

Hambleton/Richmondshire Pupil Referral Service

East Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1SZ

Inspection dates 8–9 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All students make good progress and some make outstanding progress both academically and in their personal development.
- Teaching is improving and more is becoming outstanding.
- Behaviour is good. Strong relationships are evident between staff and students.
- Senior leaders and the management committee are accurate in their self-evaluation and have a clear vision for the future. There is a strong and cohesive staff team.
- The Service is improving with many students returning to education where they become successful learners.
- Partnerships with schools and parents are good. Parents are very happy with what the Service provides for their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is inconsistency in teaching across subjects and key stages. There is some outstanding teaching but also some that requires improvement.
- Students are sometimes helped too quickly.
- The role of middle leaders is underdeveloped to further improve the quality and consistency in teaching.

Information about this inspection

- All lessons given by the 12 teachers in the Service were jointly observed with either the headteacher or with the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with students, the Chair of the Management Committee and other members, members of staff, a representative from the local authority and a senior leader from a school within the collaborative partnership of schools.
- The inspector took account of 10 responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View). She also took account of the Service's own parental survey and correspondence sent by a parent.
- The inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's own information about student s' learning and progress, the school's systems for improving teaching and learning, records relating to attendance and safeguarding information.
- The inspector analysed 20 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Michele Crichton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hambleton and Richmondshire Pupil Referral Service provides education and support to students experiencing a complex range of difficulties that prevents them from attending their local mainstream school.
- Currently there are 24 students on roll, 20 of whom are taught in collaboration with their mainstream school, at alternative centres or in their homes.
- It is a member of the Hambleton and Richmondshire Collaborative of local secondary schools and serves a very large, predominantly rural area of North Yorkshire.
- About half of the students on roll have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from their local school due to behavioural, emotional or social difficulties.
- The remainder are experiencing temporary health-related problems, typically following protracted illness, injury, or anxiety-related difficulties. These students are provided through medical outreach support.
- The vast majority of students are White British.
- Admission to the service is overseen and controlled by the local authority, in partnership with schools in the collaborative.
- Students are admitted to or transfer from the service at various times throughout the year and numbers on roll fluctuate accordingly.
- Currently a small number of students have a statement of special educational needs and there is a very small number that are looked after by the local authority.
- To date the Service has not received any pupil-premium funding. There is a small number of students who would be eligible for this funding.
- The service is housed in high-quality, refurbished, former school premises, where the majority of students are taught.
- Alternative provision is given by Middlesbrough College and Darlington College.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring students have sufficient time to answer questions or complete activities before staff give support
 - sharing the good practices that already exist within the school, including those of the staff's questioning techniques
 - developing students' independence in self- and peer-assessment activities.
- Strengthen leadership and management further by:
 - developing the role of middle leaders to improve the quality of teaching
 - widening the range of activities for which they are responsible.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- On entry to the Service attainment is low and students are regularly working below national expectations. This is because of much disruption to their education from previous poor behaviour, attendance and attitudes to learning. Many students are at least 2 years behind their expected ages in reading, writing and mathematics when they arrive.
- Although students stay at the Service for different periods of time evidence shows that all learners make good progress. For those who stay six months or longer, although few in number, this is frequently accelerated progress and they can make double the expected progress of student s' nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Students arrive with variable abilities to read. The Service has a range of strategies to develop reading at any level from one-to-one teaching to buddy reading with a member of staff. Students' confidence grows as they learn to work out the meaning of words, understand new vocabulary or for the first time read for pleasure.
- Progress is good or sometimes better in each key stage from pupils' individual starting points. This includes those who are most-able, those who receive support through outreach medical provision or have a disability and special educational need. The Service does not receive pupil-premium funding. However, students known to be eligible for this also achieve as well as all others, thus ensuring equality of opportunity.
- Detailed assessments on entry, consistent behaviour management and personalised programmes ensure gaps in learning close. Last year all Key Stage 4 students gained qualifications at GCSE level, vocational or industrial qualifications. The vast majority of students (92%) who left last year were still in further education, employment or training after six months of tracking. Staff closely monitor students who attend off-site provision to ensure they are working hard, attending well and making good progress.
- Parents are very happy with the academic and personal progress their children make. This was evident in the responses to Parent View, surveys taken by the school and through correspondence sent to the inspector.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall. Some is outstanding, the vast majority is good and a small amount requires improvement. This range can be seen across all subjects and in each key stage.
- All learning is personalised and teachers know students exceptionally well. They understand the academic and personal levels they are currently working at and the need for them to improve as quickly as possible. This is achieved by extensively planned lessons, focused learning activities and quickly developing positive relationships.
- Reading and writing activities are included in all learning activities across the curriculum regardless of the subject. For example, Year 10 students wrote answers using mathematical sentences which meant using words instead of symbols and numbers.
- Stronger aspects of teaching include high expectations of all learners, teachers' good subject knowledge and students' understanding exactly what they have to do to improve. This they gain from discussion with staff during the lesson or from comments made by staff in their books.
- In the small amount where teaching requires improving, students are given insufficient time to answer questions before either teaching or support staff provide support. Additionally, the amount and quality of teachers' questioning vary and there is little self or peer checking by students in their books.
- Support staff are used selectively in lessons to help with learning, behaviour or sometimes both. They work with students of all levels of ability and need. They make a good contribution as they are consistent in their expectations of all students.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students behave well in all areas of the school and in lessons. Staff create a calm and effective learning environment which students appreciate. In discussion they relate how they trust staff, could go to anyone if they felt they had a problem and that they know their learning and behaviour are improving. This is reflected in the fact that there have only been two exclusions in the Service in four years.
- Owing to this supportive environment students say there is no bullying. Knowledge of different types of bullying and e-safety is learnt well through the numerous practical activities that students experience. They learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to keep safe through lessons, by staff setting good role models, and through assemblies or tutorials.
- In discussion, one student appreciated not being escorted to use the local gym but met up with staff at the entrance, having developed staff trust of her behaviour in the community. Others spoke of their attendance improving significantly and how much learning they have improved. One student said, 'I didn't know I could learn this much.'
- When students arrive they are frequently lacking in confidence, have low self-esteem and are reluctant to communicate. During lessons, staff sometimes support too readily, which reduces the participation of students in their own learning.
- Although attendance is below average overall, students' individual attendance can improve dramatically. Last year, over half of the students had 100% attendance, with more than three quarters attending for 90% of the time. Close work with parents, agencies and students themselves promotes good attendance. For example, targets of small but consistent increases are constantly used to improve attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- The senior leadership gives strong direction to the Service. Their school objectives are clear and focused simply on providing the best possible support to students and to schools. Their capacity to improve is demonstrated by the fact that 70% of students who were admitted to them last year, returned into a school to successfully continue their education.
- One of the senior leaders from within the collaborative of schools supported by the Service spoke to the inspector about the level of success being achieved not only in reintegrating disaffected students but also in their work at preventing exclusions. For example, a Key Stage 3 project that the Service is currently working on with schools provides short-term, highly-focused learning and behaviour strategies which develop positive attitudes and put students quickly back on track.
- Arrangements for checking the performance of teachers are clear and link with targets set in the school-development plan. Senior leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. This has resulted in an increase in the proportion of teaching that is good or better and a decrease in that which requires improvement.
- Teaching has improved through regular monitoring of students' work, lesson observations and monitoring of teachers' planning. Although middle leaders do play a part in improving the quality of teaching, their role is underdeveloped to ensure the consistency and quality of teaching continues to improve.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet all statutory requirements. Senior leaders have confirmed that procedures on alternative sites also meet requirements.
- The curriculum meets the needs of the students well, and is a key element in the progress they make both personally and academically. For example, students benefit from climbing and mountain biking to develop confidence and team work. Trips to museums and theatres develop ideas that are incorporated into course work for art.
- The variety and richness of the curriculum also ensure there is good provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good conduct, respect and practice of doing the right thing are consistently expected of all students

- The local authority provides only a 'light-touch' support to this good Service. For example, the management committee requested some additional training from them to keep their skills honed.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The management committee were prepared well for the transition to governance by ensuring a wealth of experience and knowledge amongst its members. Selective individuals were specifically approached to ensure good calibre governance. There are educational leaders on the committee who are able to ask challenging questions about the leadership of teaching and comparing this against staff performance. They have ensured that all members are up to date in their roles and responsibilities by requesting any training they have felt necessary, for example, from the local authority or by attending in-house training sessions on students' progress to enable deeper questioning of the achievements of all student groups within the Service.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	135850
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	425720

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	24
Appropriate authority	Management Committee
Chair	Cllr Tim Swales
Headteacher	Mrs Fiona Dodgson
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2010
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