

Harrogate Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130339
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	341026
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Keith Massett

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	35
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Geoffrey Crocker
Headteacher	Mrs Samantha Campbell
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited eight lessons, including two vocational sessions at the local college, observed eight teachers and held meetings with the Chair of the Management Committee, staff, individual students and a parent. The inspector observed the pupil referral unit's work, and looked at its analysis of examination results, students' records, the unit's development plans and a variety of policy and procedural documents. The inspector analysed 21 questionnaires returned by parents and carers. Analysis of questionnaires from students and staff further informed the inspection.

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

- how well students progress and work towards accreditation that is matched to their needs and leads to appropriate destinations
- whether teaching and assessment are consistently effective over time and across subjects in ensuring that good or outstanding progress is made
- whether achievement and personal development of students demonstrate that the curriculum and care, guidance and support meet the full range of students' needs and interests
- how well students understand and live the Every Child Matters outcomes and the extent of their spiritual, moral social and cultural development
- how effectively leaders and managers at all levels drive improvements in students' outcomes.

Information about the school

The pupil referral unit caters for students from the town of Harrogate and surrounding areas within North Yorkshire. There have been considerable changes to the provision since the last inspection. In 2008 the unit assimilated the Harrogate outreach service for students not attending school, to form Harrogate Pupil Referral Service. The new service continues to provide for students who have been excluded, or who are at risk of exclusion, from mainstream schools. All students have social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. Those in Years 7 to 9 undertake a 12-week intensive programme before returning to mainstream education. The majority in Years 10 and 11 stay longer. The new service also provides outreach teaching and support for students with a wider range of needs including those unable to access mainstream education due to illness or medical reasons, those with chronic non-attendance and those awaiting a school place. Almost all students are of White British heritage. There are increasing numbers of looked after children and those who have a statement of special educational needs. Currently, nine students have a statement of special educational needs and there are seven looked after children.

The unit has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award and has achieved the Quality Standards for Careers Education and Guidance.

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

Harrogate Pupil Referral Unit provides an outstanding education for its students. The unit has maintained high-quality provision since the last inspection and has successfully assimilated the Harrogate outreach service for pupils not attending school. At the same time, it has ensured that students' learning and progress are outstanding.

Self-evaluation is rigorous and highly accurate. There is constant self-challenge and a desire to be at the leading edge in securing the best outcomes for students. These factors indicate that capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

Students gain a wide range of accreditation that is matched to their needs and interests. By Year 11 all achieve nationally recognised qualifications. Virtually all gain GCSE qualifications, including some at the highest grades and increasing numbers attain five A* to C and five A* to G grades. Given the very low starting points on entry and a short period of time at the unit, this represents considerable achievement. Students in Years 7 to 9 settle quickly and also make outstanding progress. All teaching observed during the inspection was at least good with some that was outstanding. Outstanding use of assessment information in planning the curriculum ensures effective learning opportunities for individual students. Highly relevant activities and courses support outstanding progress for all groups, including those with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities. Students make rapid gains in developing skills for the workplace. This includes the use of basic skills in real contexts and effective preparation for future study or work through vocational courses, work experience and effective information, advice and guidance. As a result, all students go on to future education, employment or training.

The outstanding curriculum is highly relevant and engaging as well as being enriched through partnership work, particularly with the college. This also secures progression when students leave the unit. For students in Years 10 and 11 there is excellent integration of academic and functional skills, personal, social and health education, vocational courses and work experience. The 12-week programme for younger students ensures exceptionally rapid progress in core subjects as well as in communication and social skills. The curriculum is highly effective in promoting improvement in behaviour as well as developing personal and social skills.

The very high commitment to working in partnership underpins support at all levels and is a cornerstone in promoting students' well-being and academic development. Partnerships play a major factor in the extensive, personalised curriculum as well as with providers of work experience and in the wide range of enrichment opportunities. The unit is proactive in securing partnership with services and agencies and strives to ensure that support is coordinated to meet each individual's needs. Regular multi-agency

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meetings with key representatives from health and education support this highly coordinated approach. Multi-agency work is also extremely effective in providing support for those whose circumstances make them the most vulnerable, particularly those with special educational needs or other complex needs.

As a result of the outstanding care, guidance and support there are many people students can turn to. All students say they feel safe at the unit and parents and carers strongly agree with this view. Excellent transition arrangements support new students and their parents and carers. Thorough assessments of students' personal and social needs ensure carefully targeted support. A commitment to inclusive practice where all individuals are treated with dignity and equality is at the heart of the unit. Highly developed monitoring and tracking ensure quick support for those at risk of falling behind. Students demonstrate healthy eating and take exercise regularly while in the care of the unit. However, while they understand factors affecting their health, many do not always follow a healthy lifestyle when out of school. Although most younger students have a successful return to mainstream schools, some are concerned about the ease with which they will make this transition following the high levels of individual help they have received at the unit.

The unit's analysis of how effectively it promotes community cohesion ensures that it has an excellent understanding of its context and students' needs. Effective plans promote engagement with community groups and other providers, both locally and globally. However, students' understanding of different religions, ethnic groups and cultures, regionally and in the United Kingdom, is less well promoted and developed. Safeguarding practice is exemplary. High levels of training ensure that all staff are highly vigilant and take a major role in responding to child protection issues.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance transition, ease reintegration and improve students' health and well-being by:
 - providing advice and training for receiving schools
 - building on existing strong partnerships to ensure greater consistency in sharing advice and information between the unit, mainstream schools and other agencies.
- Promote community cohesion by:
 - increasing students' understanding of different religious, ethnic and cultural groups regionally and in the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment is low but the unit secures a rapid improvement in the short time students attend. A large majority of students make outstanding gains in academic progress and personal development. Individual students' needs, gifts or talents are recognised and many achieve accreditation or awards in these areas. Most students enjoy their time at

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the unit.

Students adopt safe practices, shown in their sensible responses and behaviour in lessons, around both sites and off-site. Students are highly confident that the unit will deal quickly and efficiently with any concerns they raise. Students' behaviour supports learning in lessons and contributes to a good atmosphere and students feeling safe because expectations are high and consistent. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are de-escalated well and not allowed to interfere with learning or well-being. The breakfast club provides a healthy and nutritious start to the day for students and staff and many students use exercise equipment or play table tennis at break time.

Students make a positive contribution to the unit and wider community. They regularly engage in fundraising and activity weeks and contribute to local activities through work-related learning. Students contribute well to the unit's community life by serving and managing aspects of the breakfast club. Although attendance is low for a few, for most attendance improves significantly while they are at the unit and overall attendance is improving. Students are eager to embrace new opportunities offered by the unit and participate well in artistic, sporting and cultural activities. They gain growing understanding of social and moral issues, such as the implications of new technology for employment in the motor industry. Social skills develop well for future application in an adult work-based world. Respect and tolerance for others grows during their placement.

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	4
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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3

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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The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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How effective is the provision?

Teachers use excellent knowledge of their subject and of students to plan activities that interest and engage students. Many opportunities are taken to link work to the real world and current topical events. Teachers accurately assess students' attainment. Precise, accurate marking, oral feedback in lessons and written feedback ensure that students know exactly what to do to improve their work. Excellent resources and use of new technology help to engage students and the environment stimulates learning. Occasionally, there is too much direction by the teacher and students miss opportunities to assess their work with peers and to take part in group discussions.

The outstanding curriculum is highly matched to individuals' needs and leads to outstanding progress. At Key Stage 4 the curriculum always links to accredited courses and opportunities for progression or further study. Every effort is made to ensure continuity and progression for students on a temporary placement at the unit. A well-planned and varied programme of activities enriches the curriculum. A particular strength is the regular outdoor experience provided through activities such as rock climbing, cycling and overnight stays in the Yorkshire Dales.

The teachers and other staff know students exceptionally well and use this to support students' personal and academic development. Work with families means staff are vigilant and highly skilled in assisting students in challenging circumstances. The parent support adviser provides good support. As a result, parents and carers indicate they feel supported and empowered to help their children.

Excellent care is taken to ensure the safeguarding of students and to ensure a safe environment. Students receive high-quality information and support about sex and relationships, drugs and substance misuse. Guidance relating to their future options when they leave the unit is also very effective, particularly for those in Key Stage 4.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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's vision, drive and passion is shared by leaders at all levels and understood and agreed by all staff. Leaders and managers are highly effective and

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empowered to identify areas for improvement and lead on developments. Morale is very high and staff believe in the unit's purpose to secure better outcomes for students. Rigorous monitoring is used very well to improve provision with clear plans in place to support further development. The consistent desire to improve the quality of teaching is supported by rigorous performance management and professional development and is a significant factor in students' rapid progress.

The management committee is rigorous in ensuring that all staff and pupils are safe and its members discharge statutory duties effectively. They support the unit's total commitment to ensuring outstanding equality of opportunity for every student and challenging discrimination. They are systematically involved in evaluating the work of the unit and have strong capacity to influence its strategic direction. The unit promotes community cohesion well. Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the locality make a significant contribution to clear plans to improve community cohesion further. Members support the continued development of highly effective partnership work as key strategic partners are represented on the management committee.

Parents and carers are informed and feel empowered to support their children. Good communication systems are well established, using a wide variety of methods to ensure communication with all parents and carers. Every effort is made to involve parents and carers through regular newsletters, students' record books, the unit's well-established website, regular reports and communication. Rapid response to emerging problems and persistent follow up is welcomed by parents and carers.

The unit provides good outcomes and ensures good value for money.

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	2
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	2

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Views of parents and carers

Almost all returned questionnaires are very positive and indicate that parents and carers are very satisfied with provision. Inspectors endorse parents' and carers' views that the unit provides an outstanding education. Positive comments included, 'We have seen a complete change around – good results and behaviour is fantastic,' and, 'The PRU has opened doors for the future.' Some comments were less positive about aspects of home tuition and one student being wrongly placed at the unit. A small minority of parents and carers indicate that their children do not enjoy school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Harrogate Pupil Referral Unit 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 20 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 35 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	6	30	9	45	3	15	1	5
The school keeps my child safe	12	60	8	40	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	65	6	30	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	40	9	45	1	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	75	4	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	65	6	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	55	5	25	1	5	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)	9	45	9	45	1	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	60	6	30	2	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	75	1	5	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	55	6	30	1	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	70	4	20	1	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	13	65	4	20	2	10	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 pupils' 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.



Dear Students

Inspection of Harrogate Pupil Referral Unit, Harrogate, HG1 5EP

Thank you for the welcome you gave me when I came to inspect your pupil referral unit. I would like to give my particular thanks to those of you who gave up your time to talk to me in lessons, around the unit and at the college.

Harrogate Pupil Referral Unit provides you with an outstanding education. The headteacher and teachers are constantly trying to find new ways to ensure that lessons are as good as they can be. Teachers know you very well and lessons are good overall and often outstanding. The range of courses and variety of qualifications ensure that your individual needs are met and this helps you to enjoy time at the unit. Many of you particularly enjoy developing skills in real work settings and activities such as rock climbing and cycling that keep you healthy and help to build your confidence. Many of you have made very good improvements in your attendance and during my visit your behaviour was good. The care, guidance and support you receive are also outstanding because of the excellent guidance you receive and the numerous different agencies helping to meet your individual needs. All of this enables you to make outstanding progress and help you return to school or move on to future education, employment or training.

I have asked the unit to focus now on what could be improved. To do this I have asked the unit to help develop your understanding of the different religious, ethnic and cultural groups regionally and in the United Kingdom. This will help you increase your confidence and skills in living and working alongside people from different backgrounds.

I have also asked the staff to help improve your health and make your return to school easier by sharing information and advice with your schools and other agencies and by offering to share their outstanding practice.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by making sure you attend even more regularly. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Keith Massett

Lead inspector

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