Newhaven Pupil Referral Unit

Inspection report

Unique reference number 100103
Local authority Greenwich
Inspection number 376346
Inspection dates 21–22 March 2012
Lead inspector David Smith

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

Type of school Pupil referral unit
School category Community
Age range of pupils 11–16
Gender of pupils Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll 151
Appropriate authority The local authority
Headteacher Mrs Alice Hexter
Date of previous school inspection 10 December 2008
School address Newhaven Gardens
Eltham London SE9 6HR

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Email address headteacher@newhaven.greenwich.sch.uk

Age group 11–16
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Smith               Additional inspector
Debby McCarthy            Additional inspector
Sandra Herring            Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Nineteen lessons were observed, each taught by a different teacher. Meetings were held with senior staff, the Chair of the Management Committee and parent and carer representatives of the management committee. Discussions were held with a group of students and individual students. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the unit's work and looked at documentation including self-evaluation, improvement planning and that related to students' safety. They also took account of the 22 responses to the questionnaires circulated to parents and carers before the inspection.

Information about the school

Newhaven is a large pupil referral unit (PRU) with a complex range of functions. This includes provision for excluded students, non-attendance due to illness (including mental health illness), persistent non-attendance, looked after children who are new to the authority and those experiencing behavioural difficulties which may lead to exclusion. There are 10 children in the care of the local authority. All students are recognised to have special educational needs and five have a statement of special educational needs. A large majority of the students are White British and the remainder are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. None is at an early stage of speaking English. There are twice as many boys as girls in the unit. Nearly a fifth of the students are known to be eligible for free school meals which is low for a PRU. The provision is based on two sites, with additional responsibility for the school room and ward-based teaching at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Initially all of the students attend the Annexe provision, either for assessment or as part of the Newhaven Education Support Team. Following a six week assessment the majority move to the Newhaven site and a minority returns to mainstream education. Newhaven also manages an outreach provision to enable students to continue to access learning.
Inspection judgements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall effectiveness</th>
<th>2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of pupils</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of teaching</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Behaviour and safety of pupils</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership and management</td>
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Key findings

- This is a good PRU. Typically the students are far happier to attend the unit than their previous placements. The unit enjoys, and merits, the clear approval of parents and carers. It is not outstanding because teaching is not yet outstanding and a few students need to attend more often.

- Students achieve well. They are clear that the unit helps them to do as well as they can. Newhaven establishes high expectations and succeeds in rapidly closing the gaps in attainment with students’ mainstream peers. The Year 11 students leave with qualifications that prepare them well for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

- Teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and the staff team work well to meet the students’ learning needs. A wide range of strategies are used to motivate the students. However, students make slower progress in a very few lessons. This is because the pace of learning is too slow and students’ prior progress and attainment data are not used precisely enough to plan learning.

- Students behave well. They take a while to settle but the established students have positive attitudes and are keen to do well in their examinations. They take a full and active part in a range of team games which reflects their willingness to cooperate with each other. The safety of students is strongly promoted. The entrenched non-attendance of a few students limits attendance to average but the unit is working rigorously to improve this situation.

- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and other senior leaders form a particularly effective team. They are well supported by a management committee that knows the unit’s strengths and areas for development well. Leaders lead teaching effectively through robust performance management. Students have clear learning pathways and enjoy an excellent range of activities, which make a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Links with other agencies are excellent.
What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Significantly reduce the number of students who are persistently absent in order to improve their academic achievement by December 2012, through:
  - developing the centre’s systems for promoting and celebrating attendance to more effectively capture students’ interests
  - focusing on breaking the cycle of persistent absence of a few students by more innovative and imaginative work with parents, carers and other agencies.

- Improve teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - ensuring that the pace of lessons is brisk and purposeful
  - using prior attainment and progress data consistently, to pitch learning at an individual and challenging level for all students.

Main report

Achievement of students

Achievement is good. Attainment on entry to the unit is variable but is often well below average. This is because most of the students have previously been persistent non-attenders or have exhibited behaviour that has prevented them from learning effectively. There is evidence of rapid improvement in the attainment of the established students which was evident in the lessons observed. All students leave with a qualification in English and mathematics and good progress was evident in lessons. Attainment in science and information and communication technology is particularly good and often two GCSE grades above their expected levels. High quality displays of the students’ artwork reflect the high levels often attained. The students attain well in their Preparation for Working Life course and achieved well on a recent work placement. These results reflect significant progress from the students’ starting points. Their good progress also narrows the attainment gap with their mainstream peers and students expressed their pride in reversing years of underachievement. There was no evidence in class or over time to suggest that there is variation in the achievement of groups of students linked, for example, to their gender or ethnic background. Students with statements of special educational needs and those who are disabled made good progress in the lessons seen as well as those in the care of the local authority. Most parents and carers agreed that their child is making good progress, which is an accurate view.

Students who are hospitalised for a short time are provided with good opportunities to keep up to date with their work. Part-time Key Stage 3 students are prepared well for their return to mainstream schools. There was a strong focus in the lessons seen on developing their literacy skills to enable them to access all areas of the curriculum.
Quality of teaching

Teaching is good and, as a result, students make good progress from their starting points. This is consistent with the views of most parents and carers. Learning is structured and students’ progress is continually assessed. An extensive range of strategies are used to meet students’ wide range of learning needs effectively. Learning is made fun and this helps to promote strong relationships. Effective teamwork and the skilled work of the learning support assistants contribute to the consistent management of any challenging behaviour. The provision of individual support for the students is particularly effective. The curriculum promotes the development of the students’ literacy skills well with good opportunities to support the accuracy and quality of the students’ extended writing. Students are aware of their current levels and know how to improve. In addition there are good opportunities for self- and peer-assessment. Year 10 students, for example, worked well together on a joint art project and displayed the maturity to assess each other’s work.

Challenging behaviour is well managed, for example in a Year 9 information and communication technology lesson, and this combined with high expectations ensured that good progress was made. There are also good opportunities for students to apply their skills to real-life situations, for example in a Year 9 mathematics lesson the teacher was very confident and ensured that students made good progress in their understanding of the tax systems and the budget. There was good promotion of the students’ moral and social development in an assessment class at the Annexe when they discussed the importance of healthy lifestyles. The teaching on the hospital site is good and the staff were observed engaging students in their learning, despite their medical conditions. Outstanding teaching observed helped to provide students with a deep understanding of their learning. Expectations in these lessons were very high and the students gained the confidence to tackle challenging tasks. A calm and purposeful atmosphere was established in a Year 11 mathematics lesson, for example, which contributed to outstanding progress and behaviour. On the few occasions when the pace of teaching dropped students made satisfactory rather than good progress. This is because activities were not challenging enough and prior attainment and progress data were not used sharply enough to tailor learning to individual need.

Activities are planned to provide students with experiences as close as possible to those that they would be experiencing in mainstream schools. This helps, for example, on the hospital site to enable students keep up with their peers. Teachers use their good subject expertise to provide accreditation courses that effectively challenge the older students.

Behaviour and safety of students

Behaviour is good. The behaviour of most of the students when they start at the unit is extremely challenging. In conversations with Year 11 students, they provided a clear account of how their behaviour had improved dramatically during their time at
the unit. Their honesty and positive attitudes were impressive. They felt that the unit had helped them to develop high aspirations for their future and the demands of examination work focused their energies. This was evident in a Year 11 English assessment where the year group were absorbed in their examination. The behaviour of the students observed on the hospital site was excellent. A good level of maturity was also evident in the very positive feedback and outcomes from the Year 10 work placements. The students behaved very well during their lunch break at the Annexe and related very well to each other and the staff. The group of students whose circumstances make them more vulnerable on the Newhaven site are provided with discrete provision and they feel secure in their nurturing environment. It is clear that as the students progress through the unit they are effectively encouraged to take more responsibility for their own behaviour.

All parents and carers who completed the questionnaire are rightly confident that behaviour is good and say that their child feels safe at the unit. A few students indicated in the questionnaires returned for the inspection that they have concerns regarding bullying. The recent mix of excluded and part-time Key Stage 3 students on the Newhaven site has contributed to outbursts of challenging behaviour which are well managed by the staff but do unsettle some of the students. However, in conversation with the students they made it clear that any instances of bullying, including sexist and racist comments, are effectively dealt with.

The overwhelming majority of students have very low or non-attendance prior to starting at the unit. Attendance is transformed for most of the students and, as a result, attendance is broadly average. This is a major triumph, but a few of the students have entrenched non-attendance. The school staff and other agencies work tirelessly to improve this but in some cases too little impact is made on changing their attitudes to schooling. There is a continual drive to ensure that punctuality is good and examples of the positive impact of the unit’s strategies were seen during the inspection. Students are given good advice on how to keep themselves safe.

**Leadership and management**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and other senior leaders are very experienced and particularly effective leaders. They have high expectations for the opportunities provided for the complex group of students on roll at the unit. Members of the management committee know the unit well and provide a good balance of support and challenge to the senior leaders. Self-review is rigorous and realistic and fully informs plans for future improvement. The unit has appointed a strong team to lead the core subjects across the provision and they have capacity to contribute well to the drive for concerted improvement.

Leaders and managers ensure that students have access to a personalised and effective curriculum. Staff have the expertise and the opportunity to work with small groups, which helps to engage reluctant learners in a challenging curriculum. There is a core entitlement at Key Stage 4 with an effective focus on English and mathematics. An excellent range of enriched activities and visits helps to engage the
students in their learning. These experiences also make a strong contribution to the students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum offered on the hospital site is tailored well to meet individual needs and, for example, focuses on ensuring that longer-term students do not fall behind their mainstream peers.

The staff team works well with parents and carers and, as a result, most who completed the questionnaire would recommend the unit to others. Links with many support agencies are excellent and this helps to promote life-changing opportunities for many of the students.

The unit has fully addressed improvements identified in their previous inspection report. Consequently, when they have students at an early stage of learning English they have introduced effective policies and practice that inform a consistent approach to practice. Any weaker aspects of teaching are tackled by a blend of support and challenge as leaders have high levels of ambition. Consequently, the unit demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.

There is good promotion of equality and no evidence of discrimination. The unit’s arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements. There is a comprehensive series of systems and protocols, including daily meetings, to ensure that concerns regarding behaviour and safety are effectively addressed. Care is taken with recruitment to ensure that only suitable adults are appointed.
Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Judgement</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>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.</td>
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Overall effectiveness of schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of school</th>
<th>Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery schools</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary schools</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special schools</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil referral units</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All schools</td>
<td>11</td>
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New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.
Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement: the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.

Attainment: the standard of the pupils’ work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.

Attendance: the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school’s efforts to encourage good attendance.

Behaviour: how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils’ punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.

Capacity to improve: the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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: inspectors form a judgement on a school’s overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.

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.

Safety: how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils’ freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.
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.

23 March 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of Newhaven Pupil Referral Unit, Newhaven SE9 6HR**

- We would like to share with you how much we enjoyed our visit to your pupil referral unit (PRU) in order to inspect how you are getting on. We decided that Newhaven is a good PRU and you have every opportunity to make up for the time that you have lost in education.

- Good teaching is helping you to make good progress with your work. We were particularly impressed with the qualifications gained by the Year 11 students. We enjoyed looking at the high quality displays of your artwork. Also, we are sure that the Year 10 students thoroughly enjoyed their work placements. However, we felt that the pace of learning and level of challenge of work in some of your lessons could be improved.

- You are being given good advice about how to improve your behaviour and this has a good impact. Your behaviour at the start of your time at the PRU is often unsettled. In contrast the behaviour of the Year 11 students is particularly good and their attitude towards their exams is very positive. The attendance of some of you is not good enough. We have asked the headteacher to ensure that everything is done to improve your attendance because you are wasting such good opportunities to do well.

- You told us that you greatly appreciate how much staff help you to do your best. This is down to the good job that senior leaders and staff do at your school. We hope that you make every effort to behave and work hard.

Yours sincerely

David Smith
Lead inspector
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