

Gloucestershire Hospital Service - Children and Young People's Directorate

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131367
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	341135
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Dr Michael Farrell

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

Type of school	Pupil Referral Unit (Short Stay School)
School category	Pupil Referral Unit (Short Stay School)
Age range of pupils	4–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	114
Appropriate authority	The Management Committee
Chair	Ms Meg Dawson
Headteacher	Ms Mary Holland
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited four lessons taught by four different teachers in the hospital schoolroom, scrutinised the work and records of pupils educated by the outreach provision, and held meetings with the chairperson of the management committee, staff and pupils, and spoke to parents. They observed the Service's work, and looked at policies, records and the service development plan and scrutinised 41 parental questionnaires.

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

- How well the Service tracks the progress of pupils in each key stage and subsequent interventions.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and how effectively the Service encourages it.
- How well the Service has developed its outreach service and how effectively it evaluates this and the hospital-based provision.
- The quality of the curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Gloucester Hospital Education Service (hereafter the Service) comprises a school unit based in the Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and a peripatetic outreach team with an office based in Cheltenham. The Service forms part of the Children and Young People's Directorate and is registered as a short stay school. Pupils include gifted and talented children and children with profound and multiple learning difficulties. The hospital unit provides access to education for all children admitted to the paediatric ward, and after children have been discharged, the outreach team provides support at home or in the child's mainstream or special school. Pupils stay for different lengths of time ranging from a few days to much more extended periods. The outreach service has been developed since the previous inspection. The Service also provides education for pregnant schoolgirls and teenage mothers. It achieved Healthy School Status in 2009.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The Service offers good provision. It provides excellent care, guidance and support. Links with parents are excellent because it makes every effort to keep parents fully informed and much work is delivered in pupils' homes. Because the Service works very collaboratively and fully recognises the importance of multi-professional working, links with schools and agencies such as the health services are outstanding. This also supports excellent safeguarding procedures. Leaders and managers embed ambition excellently through their high expectations and by thoroughly monitoring staff performance. Tracking of pupils' progress has improved considerably, enabling effective intervention. Provision for community cohesion is only satisfactory because, despite some useful work in this area, the Service does not plan, monitor and evaluate it in enough detail.

Teaching is typified by warm relationships with pupils and close team working by teachers and support workers. Lessons capture pupils' attention and interest because they are well planned and structured and use stimulating resources. Assessments are made with care and effectively inform the next steps in learning. However, teaching does not always stretch pupils and that is why it is good rather than outstanding. The curriculum is imaginative, flexible and well designed to meet pupils' individual needs. It helps ensure there is a rich variety of engaging activities from which teachers draw. Care is a priority so pupils feel confident and safe and try their best. The guidance and support pupils receive are also outstanding especially in helping them to successfully return to their mainstream or special school.

Pupils' attainment is average, and they make good progress and achieve well. Individuals and groups of pupils, including those with different types of medical needs, boys and girls, and teenage mothers, all make good progress. Pupils are courteous and helpful and understand healthy lifestyles well. Although attendance is low compared with mainstream schools, this very largely relates to pupils' medical conditions and the Service does all it can to secure regular attendance. Pupils' contribution to the community is satisfactory. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because it is well encouraged by the curriculum and by the respectful ethos of the Service. Children in the well led and managed Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well and make good progress because of good provision including a wide range of imaginative curriculum activities. The Service's accurate self-evaluation, including the tracking of pupils' progress, gives it a clear view of its own effectiveness and this, coupled with the progress the Service has made, shows a good capacity to improve further. Also important are its high aspirations evident in

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the successful development of an effective outreach service.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress by ensuring lessons are always as challenging as they can be.
- Improve the pupils' contribution to the community by extending direct links with different communities, and improving the planning, monitoring and evaluation of community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment when pupils enter the Service is variable. It is sometimes lower than average because of medical reasons and absence from school but overall it is within the average range. In the sometimes short period when the Service educates pupils they make good progress and achieve well, maintaining their average attainments in trying circumstances and sometimes improving on them. Individual pupils and groups of pupils reach challenging targets. Different groups, including boys and girls, pupils with different medical needs and those of different abilities, all make good progress and achieve well. In a good lesson introducing British Sign Language, observed in the hospital schoolroom for pupils in Years 1, 6 and 7, all pupils made good progress, developed confidence and gained considerable enjoyment because the lesson was well structured, care was excellent, and the lesson was flexible enough to cope with the different ages of pupils. Also, relationships were very good, resources were interesting and staff worked well together as a team. In another lesson, Year 6 pupils made good progress in understanding the use of electricity and safety issues because the lesson was interesting and practical, and again relationships were warm and encouraging.

Pupils feel very safe indeed because they are either taught in hospital where they are looked after, or in their home or their mainstream school in familiar surroundings. They behave well because they are interested in the well-chosen activities. Pupils show a good understanding of healthy lifestyles including mental and emotional health. They contribute satisfactorily to the community. Attendance is low compared with mainstream schools but the great majority of absences relate to medical reasons. Economic well-being is good because of the contribution from good progress in English, mathematics and information and communication technology and the good contribution of careers advice and where possible, work experience. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, especially in relation to raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence to return to their own school. Also, the curriculum includes activities to encourage cultural and social understanding well.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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	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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In lessons observed, teaching, including assessment, was good and outreach pupils' work and teaching records also indicate good teaching and assessment. Well-chosen activities stimulate pupils' interest, there are good opportunities for developing independence, and relationships are strong. Teachers and support workers make a valuable contribution. While good overall, the teaching sometimes leads to individual pupils making outstanding progress. Assessment is thorough and usually successfully informs the next steps of teaching, and marking is helpful and encouraging. However, lessons are good rather than outstanding because they do not move quickly enough from consolidating what pupils know to really stretching them with new learning, and so are not challenging enough

The curriculum is varied and offers rich opportunities to capture pupils' interests. It meets pupils' individual needs well giving due emphasis to basic skills but extending much further according to pupils' needs including examination course requirements. Where possible it includes visits to places of interest such as a local farm. There is a very strong emphasis on shaping the curriculum experiences to the individual pupil's requirements and the Service shows great imagination and flexibility in ensuring this including the effective use of part-time teachers to provide specialist lessons. Cross-curricular links are carefully planned. Information and communication technology is used well. The Service rightly recognises the importance of developing opportunities to learn through the use of dedicated e-mail and internet work as well as the vital face-to-face contact with teachers and support workers.

Care, guidance and support focus deeply on individual needs, seamlessly combining

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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medical and educational provision. Excellent teamwork pragmatically concentrates on securing the best outcomes for pupils including having a powerful impact for pupils who are particularly vulnerable. Communications with others, such as the health services, schools and parents, are very open and trusting. Schools and medical staff speak very highly indeed of the quality of the links with the Service. Great care in making transition arrangements helps ensure pupils move back to school smoothly and with confidence. The quality of the Service staff and their tremendous determination to do the best they can for pupils powerfully affects the excellent ethos of the Service.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers support the quality of teaching well and embed ambition excellently as reflected in the high quality of care, guidance and support and excellent links. This is because there are very high expectations of staff, informed by very careful monitoring of performance. Staff respond to these expectations fully. The management committee supports and challenges the Service well, helped by the greatly improved systems of self-evaluation put in place since the previous inspection. Excellent engagement of parents leads to their very high opinion of the Service and includes keeping parents very well informed. Partnerships with other services and schools are outstanding because team working is at the heart of the ethos. Equal opportunities are well promoted because pupils are treated as individuals and there is no evidence of discrimination. Safeguarding procedures are very strong because this is a central focus of the Service and policies and their implementation are very carefully thought through and rigorously implemented. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory, but is not sufficiently monitored and evaluated. Resources including staff are well deployed.

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	2

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met	
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

At the time of the inspection there were no children in the Early Years Foundation Stage educated in hospital, taught at home or supported in their schools. Judgements were made from the Service's records of progress, lesson planning, photographic evidence and other sources. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attain within the average range, make good progress and achieve well. They appear to greatly enjoy activities provided. For example a child showed evident enjoyment making a rocket from a balloon and card and great pride in the results. Great care is taken with children's welfare to ensure they feel safe and staff work very closely with parents and other services such as the health service to provide the best for the children. The range of activities provided is varied and interesting, and stimulating resources are used. Careful records of assessment are made and these inform subsequent lessons and activities. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Provision in the hospital includes an attractive outside play area that children can enter directly from the schoolroom. The Service is correct to be actively planning to ensure this area has a covered part so children have access to outside play in inclement weather.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Around a third of parents returned questionnaires. Parents who spoke to inspectors and the overwhelming majority of those completing questionnaires are positive about the Service. These very positive comments extended across all areas covered by the

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questions. Because of an apparent clerical error, a question concerning being prepared for the future was omitted. Representative of the very appreciative comments are that the Service has been 'a lifeline' and 'We cannot speak highly enough of this service.' Inspectors agree with parents' very positive views.

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Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gloucestershire Hospital 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 114 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	64	9	32	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	64	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	79	4	14	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	64	8	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	75	7	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	79	5	18	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	50	12	43	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	71	8	29	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	36	7	25	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	75	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	68	8	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	75	5	18	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 all 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 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.



24 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gloucester Hospital Education Service, Gloucester GL1 3NN and Cheltenham GL50 3EW

Thank you for speaking to my colleague and me when we visited you and for telling us what you thought about the Service. We found many good things and some excellent things.

The Service is well led and managed. You work hard and make good progress in your studies and develop well. The care and guidance you receive are outstanding. Teaching is good and the curriculum is varied and interesting. The links the Service makes with parents, schools and other services are excellent.

There are two things that could be better so I have asked the Service to:

- improve your progress by making sure lessons always challenge you as much as possible
- improve your contribution to the community by strengthening the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the way you link with the wider community.

I am confident that given more opportunities to understand and participate in contributing to the community you will extend what you already do. Also, I am sure that you will continue to try hard in your lessons and respond well to increased challenges.

With every good wish for your future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Farrell
Lead inspector

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