

Auckland Education Centre

Bosworth Wood Campus, Auckland Drive, Solihull, B36 0DD

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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

- The majority of pupils, including those who have learning or sensory difficulties, achieve well during their time at the centre. Achievement in English, mathematics and personal development is good.
- A few pupils make outstanding progress in reading and attain the standards expected nationally by Year 6.
- Teaching is almost always good and in the best teaching, tasks fully meet all pupils' needs and abilities so that they engage fully in learning.
- Pupils' good behaviour is the result of an effective behaviour management system and the consistent way staff apply it. Many pupils learn to regulate their own behaviour, and attendance has improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They receive good quality care and support, and say that there is always someone to talk to if they need help.
- Subjects and topics meet pupils' needs well, and they benefit from exciting off-site activities that promote their good personal development and enjoyment.
- The new headteacher has made an effective start and has evaluated the centre's effectiveness accurately. Leaders and managers place a high focus on raising achievement and improving the performance of staff through rigorous checks on their work.
- The local authority manages the budget well and, together with the management committee, has an accurate view of the centre's work and high expectations for the future.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. In a few lessons, teachers do not match tasks to pupils' abilities or use teaching assistants well enough to support pupils' individual needs.
- There are some inconsistencies in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) because not all staff have received relevant training.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made a few short visits to observe pupils learning and playing, and listened to a few pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, members of the management committee, representatives from the local authority and some pupils.
- The inspector observed the work of the centre and looked at a number of documents, including the centre's own information about pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and some pupils' books.
- There were too few responses to the online survey (Parent View) to give a helpful picture of parents' views of the centre. However, the inspector took into account the centre's own parental survey and the 15 responses to the inspection questionnaire from staff.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The centre caters for primary-aged pupils from across Solihull and a few from surrounding boroughs. The vast majority have a statement of special educational needs for their behavioural, social and emotional difficulties.
- Half of the pupils have moderate learning difficulties and about a third have autistic spectrum disorders. A few pupils have sensory impairments.
- No pupils are currently dual registered with both the centre and a mainstream school. The majority move on to local special schools at the end of Year 6. A few pupils reintegrate into mainstream schools in Years 5 or 6.
- Almost all pupils are White British and no pupils speak English as an additional language. There are far more boys than girls.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for certain groups, including pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is average.
- The headteacher took up her post at the beginning of this term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that pupils make even better progress by making sure that:
 - tasks are always appropriate to the abilities and next steps in learning of all the pupils in the class
 - all teachers make best use of the skills of teaching assistants to fully meet the special educational needs of the pupils.
- Ensure that all staff are quickly trained in the teaching of phonics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The vast majority of pupils, including those who have a statement of special educational needs and those with moderate learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders or sensory impairments, achieve well from typically low starting points. By Year 6, most have made good progress and a few make outstanding progress in reading to reach the standards expected nationally for their age.
- Pupils improve their literacy and numeracy skills and their behaviour while at the centre, making good progress in English, mathematics and personal development. More-able pupils work at a fast pace and benefit from good levels of challenge, so they achieve well.
- Progress in reading is good and it is sometimes outstanding because pupils read every day. They have access to a good range of books and benefit from the high focus placed on improving and developing reading skills across the centre.
- Pupils' writing skills improve as they move through the centre. They gain the confidence to write because of the good focus on discussing writing tasks and talking about what they want to write. Pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders often use symbols well to read and write simple sentences, making similar good progress to their classmates.
- Pupils say they enjoy mathematics best because of the practical aspects of the subject. This was evident in Years 3 and 4 when pupils worked successfully in pairs to solve number problems to 20 and beyond. Pupils were able to quickly challenge each other to find the right answer first.
- Pupils are provided with good experiences to develop skills that will help them in the future. They make good progress in developing their communication skills because of daily opportunities to take part in discussions. Those who have autistic spectrum disorders improve their communication and language skills because of the effective use of signs and symbols by staff.
- Those known to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve equally as well as other pupils, and sometimes better in English and mathematics. This is because the extra funding is used well to provide extra experiences and employ additional staff so that these pupils can have individual attention.
- Just occasionally, a few pupils do not achieve quite as well as they could because the tasks set in lessons are not matched fully to their abilities. At these times, the level of challenge is not sufficient to promote good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers use the centre's behaviour management system consistently well, resulting in settled lessons where pupils know and understand what is expected. Relationships are strong and pupils know that there is always a teacher they can talk to. This successfully promotes positive attitudes to learning.
- Where teaching is outstanding, teachers make very effective use of questions to extend pupils' skills and encourage them to search for answers. An excellent example of this was seen in Years 5 and 6, where all groups of pupils made outstanding progress in developing their literacy, communication and personal skills as they responded to questions during table-top games.

Questioning extended their language exceptionally well and challenged them to respond.

- Teachers regularly plan good quality individual or small group support for those with learning difficulties and any other pupils who require it. Pupils new to the school, for example, are able to improve their literacy and numeracy skills well as they are provided with additional tasks and extra help at the beginning of each lesson, enabling them to quickly catch up with their classmates. Teachers adapt their teaching by making effective use of signs and symbols so that the communication needs of pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders and those with sensory impairments are fully met, enabling them to achieve well.
- Teachers regularly extend pupils' skills through high-quality demonstrations so they know precisely what they need to do to learn successfully. This was evident in food technology, where the teacher demonstrated how to stay safe in the kitchen while showing pupils how to chop vegetables and use the cooker safely.
- The quality and range of assessment have improved since the last inspection, and pupils' work is marked regularly with helpful comments. Teachers work closely with pupils' previous school to make sure their attainment and learning needs are promptly identified when they join the centre. This helps teachers to measure pupils' small steps of progress from their starting points and as they move from class to class.
- The teaching of reading is almost always good and in some classes it is outstanding. Staff listen to their pupils read every day. A phonics approach is used well to encourage the younger pupils in their recognition of new or unknown words. However, not all staff have received recent training and this reduces the effectiveness of teaching for a few pupils.
- Teachers use their teaching assistants well in almost all classes to promote learning and check achievements. In a few lessons, too little is planned for teaching assistants to do and they become passive observers, resulting in missed opportunities to promote pupils' skills further.
- In a very few cases, planned tasks are not matched closely enough to the full range of abilities in the class. This means that tasks are too easy for some pupils, while others are not challenged well enough to extend their skills and do not make the progress intended.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- Pupils are referred to the Auckland Education Centre because of their social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, which have previously limited their learning and led some of them to the brink of exclusion from their mainstream schools. Case studies show that pupils' behaviour improves quickly once they start because of the centre's consistent approach, and as a result there is good evidence that many pupils start to turn their lives around during their time there.
- Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe at the centre. They say that there is very little bullying or teasing, and any that does arise is quickly dealt with. Behavioural and racist incidents have decreased over the past few years.
- Pupils quickly begin to show positive attitudes to learning once they start at the centre. They value the good opinions of the staff and try hard to please them, showing enthusiasm for their tasks and working well together. This was evident when two older pupils offered to fetch chairs for adults in the hall and cleared away at the end of the session.
- Pupils say that they like the centre and this is evident in their improving attendance. They really

like the awards they receive for their good work and behaviour. This was evident as pupils proudly went out to receive their awards during the end-of-week assembly. Pupils clapped each other and showed very mature attitudes as they waited expectantly to see if they would receive one themselves.

- Pupils make good progress in gaining respect for adults and other pupils. Opportunities to play paired and team games are having a positive effect on pupils' achievement and helping them to get on well with their classmates.
- Just occasionally, there are examples of when pupils find it difficult to concentrate and their behaviour becomes challenging. Two older pupils said, 'It can get noisy sometimes but usually behaviour here is better because you're allowed to go outside if you get stressed and decide for yourself when you are ready to come back in.' They really value this approach.

The leadership and management is good

- The new headteacher has made a good start in her role. She is ably supported by the senior staff, the management committee and the local authority, and has already introduced several new ways of checking pupils' achievements with mainstream schools to ensure the accuracy of teachers' judgements. The headteacher is fully aware that a small amount of teaching requires improvement.
- Leaders are committed to improving teaching, and are making good use of national standards for teachers to develop and manage the performance of staff so that they can improve and progress up the pay scale. Senior leaders have a positive impact on improving the skills of other leaders and staff. There are some good examples across the centre of how high-quality training has improved the staff's effectiveness.
- The consistent approach to managing and improving pupils' behaviour is a particular strength of leadership. Rigorous training in the management of behaviour has resulted in all staff using the same effective methods. As a result, pupils know and understand what is acceptable and what is not, leading to their good behaviour and the calm, purposeful learning environment.
- The school's own survey of parental views shows that parents agree that their children are well looked after and achieve well.
- The school is well supported by the local authority, which recognises the improvement the school makes to pupils' lives. The local authority has developed effective systems that enable the centre to flourish through close links with local schools. The centre's staff are fully involved in referral procedures and there are clear lines of communication between the centre, mainstream schools and the local authority to ensure successful placements. Local headteachers value the school's work, so there is a positive partnership with support offered where necessary.
- Subjects and topics have been strengthened and pupils enjoy them because they meet their individual needs well. Speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy contribute effectively to pupils' successes, particularly for those with language or sensory needs. Additional experiences such as the residential opportunities for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and the focus on overnight camping trips for younger pupils all engage them well. These initiatives are encouraging most pupils to come to school every day.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through subjects and topics, and pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility for themselves.

- Leaders make sure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed and are not subject to discrimination, as shown by the good progress made by pupils who receive additional support through the pupil premium. These pupils now progress at least as well in English and mathematics as the other pupils in the centre.
- The centre has appropriate plans to use and evaluate the new national primary school sports funding to improve pupils' sports skills. Weekly swimming for all pupils already ensures that most pupils learn to swim before they leave the centre, and pupils benefit from some specialist coaching so that they do well in local sports tournaments.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures meet current national requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The management committee is supportive and provides good quality challenge to leaders. Its members are fully involved in monitoring the centre's work, checking teaching and behaviour and looking at how well pupils achieve. They are fully committed to managing the performance of staff and have a successful track record of providing high-quality training and ensuring that the best staff are rewarded for their efforts. The committee has a good range of skills which are used to benefit the centre, and its members have a clear view of how effective the centre is. The committee is well supported by the local authority, which works in close partnership with it and with the headteacher to ensure that the centre continues to improve. Good management of finances means that, for example, pupil premium funding is used to enrich learning for the pupils for whom it is intended. It is used to provide support so that these pupils achieve as well as their classmates.

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	134534
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	427071

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	32
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	N/a
Headteacher	Carole Bell
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 November 2008
Telephone number	0121 788 4444
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