

Andover Education Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115837
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338665
Inspection dates	12–13 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Stuart Charlton

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	4–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	49
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Lesley Cox
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed eight lessons and all nine full-time teachers. Meetings were held with the chair of the management committee, a representative of the local authority, staff and students. The inspector observed the Centre's work, and looked at its improvement plan, the minutes of the leadership team and management group meetings, a range of other documentation and 12 questionnaires from parents and carers. The majority of students completed their questionnaires, and these were examined by the inspector.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the Centre's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in ensuring quality provision for all students
- the systems to judge attainment on entry, set challenging targets and track students' progress across all aspects of the provision
- individual students' records to determine the outcomes in relation to their personal development, particularly behaviour and attendance and how these are monitored and evaluated
- the systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning and how these are validated to determine if they are effective in ensuring that all students achieve as well as they can.

Information about the school

The Andover Education Centre (AEC) provides education and support for pupils and students aged four to 16 with a diverse range of needs. At the time of the inspection, there were no primary-aged pupils in the Centre and no children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Nearly two thirds of students have a statement of special educational needs related to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. All are from White British backgrounds and none speaks English as an additional language. The AEC provides three areas of provision:

- a secondary behavioural unit providing for students at risk of exclusion. This unit also provides a one-to-one programme for primary pupils who have been permanently excluded or who are in danger of permanent exclusion
- education for emotionally vulnerable and physically unwell students. This provision is known as Andover Education Centre Medical Referrals Provision (MRP). These students are also supported by the Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS) or other medical professionals
- an outreach behaviour support team, developed since the last inspection, which provides support and advice to schools in the local area. This area of provision is supported by staff employed through the North West Hampshire Education and Inclusion Partnership (NWHEIP).

Since the last inspection, a new manager for the AEC has been appointed and the provision has moved to a new and extensively improved site. There is a rising profile of children in need or in care, as well as pupils with a statement of special educational

needs awaiting specialist provision.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Andover Education Centre provides outstanding education for its students. All make excellent progress, regardless of gender or ability, based on extremely high quality teaching and learning. The care, guidance and support provided to help students develop their personal, social and learning skills is exemplary and these skills prepare them extremely well for their future lives. The provision is innovative. The Centre has used the secure base established at the last inspection to reach out to even more students in the Test Valley area and enable them to re-engage in education. So successful is this provision that there are now no permanent exclusions in the secondary schools in the area. Students who are at risk of exclusion because of behavioural issues or who have medical or emotional needs are quickly identified because the Centre acts very effectively as a 'clearing house', irrespective of whether students are in school. Appropriate provision for these students is then developed at the Centre, in another school, or through home tuition. Safeguarding procedures are excellent, ensuring that a safe and secure environment is provided. Relationships are outstanding and students indicate that they now 'enjoy coming to school' and that lessons are fun. Attendance is good, based on extremely rigorous procedures and a rewards system that is highly valued by students. Behaviour is outstanding and parents and carers cannot speak highly enough about the Centre and the positive effect it has on their children. The spiritual, moral and social development of all students is excellent.

Parents and carers are actively involved in their children's learning. Programmes of study and students' individual education plans are discussed and agreed with parents and carers on a termly basis. These are then used extremely well to drive learning forward in lessons and at home. The Centre's work with parents and carers to help them to understand their children's needs is highly effective.

The headteacher provides the commitment and determination to drive the Centre's provision forward by successfully challenging other local headteachers to support her vision. She has developed very quickly a shared ethos across the Centre and established seamless teamwork between managers, teachers and support staff to form the cornerstone for high quality learning in lessons. Their understanding of the Centre's strengths and weaknesses is excellent and drives further improvement. Staff development is given top priority and the input of staff is highly valued and acted upon so that all strive to improve the Centre further. Partnerships with other professionals are used extremely well to promote the learning and well-being of students. The management committee provides a high degree of challenge to the school and the links with the area headteachers' partnerships are critical to the Centre's success. An audit of the Centre's contribution to community cohesion has been carried out. This shows that

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links at a local level are strong, but those in a national and international context do not provide sufficient opportunities for students to learn more about life for those who live in other countries and in other parts of the United Kingdom. The continuous programme of development and the pace at which it is implemented clearly shows that the Centre's capacity for further sustained improvement is of the highest order.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Implement arrangements for promoting the national and international aspects of community cohesion to give students extended opportunities to learn more about the life of those who live in other countries and in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Since the last inspection, the Centre has developed extremely effective systems to set challenging targets for its students and to monitor their progress. These are based on detailed and accurate assessment of their needs when they enter the provision and consistent use of this information by all staff in lessons. Consequently, students' achievement is good. The focus of the Centre's work for young people in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and those in Year 10 is to re-engage in education and, where appropriate, to re-integrate them into mainstream schools. In this, the Centre achieves total success and it represents excellent progress for these students. For those in Year 11, whether they have been in the Centre for an extended period or not, the focus is to gain appropriate qualifications so that they can move on to work or further education. Students gain GCSE or Entry Level qualifications and, where appropriate, alternative literacy and numeracy accreditation. All gain grades A to G with a significant minority obtaining Grade C which is broadly in line with the grades expected nationally. This represents excellent progress from their well below average starting points on entry. The development of students' moral and social awareness is excellent. The ways in which staff help and support students in coping with their personal circumstances ensures that spiritual development is also excellent. Students are closely involved in helping to contribute towards the school community; a good example of this is the way in which they support each other, particularly those new to the Centre. They have a keen understanding of local issues and are very willing to express their views. Through work on substance abuse, smoking cessation and sexual issues, students gain, and show, good understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle. They greatly appreciate the opportunities for physical activity and they recognise the benefits of the healthy food the Centre provides at breakfast and lunch. Through the focused development of their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, as well as their personal skills, students gain the confidence and knowledge which prepare them extremely well for their future. This is reinforced very effectively by the regular work-placement opportunities for students in Years 10 and 11.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers and support staff work together extremely well as a team and have a seamless approach to managing behaviour. Planning is very effective, but one of the Centre's many strengths is the detailed knowledge all staff possess of their students. This enables everyone to make a crucial contribution to students' learning by identifying clearly the needs of individuals and how these will be met. In a design and technology lesson for students in Year 9, the excellent relationships, the teacher's subject knowledge and the careful choice of activities ensured high quality learning for all. Such excellent learning extends across all areas of the school. This is based on the excellent relationships which teachers establish with their students, their subject knowledge and their detailed knowledge of the needs of each student and how these will be met in lessons.

The curriculum is a strength of the school. It provides an excellent balance between meeting students' needs and more practical and creative activities. The very wide range of sporting activities contributes extremely well to developing students' confidence and self-esteem. The way in which the curriculum is adapted to meet the individual needs of

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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students with medical needs is particularly impressive. Other enrichment activities, such as visits to the theatre, museums and a local farm, add to students' enjoyment and link their learning to real-life experiences. Opportunities to develop and extend students' personal skills through the extremely effective links with a wide range of agencies, such as the Youth Service and Social Services, make a particularly important contribution to learning.

Staff make sure that all students, including those who arrive at different times, settle quickly and happily into life at the Centre. Transition arrangements for those moving into the Centre and for those who move to other schools and colleges are excellent and contribute extremely well to reducing students' anxieties. The care, guidance and support provided by all staff are second to none. Staff spend a great deal of time listening to students, giving them advice and promoting their well-being to overcome difficulties in their personal circumstances. The outreach team is highly effective in working with students who are at risk of exclusion in their schools and in providing support for students even after they have left the Centre.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads by example and gives a very clear sense of direction to the work of the Centre. She is extremely well supported by her senior management team and between them they ensure that everyone is clear about what needs to be done for the provision to improve further. Staff approach key developments enthusiastically. The management committee works tirelessly to ensure that the quality of provision is such that the Centre is recognised as a leader in the local community. Through its work, the Centre fully meets its commitments to the promotion of equality of opportunity and campaigns to great effect to eliminate discrimination. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, based on tried and tested systems to monitor and evaluate all aspects of provision.

Safeguarding and child protection are high on everyone's agenda and fully meet national requirements and guidelines. Risk assessments are a particular strength, being thorough and detailed. Excellent links exist at local level through which the Centre promotes community cohesion. However, as yet, there are few opportunities for students to learn about life for those who live in areas where the racial and cultural mix is very different to that locally or in other countries.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Andover Education Centre to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 12 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 49 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	5	42	5	42	1	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	8	67	4	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	7	58	4	33	1	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	6	50	4	33	1	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	7	58	4	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	6	50	4	33	2	17	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	5	42	5	42	2	17	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	6	50	3	25	1	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	58	4	33	1	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	50	4	33	1	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	50	6	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	50	6	50	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	6	50	5	42	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 July 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Andover Education Centre, Andover, SP11 6JP

Thank you for all the help you gave me when I inspected the Centre. I particularly enjoyed being able to talk to a good number of you. You told me very clearly that Andover Education Centre is brilliant, with an excellent headteacher. I agree with you that the Centre provides you with an outstanding education, and consider that you get the highest quality teaching and an extremely wide range of subject options. This enables you to make excellent progress and gain GCSE qualifications that prepare you extremely well for work or further education when you leave. All of you emphasised that staff are always ready to help you and that they make learning fun. You all said what a great difference the Centre makes to your lives. You told me that the small group sizes are a real help and that staff 'make us work hard but are very fair'.

To make things even better, I want the Centre to develop more opportunities for you to appreciate and, if possible, experience, life in other areas of the United Kingdom which are very different to Andover. I want them to see how this can also be extended to other countries.

I know that you will all try your very best at all times to help the staff to make Andover Education Centre even better.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Charlton

Lead inspector

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