

Include - Buckinghamshire

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	825/6035
Unique Reference Number	134415
Inspection number	333852
Inspection dates	6 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Richard Winter

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

Information about the school

Include is a part of Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) Education Trust, a national charity that provides learning projects for young people who are out of school or who have difficulty in getting access to education, training or employment.

Include-Buckinghamshire is described as a 'Pre 16 Bridge' project which provides education for students in Key Stage 4. It is registered for 30 students aged 13 to 16 years old. Currently there are 28 students on roll, predominantly boys aged between 14 and 16 years old. Nine students attend on a part-time basis while they are gradually reintegrated into full time education. Eighteen students have statements of special educational needs. Students can attend the projects for a maximum of two academic years and as little as two academic terms depending on when the referrals by the local authority are made. Mainly because of their age, they are unlikely to return to mainstream education before the age of 16.

The project operates on four sites which are used as teaching bases, in High Wycombe, Milton Keynes and Aylesbury. Four sites permit small teaching groups which are close to students' homes. Administrative offices are located in Thame. Include also makes use of the facilities offered by local colleges and training organizations.

Currently, most of the students on roll have been excluded from mainstream education or pupil referral units due to emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. Students' self-esteem and academic skills have suffered as a result of their failure to thrive in mainstream education. As a consequence they come to Include with poor attitudes to learning and low self-esteem. Most of the students are attaining levels well below those expected for young people of the same age. Include's mission is to secure the inclusion of all the young people in mainstream education, post-16 training and their participation as full members of their communities. The school was last inspected in June 2006.

Evaluation of the school

Include is a well-managed school which provides a good quality of education and, as at the last inspection, is very effective in supporting and re-engaging the young people in its charge by building their self-confidence, successfully managing difficult behaviour and improving social skills. Students' progress is good and a very large majority go on to further education, training or employment. The quality of teaching is good, as are pupils' welfare, health and safety. At three of the four sites, there are no separate washroom facilities for students and staff. At all four sites there are no suitable facilities for students who are ill. Apart from these requirements, the school meets all of the other regulations.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good, with particular strengths in the provision for personal development and art. It also places a strong emphasis on the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills. Information and communication technology (ICT) facilities are satisfactory overall but there are insufficient computers to aid learning. Schemes of work show clearly how students with special needs are supported. Students are involved in the planning of their own curriculum. This means that learning opportunities are well matched to their needs, interests and aspirations. Lessons are carefully planned for individuals through making good use of individual education plans (IEPs). This also allows schemes to be modified regularly.

Detailed assessment information is used effectively to plan the curriculum. There is particularly good practice at Milton Keynes where a self assessment framework is used. Students can follow courses that are externally accredited, such as City and Guilds and Assessment and Qualification Alliance courses. Further support is provided for some attending courses at local colleges. Sessions in personal, social and health education (PSHE) focus strongly on moral and social understanding and citizenship. Themes are taught separately and across all other subjects of the curriculum. Students and teachers work together to organise a variety of extra-curricular activities, such as visits to activity centres which offer exciting physical challenges such as boxing, snowboarding, rock climbing and mountain biking.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Lessons contain a variety of learning activities which are mostly successful in gaining students' interest. Teachers work hard to engage students in their learning and are generally successful in creating a positive learning environment. In some cases however, while some students concentrate, others lose focus easily. Staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of students which means that they react to this in a well-measured fashion which de-escalates potentially difficult situations. This enables the staff to manage effectively the students frequently challenging behaviour. Evidence from lessons and completed work shows that students take pride in their achievements and that they generally work in a positive atmosphere. There are good displays of students' work, in particular their art and photography which is of a high quality. There is good support and rapport between teachers, teaching assistants and

students which encourages self motivation. Managers regularly carry out lesson observations. This ensures that there is very thorough monitoring of teaching methods, classroom management and assessment.

Students are fully involved in assessment processes. IEPs are regularly reviewed with staff. Students are more aware of their behaviour and attitude targets than they are of their learning targets, but they know in a general way what they have to do to improve. There is also much checking on their understanding as teachers skilfully question students' understanding. This makes much assessment informal but continuous.

Students have particularly complex needs and find it difficult to broaden their interests sometimes making it difficult for them to engage with learning; their attendance also frequently disrupts continuity of learning. The majority obtain only limited accreditation in externally examined courses, so that standards remain below average on leaving. Nevertheless, given their circumstances, capabilities and time on the project and that most move on to further education, training or employment, progress is good.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is satisfactory overall. Moral and social values are strengthened as the school focuses strongly on promoting the understanding of right and wrong and makes good use of detailed behaviour and risk assessments as well as each student's IEP. Staff act effectively as mentors, providing regular opportunities to reflect with students on relationships. Use is made of outside professionals for this purpose. This means staff gain a very good understanding of what triggers poor behaviour and can plan effectively to combat it. They insist on high standards and breaches are robustly and appropriately dealt with. There are effective systems for rewarding positive attitudes. This results in satisfactory behaviour and attitudes overall.

Attendance, although below average, is satisfactory in view of the school's policy of bringing students gradually back into full-time education. Attendance has improved over the last 12 months. Although there are a relatively high number of fixed term exclusions, this is a reflection of the high standards that the project expects from behaviour. There have been no permanent exclusions because of the tenacity of staff to retain the students in their education.

There are regular opportunities to discuss current issues in the news which some students develop an interest in. Cultural understanding and tolerance are promoted through the personal and social development course and social studies, so that some students begin to understand the importance of cultural harmony. The school works well with outside agencies such as careers advisers, work experience providers and local colleges. The latter provide a variety of vocational courses which students opt for according to need. Students gain an understanding of public services through visits to local fire stations, visits from police liaison officers and in some cases, voluntary work, for example, at a home for the elderly. Occasionally, they help in

raising money for national charities. This fosters better relationships so that students begin to understand their roles and responsibilities in the wider community. Students gain experience of research and managing budgets by planning outings, for example to the coast. They also make effective use of ICT in projects that spread across subjects such as science and art. These are aspects of their education which most enjoy and ensure that they gradually attend more regularly.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

Welfare, health and safety are good and the school meets all the regulations. Healthy living is promoted effectively in science and PSHE and for example through cookery sessions. There is a varied programme of physical activities. Opportunities for outdoor exercise at break times are limited at the High Wycombe site as transport is required to get to local facilities. Representatives of sexual health clinics come to the school and in some cases provide consultations.

The quality of supervision is high and no bullying is tolerated. An effective key worker system is in place which provides regular tutorials to air concerns. Students are made aware of the dangers of drug abuse. The written policies on safeguarding students' welfare and safety are fully compliant with the regulations. These include child protection, behaviour and sanctions, anti-bullying and health and safety procedures for educational visits. The school has a first aid policy and staff are now qualified. Medicines are stored safely and incidents and accidents are properly recorded. However, there are no written guidelines in the first aid policy as to what medical conditions can be treated on site and what triggers a hospital visit.

Fire risk assessments are carried out by external consultants. Currently, not all sites have a fully trained fire safety officer. This is because trained staff have recently left these projects. However, the new staff that have been appointed are about to undertake fire safety training. The school has now undertaken an audit and has written a three-year access plan to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Attendance records are now kept correctly. Parents are positive about nearly all aspects of the school. There are some concerns about behaviour at times. The local placing authority is positive about the school's work in improving attendance and the way in which the school ensures the safeguarding and engagement of the students. They recognise in particular, the success which the school has in developing more mature and responsible individuals but although generally communication is good, they would like to be better informed of students' attainment at the end of an academic year.

The school ensures that all the regulations for the appointment and checking of staff are met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- provide sufficient washrooms for staff and students, including facilities for students with special needs, which take account of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(k))
- provide appropriate facilities for students who are ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l)).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- provide more computers for use by students
- provide written guidelines in the first aid policy as to what medical conditions can be treated on site and what triggers a hospital visit
- ensure that each site always has a currently trained fire safety officer.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development			✓	
The behaviour of pupils			✓	

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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School details

Name of school	Include - Buckinghamshire
DCSF number	8256035
Unique reference number	134415
Type of school	Special school for students with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties
Status	Independent
Date school opened	July 2004
Age range of pupils	13-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 15 Girls: 4 Total: 19
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 7 Girls: 2 Total: 9
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 12 Girls: 6 Total: 18
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 1 Girls: 0 Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£15000
Address of school	109 High Street Thame OX9 3DZ
Telephone number	01844 261705
Fax number	01296 437549
Email address	ncrawley-lyons@cfbt.com
Headteacher	Helen Barnes (operations manager)
Proprietor	CFBT Education Trust
Reporting inspector	Richard Winter
Dates of inspection	6 March 2009