

Chalkhill Education Centre (Out of School Learning Service)

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131189
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	341106
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Bill Stoneham

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	5–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	4
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bob Price
Headteacher	Graeme Cornell
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2007
School address	Chalkhill Education Centre Princess Royal Hospital site Lewes Road RN16 4NQ
Telephone number	01444 441805
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspection looked at classroom teaching and other learning activities in the unit. About 50 per cent of the time was spent looking directly at learning. Seven lessons and six teachers were observed and meetings were held with staff, students and the chair of the management committee. A variety of stakeholders were also consulted. Various documents including the unit's development plan and its extensive safeguarding policies were scrutinised. Four parental and carer questionnaires were received and the unit offered evidence of parental and carer satisfaction from its own surveys.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the unit's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well different groups of students progress
- how effectively the curriculum is personalised to meet the needs of individual students, including those in the sixth form
- how effectively the provision for care, guidance and support meets the complex individual needs of each student.

Information about the school

Chalkhill Education Centre (Out of School Learning Service) is based in new premises on a hospital site in Haywards Heath. These premises opened in March 2009. Students are referred to the service because they exhibit a range, or a combination, of complex medical difficulties which include such problems as mood and conduct disorders, acute psychosis and bipolar disorder, eating disorders, clinical depression and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). Admissions and discharges are controlled by consultant psychiatrists. At the time of the inspection none of the students had a statement of educational needs and/or disabilities, though some had special needs in terms of behavioural and emotional problems. Most students stay in the service, as either day, or hospital-based, students for short periods of time. During the last academic year the average stay was 25 days, with some staying for only two or three days. Though the service is based in West Sussex, students are referred from many different local authorities. At the time of the inspection all students were of a White British heritage; three were looked after children.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Chalkhill offers its students outstanding education and therapeutic care. Many aspects of its work are outstanding, reflecting the sheer dedication of the staff, who are committed to changing and improving the fortunes of young people who have faced severe difficulties and traumas in their lives.

Chalkhill students frequently have prior levels of attainment that are above average for their age. Some girls, in particular, have exceptionally high levels of prior attainment. Owing to the short-term nature of the education provided, few students sit GCSE or other examinations while at Chalkhill. Nevertheless, the unit has developed detailed and rigorous assessment systems and can show that students, including those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, make good progress in their learning.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Excellent partnerships involving education, care and health professionals ensure high quality outcomes. As one health professional commented, 'In national terms this is an outstanding provision.' Extensive work is done to promote healthy and safe lifestyles, and safeguarding arrangements are outstanding. Other outstanding features include the engagement of parents and carers, the quality of the curriculum, especially the care taken to meet individual needs, and the work to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination.

The students' progress is further helped by teaching that is constantly good and occasionally outstanding. Assessment procedures are good and staff are well informed about the needs and abilities of each student. The strength of the partnerships with 'home' schools also contributes to good learning so that all, including pupils of primary age and sixth form students, are able to maintain momentum in their studies.

Excellent progress has been made since the last inspection. Attendance and behaviour are outstanding and levels of achievement have risen. The unit is highly successful in reintegrating its students. The good management committee are most supportive. However, though staff are adept at identifying need and evaluating outcomes, they do not systematically report, or celebrate, their successes. A track record of sustained improvement amply illustrates the ambition and drive of the excellent leadership team. Rigorous self-evaluation enables strengths and areas for development to be identified and appropriate plans made, reflecting well an outstanding capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to improve self-evaluation further, senior staff and the management

committee should identify and publish a set of readily quantifiable success criteria against which student performance can be measured and the outcomes celebrated.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In lessons, the students are involved in their learning and respond with interest and determination to the challenges set. They enjoy their learning. Progress during lessons is consistently good, with the students extending their subject knowledge and understanding. Student questionnaires indicated that the students believe they are well taught and that staff are very supportive. As one student commented, 'Chalkhill is amazing! They are helping me towards good GCSEs and I have taken extra courses such as Arts Award.' The unit is successful in enabling students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and sixth formers, to return to school to continue their mainstream education. Relationships in class and around the unit are good. Students feel safe and they display respect for each other. Responsibility is encouraged well, with students taking an active role in designing their own care plans, for example. They also take much pride in their building and ensure that their social areas are well cared for and are comfortable. Student art work is used to decorate many of the public areas. This work is attractive and reflects different cultural themes studied. Students are given opportunities to involve themselves in various activities, including music, sport and drama. The students experience many successes that boost their self-esteem and equip them well for their future education and beyond.

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	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2

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

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

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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Students learn well because they are well taught by staff with detailed subject knowledge. The working relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students are encouraged to work independently, with good emphasis on developing key skills.

The curriculum is outstanding because it is personalised. Students follow individual programmes that have been carefully designed to meet their own requirements. The strength of the curriculum also reflects the quality partnerships that are established with the students' 'home' schools. Breadth is provided via activities such as theatre visits and lessons on independent living. These activities are significant in boosting confidence, as well as making a good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The unit provides an outstanding, caring and supportive environment. Effective induction methods and excellent partnerships with many different care, education and health agencies enable students to settle quickly into the daily routines and to understand the high expectations that the unit has of them.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 excellent leadership of the Head of Education, combined with the dedicated support of staff, has resulted in a clear focus on successfully driving improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels, including the management committee, are fully committed and involved in securing improvements.

The unit fully involves parents and carers in its work and keeps them well informed. Partnership work is excellent. The service maintains strong working relationships with many agencies. These include the students' 'home' schools, enabling significant enhancements to be made to the curriculum, as well as ensuring excellent and individualised health and social care, guidance and support, especially in terms of

promoting personal well-being. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding. The detailed risk assessments are thorough and all appropriate policies are in place and are monitored. There is a very strong determination to ensure that the students enjoy an appropriate education in a safe setting; leaders and managers have been most effective in achieving this. Academic outcomes are good because the management of teaching and learning is strongly focused on raising standards. An emphasis on respect, rights, boosting confidence and encouraging responsibility underpins much of the unit's work. This makes an excellent contribution to the promotion of equality and tackling discrimination. Good efforts have been made to promote community cohesion. The students make a good contribution to their own community. Good efforts to ensure that the students' knowledge and understanding of the wider world and their contribution to it are also made. Staff assiduously self-evaluate the unit's work but they do not consistently highlight the outcomes or celebrate their successes.

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	2
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	1

Sixth form

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good. Four post-16 students were on roll, each following an individualised programme. Students in the sixth form make good progress, benefitting from the excellent provision made for their needs. Where necessary, basic programmes to boost standards in literacy and numeracy are offered, which include external validation. This helps the students concerned to progress to the next stage of their lives. Some students are extremely high attainers who are predicted to achieve the highest possible grades at A level. The quality of the partnership work with other education providers and the sensitive way this is managed enables even the

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most able students to continue to make at least good progress in their studies. The way the sixth form is organised allows programmes of study to be tailored to individual needs so that the students are able to cope successfully with the challenges they face.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

A small number of replies to the questionnaire were received and responses were almost all positive. This view is reflected in the unit's own parental and carer surveys. The two exceptions were answers to two individual questions. In both cases, the respondents gave positive replies to all other questions. The overwhelming message to emerge is that parents and carers believe that Chalkhill is making a significant contribution to enhancing life chances by helping the young people to overcome their problems and anxieties.

The overwhelmingly positive views expressed by parents and carers reflect the inspector's judgements of the quality of the unit.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chalkhill Education Centre (Out of School Learning Service) 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 four completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 20 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	2	50	2	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	2	50	2	50	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	2	50	0	0	2	50	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	2	50	2	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	2	50	2	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	2	50	2	50	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)	2	50	1	75	1	25	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	2	50	2	50	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	50	2	50	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	2	50	2	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	3	75	1	25	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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.



28 January 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Chalkhill Education Centre (Out of School Learning Service), Haywards Heath RG16 4NQ

I wish to thank you for making me so welcome during my recent visit. I have fond memories of meeting and talking with you and seeing your work. I am impressed with what you are all achieving and I am so pleased that I was able to see some of you performing your own music; the song that I heard performed was quite moving. You told me about the high quality education you receive and I am pleased to say that my visit confirmed your opinions; you receive an outstanding education. You are making good strides in your education and personal development. Your staff help you to do this but you also help by your positive attitudes and your excellent attendance and behaviour. Chalkhill has many strengths and you particularly benefit from an excellent curriculum and the outstanding care, guidance and support you are given.

Though the education you receive is outstanding, I found that the senior staff and the management committee do not do enough about publicising and celebrating your successes. Staff evaluate Chalkhill's work extremely thoroughly; they now need to highlight these outcomes so that you, and future students, know just how well you are doing and just how good the unit is. You can help by keeping up all your hard work.

Thank you again for making me so welcome. I enjoyed meeting you and would like to wish you every success in your future endeavours.

Yours sincerely

Bill Stoneham

Lead inspector

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