level of care, guidance and support. Parents also appreciate the changes pupils are able to make. One parent explained, 'They have given my daughter her future back.'

The high level of personal care and good curriculum are built on excellent links with other providers and support agencies. Together they support pupils' good personal development. This includes good attendance and behaviour which are, in many cases, significantly improved from when they attended mainstream schools. These links are also part of the scrupulous work which ensures that pupils are safe, and learn how to stay safe in future.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as pupils come to terms with who they are and the challenges they face. They learn to get on well with others, both within the unit and beyond. They make a satisfactory contribution to others' welfare through charity activities and as junior sports leaders. Pupils show an increasing awareness of health issues – for themselves and in some cases for their own children. They are accumulating skills and qualifications which enable them to progress into further learning, and prepare them well for employment.

Good teaching supports pupils to progress well, whatever learning difficulties and/or disabilities they face, in all the strands of the Maple provision. It also ensures that they enjoy their education. This shows in their commitment to learning and the way they talk about recent outdoor pursuit activities or their work-placements. They have good attitudes to learning, and for many this illustrates how they have put previous poor motivation behind them. Those in the hospital or the Link provision are able to maintain their momentum and fulfil the potential they showed in their mainstream school. Pupils achieve well. Standards vary across the different strands of the provision but are broadly average. Some pupils are concentrating on appropriate basic skills at entry level. Others are supported to attain high grades at GCSE or to start an advanced level course in preparation for sixth form. Opportunities for pupils in Years 10 and 11 to study science and gain qualifications in the subject are currently better on some of the unit's sites than on others. Systems to monitor pupils' academic progress and ensure that they are fully challenged are developing, but are not yet consistent across the different strands within the unit.

Maple is well led and managed. The headteacher's very clear vision is widely shared so that the different strands of provision blend together smoothly. Self-evaluation is rigorous, and the rate of progress over the last year shows good capacity for further improvement. The management board provides good support, while monitoring standards and improvement carefully. The unit provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop a consistent approach to monitoring pupils' progress and setting challenging targets across all the strands of the unit's work.
- Improve Year 10 and 11 pupils' access to science qualifications.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Some pupils are working at average or above average levels before they join the Maple provision either because of illness or inability to attend mainstream school. Others have missed significant parts of their earlier education, and their skills and confidence are well below average when they come to Maple. All pupils progress well. One five-year-old thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of reading unfamiliar words in his hospital bed. All pupils at the JASP and Young Parents' Centres achieved at least one GCSE pass in 2008. For many this was a huge step after lengthy periods away from school. Four out of five pupils in these centres achieved 5 or more GCSE passes, as well as gaining qualifications in information and communication technology (ICT) and skills for working life which prepare them well for future economic well-being. Pupils attending the hospital provision, Link, or the outreach home tuition are able to maintain their progress from mainstream school, even achieving B grades or better at GCSE. The improvements in pupils' self-confidence that go alongside these qualifications mean that far more are able to progress to further learning or employment than would have been the case without the Maple support.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils readily explain how their behaviour has improved and how they are much more focused without the distractions of mainstream school. Partner providers such as the manager of the local City Learning Centre express their respect for pupils' attitudes and determination to learn. Good relationships within the unit are supporting pupils to make significant improvements to their attendance, which is now above average. Their enjoyment of learning is obvious, whether they are in a hospital bed or half-way up a climbing wall. The range of challenges which pupils in the different strands of the Maple provision face means that everyone is highly conscious of safety issues. There are limits to the range of health promoting activities that are available, but pupils' awareness is growing and is currently satisfactory. In a lesson looking at the precautions they should take in sunlight, pupils grazed steadily on the available fruit. Pupils' ready involvement in family therapy and reflective art projects contributes to their good spiritual, moral and social awareness. However, their awareness of the cultural diversity within society is less well developed. Pupils are prepared well for their future lives, for example, by taking part in enterprise days.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers build good working relationships and manage pupils well so that behaviour is good and pupils maintain a good focus on learning. Lessons are well-prepared and well-resourced. There is good access to ICT and good use of the Internet, which enables pupils to continue studying at home. Teachers plan flexibly to cater for pupils' different needs. For example, they take full account of the different examination requirements in secondary-aged pupils' mainstream schools. Questioning is not always tailored sufficiently to provide the best level of challenge to pupils with different target grades. Teachers assess pupils' individual needs carefully and respond very sensitively to these so that pupils who face barriers to learning are effectively

included. Very occasionally, teachers take too much responsibility and do not ask pupils to be as independent as they could be. Marking and feedback are good and pupils say they are very clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum offers a wide range of appropriate courses carefully tailored to meet individual pupils' needs. It supports reluctant pupils to re-engage with learning and previously successful pupils to maintain their momentum while away from mainstream school. Secondary-aged pupils can gain qualifications from entry level to GCSE, though GCSE science is not available on all sites. Through its impressive links with other providers Maple offers a good range of preparation for work, personal development and enrichment activities. Individual programmes are very carefully selected and sometimes repeatedly refined to identify the most effective mix. This involves continually expanding the range of courses. For example, a current exciting development involves supporting home Internet access for pupils to enable them to take part in lessons while at home. This extends the time they can devote to learning and increases the opportunities for some who are taught at home to communicate with other students.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The day-to-day personal support and guidance offered and its commitment to pupils' welfare are outstanding. Individual pupils are very well known. Academic guidance and the monitoring pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. It is well developed at the Young Parents' Centre and there are plans to extend this approach across the whole unit. Arrangements to ensure pupils' safety are rigorous and safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements. There are excellent links with health and social care providers which make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. One hospital consultant explained how classroom observations make a helpful contribution to medical diagnosis. Attendance is very carefully monitored and staff work hard to make pupils' day-to-day experience enjoyable. They also collaborate very closely with schools to gather information before pupils come to Maple, to exchange work and assessments, and to ensure a smooth return to mainstream education.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides a very clear vision of the unit's mission, and how it needs to develop. This is shared by other managers and staff. Self-evaluation is realistic and regularly updated. It reflects a clear picture of what the staff team wants to deliver, and how far they have progressed. Pupils' performance is analysed with varying degrees of rigour to find scope for improvement. Plans are in place to make this process more frequent and consistent across all of the provision. The unit promotes equality of opportunity and eliminates discrimination well. It is highly inclusive, reaching out to engage and support pupils who face barriers which prevent them from coming to any of the sites. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. Managers are working to create one cohesive community which embraces pupils facing a wide range of difficulties. The vision is to support them to take what they have learned into other communities to improve their understanding of diversity. Improvements to the curriculum, facilities and staff roles over the last year illustrate the good capacity for improvement.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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
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**

You may remember that I came to the different Maple sites recently to see how you and the staff are getting on. I enjoyed my visit and would like to thank you for making me welcome and talking to me.

I thought you would like to know that the Maple Medical is a good pupil referral unit and is giving you a good education. I agree with you that the staff are really supportive and this has helped many of you to change your lives.

You are making good progress. Some of you have improved your attendance a great deal. Many of you have improved your behaviour and the way you are prepared to learn. Others amongst you are managing to continue learning while you are unable to attend mainstream school. Many of you are learning how to work alongside other people. The older pupils often find the sort of things they can be successful with as they work with partner organisations like the CLC and The Point. All of these older pupils are gaining qualifications and getting a clearer picture of where they want to go next.

The headteacher and her team are making improvements all the time. I have asked them to focus on two particular things:

- give you a bit more challenge by tracking the progress you are making more closely
- improve the opportunities for older pupils to gain qualifications in science.