

Forest Education Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115847
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338667
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2009
Reporting inspector	James Bowden

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Carole Frampton
Date of previous school inspection	4 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. The inspector visited nine lessons, and held meetings with the chair of the management committee, the senior leadership team and pupils. The centre's work was observed and a range of evidence looked at, including its assessments about pupils' progress, documentation on policies and procedures, the questionnaires completed by 13 parents and the questionnaires completed by pupils and school staff.

Many aspects of the centre's work were reviewed. The inspection looked in detail at the following: The effectiveness of the centre's acting-leadership team in driving improvement. The centre's judgements about attainment and progress in the different areas of learning and the measures it uses to judge pupils' progress. The effectiveness of teaching in ensuring the work matches the capabilities of all pupils. The effectiveness of the centre in promoting community cohesion. How well information and communication technology (ICT) is used to support teaching and learning, to deliver the curriculum and to support the management of assessment and tracking of pupils' progress.

Information about the school

The centre provides for pupils who have been permanently excluded from their mainstream schools, those at risk of permanent exclusion, those awaiting a place in a special school named on their statement of special educational needs, and emotionally vulnerable pupils supported by Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Though pupil turnover throughout the year is high, those referred at Key Stage 4 tend to complete their statutory education at the centre, which includes a mix of on-site and off-site activities. Unless permanently excluded, Key Stage 3 pupils attend for half-day sessions, spending the rest of their time in their usual schools. The centre also supports mainstream secondary schools through its outreach service, as well as offering home tuition. Currently, a very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and there are more boys on roll than girls. All pupils are at the school action plus stage of the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs because of their behavioural, emotional and social needs. The centre was awarded Healthy Schools status in 2008. Since November 2008 there have been significant changes in the leadership team. Up until June of this year, the centre was led by two joint acting-centre managers. It is currently led by one acting-centre manager, supported by a higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) who has responsibility for Key Stage 3 pupils.

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?**3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

Main findings

The centre provides a satisfactory education. It meets its objective of improving the life chances of pupils. It does this at Key Stage 3 by supporting their reintegration into mainstream schools and, at Key Stage 4, by rekindling pupils' interest in education. Over the past two years this has enabled almost all to move on to further education, employment or government training. Despite recent changes, the current leadership team has maintained staff morale and is providing a clear vision and direction for moving the centre forward. New technology has been introduced to enable more effective collection and tracking of assessment data on pupils. The centre's track record has been maintained and the areas for improvement at the last inspection have been dealt with. It is soundly placed to build on this further. The outcomes for pupils are satisfactory. In relation to their starting points, all make satisfactory progress in their learning and personal development. Though the centre tracks pupils' progress towards their personal targets, particularly in relation to behaviour, it is less effective in tracking academic progress. Pupils are tested when they start at the centre to establish their capabilities in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. However, the centre's analysis and use of these data are not effective enough to set realistic, yet challenging targets for pupils. In some lessons, not all the work is sufficiently challenging for the full range of capabilities within the group. Consequently, the more capable pupils finish work quickly, the less capable struggle to keep up and others drift off task. Pupils get on well with one another and all those who work at the centre. Break times in the pupils' common room are attended by both pupils and staff, which is a positive and relaxed social occasion. Most report that they feel safe at the centre. A group of older pupils told the inspector that bullying was a rare occurrence. Pupils have a good awareness of the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles, which reflects the centre's Healthy Schools status. Though attendance is satisfactory overall, it improves considerably compared to their mainstream schools. During the last year, almost two thirds showed significant improvement in this respect. The Key Stage 3 curriculum mirrors closely that found in mainstream schools, which helps ease pupils' reintegration. At Key Stage 4, the curriculum lacks breadth. Because there are limited accredited courses on offer, GCSE being the norm, the needs and aspirations of all pupils are not fully met. A particular strength of the centre is the quality of care, guidance and support offered to pupils. It has effective relationships with outside specialist agencies and other professionals, as well as partnerships with mainstream schools, to support pupils' personal development and well-being. The centre ensures that every pupil really does matter. Though it is effective in planning for the promotion of community cohesion, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to experience and improve further their understanding of

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different faiths in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sharpen the use of assessment data on individual pupils in order to track academic progress more effectively and set challenging targets to improve their achievement. Raise the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by ensuring teachers provide work that challenges the full range of capabilities of pupils. Broaden the range of accredited courses at Key Stage 4 to ensure the curriculum meets fully the needs and aspirations of all pupils. Improve planning for the centre's promotion of community cohesion and pupils' spiritual development by providing further opportunities for pupils to learn about and experience different faiths.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

When pupils join the centre, their attainment is mostly well below average. This is as a result of gaps in their learning caused by challenging histories, disrupted schooling and poor attendance. Notwithstanding this, the centre has a successful track record of reintegrating Key Stage 3 pupils into mainstream school. Although standards remain low at the end of Key Stage 4, pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. This is a very positive outcome given their previous experiences and is as a result of the small group teaching and the individual attention they receive. In 2009, most Year 11 pupils sat English and mathematics GCSE, with almost all attaining a grade D to grade G pass. Many sat a range of other subjects with similar rates of success. Attitudes for most pupils improve as their education and future plans become of more importance to them. Consequently, in lessons seen, their learning was satisfactory and sometimes good. In a Key Stage 3 science lesson, pupils improved their knowledge and understanding of the lunar cycle. In a Year 11 personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson, pupils explored young people's and adults' viewpoints on violence in video games. One pupil commented, 'This particular video actually does teach you that violence doesn't pay!', which was indicative of the group's enthusiasm and careful reflection of the issues involved. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sound. Behaviour has also improved, with a fall in the rate of incidents and fixed-term suspensions. Through the centre council, pupils are actively involved in the centre community and their views are listened to. They also support charitable causes in the wider community. The nature of the broad catchment area pupils travel from, transport arrangements and the structure of the timetable inhibit the potential for them to be involved more in the local community. A range of activities, including work-experience opportunities, prepares them well for the world beyond the centre. Pupils make satisfactory progress in improving the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Underpinning the quality of teaching and learning are the good working relationships between pupils and all adults. Teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team and any instances of misbehaviour are dealt with calmly and sensitively, disruption to learning being minimised. Pupils' progress towards their personal targets in relation to their behaviour, attitudes and relationships is monitored carefully. Pupils told the inspector that they found teachers' marking to be helpful in telling them what they had to do to improve the quality of their work. However, the inspection found the quality of marking to be variable in this respect and, as a result, the monitoring and targeting of pupils' academic progress has some weaknesses. In some lessons, there is not enough active involvement of pupils in learning. As a result, some become listless and disinterested, sometimes asking the teacher, 'What time does this lesson end?' ICT is used appropriately to support teaching and learning. Though demanding, it was used highly effectively in an art lesson to help in researching pictures of sculptures, which would then be transformed into an animal form chosen by the pupil. At the start of lessons, pupils are usually made aware of what is expected of them. At the end, however, there is little attention paid to recapping what has actually been learned. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is enhanced by a comprehensive programme of PHSE lessons. Pupils told the inspector how much they enjoyed this aspect of their learning. Cross-curricular

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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provision, including literacy, numeracy and ICT, is satisfactory. A good range of enrichment activities is available, which has included a residential trip to Wales for older pupils who were enabled to take part in a range of outdoor and adventurous activities, as well as team building exercises. The on-site horticultural project also broadens pupils' experiences. The centre provides an effective caring and supportive environment for pupils, and is particularly effective in how it supports each individual, including the most vulnerable, in very specific ways. Effective induction arrangements help pupils settle quickly into the daily routines and understand the high expectations the centre has of them. Key Stage 3 pupils are supported closely on their reintegration to mainstream schools and Key Stage 4 pupils receive good advice and guidance for opportunities beyond the centre. Although the centre's procedures for reducing absence work well with most pupils, the repeated absence of a small minority is proving more difficult to improve.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting-centre manager is working closely with the local authority and the management committee to ensure a focus on driving improvement. In this she is ably supported by her HLTA. There is a commitment and common understanding of the centre's goals and purpose. The management committee has been supportive of the centre throughout the leadership changes. It is now acting as a critical friend in holding the centre to account and checking how it is doing. This ensures a focus on quality and raising standards. A new centre improvement plan is improving the quality of self-evaluation. There is currently a greater focus on supporting mainstream schools with tailor-made support programmes. It is too early to judge the impact of these changes. The centre involves parents and carers fully throughout enrolment procedures. Pupils' progress is reviewed every six weeks and parents are kept informed and involved. This they appreciate. Partnerships with mainstream secondary schools and other educational institutions are very effective in promoting learning and pupils' well-being. Safeguarding procedures have a high profile and, at the time of this inspection, are good. A keen focus on respect, rights and responsibilities underpins the centre's promotion of equality and the tackling of discrimination. Through working with other local mainstream schools as part of its outreach programme, it is successful in bringing itself and these schools in the community together. This has resulted in a fall in

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permanent exclusions within its partnership schools.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

A quarter of the parents of pupils attending the centre replied to the inspection questionnaire. Almost all are positive about the centre and what it has done for their children. This inspection confirms their views. In particular, they feel it deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour and that the current leadership team leads and manages the centre well. All are happy with their children's experience at the centre and the changes made in their attitudes towards education. One stated that 'I have nothing but praise for the staff who have made my child feel safe and secure, and also made his education fun.' Another stated, 'The staff at this school are more than helpful to us as a family.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Forest 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 12 statements about the school. The inspector received 13 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there 48 are pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	3	23	8	62	1	8	1	8
The school keeps my child safe	7	54	6	46	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	5	39	7	54	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	1	8	10	77	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	5	39	8	62	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	5	39	8	62	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	3	23	10	77	0	0	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	46	7	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	62	5	39	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	77	3	23	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	39	8	62	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	10	77	3	23	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	69	4	31	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



20 March 2009 Dear Pupils Inspection of Forest Education Centre, Dibden, SO45 5UG

Your centre provides a satisfactory quality of education for you. The acting-centre manager and her staff work hard to help you learn well and improve your personal qualities. A group of Year 11 pupils told me how they valued their time at the centre and the opportunities it provides for you. This was also the view of most of you who completed the Ofsted questionnaire during the inspection. Some of you had concerns about behaviour. However, apart from the odd occasion when pupils 'kick-off', I found behaviour to be satisfactory. In particular, I was very impressed by the way you respect the property and the way you have responded to the whole site being a no-smoking zone. The centre has the following strengths: The senior leadership team run the school well and have plans to make things better for you. All the staff have your best interests at heart, ensure you are safe and well cared for, and make every effort to make sure you will do well in the future. The centre works well with other people to broaden your experience of education. In lessons, teachers and other adults give you all the help and support they can. To make things better, I have asked the centre to: make better use of the assessment data it has on you in order to set you more challenging targets raise the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by ensuring teachers plan work that challenges all of you introduce a greater range of accredited courses for you in Years 10 and 11 provide more planned opportunities for you to learn about and experience different faiths in your community. Good luck for the future. Yours faithfully James Bowden Lead inspector

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