

Grosvenor House

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134236
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	381672
Inspection dates	8–9 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Robert Ellis HMI

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	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	13
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair of the management committee	Alan Norley
Headteacher	Gary Davis
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2009
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Age group	11–14
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. Nine sessions were seen and four teachers and one teaching assistant were observed teaching. Meetings were held with groups of students, the chair of the management committee and staff. The inspector observed the unit's work, and looked at students' files, curriculum plans, the unit's tracking data showing students' progress and attainment, teachers' lesson plans, students' work and the displays around the building. In addition, the questionnaire responses of three parents and carers, three students, and three staff were taken into account.

The inspection reviewed many aspects of the unit's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The use of assessment information to tailor the curriculum accurately to students' starting points and needs and to measure their progress over time.
- The actions taken to support and challenge students who do not attend regularly.
- The extent to which monitoring and evaluation provide accurate and timely management information that informs development planning.

Information about the school

Grosvenor House is a pupil referral unit that provides for students aged 11 to 14 who have been excluded from mainstream schools or who are at risk of exclusion. If there is sufficient capacity, the unit also provides temporary places for students that the local authority has found hard to place. All students have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Around two thirds of the students are known to be eligible for free school meals. There are no students who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The local authority is conducting a review of this type of provision.

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

- Grosvenor House is a good pupil referral unit. Most students enjoy learning and quickly develop the skills and abilities that they need to move on to the next step in their education.
- Students' welfare and well-being are fundamental to the work of the unit and students are looked after very well. The very positive relationships between staff and students make a major contribution to students feeling safe and re-engaging successfully with their learning.
- Students' attitudes to learning and their attendance improve significantly while students attend the unit. Behaviour is mostly good and some students attend regularly. However, there are too many students with very poor attendance and consequently, overall attendance is low.
- Teaching is good and well-planned lessons ensure that students' needs are met. A strong focus on personal development ensures that students develop the skills they need to learn effectively.
- The use of assessment to identify students' behavioural and learning needs is excellent.
- An outstanding, relevant curriculum provides excellent opportunities to challenge students and promotes their personal development extremely well.
- Staff are led well and share a common sense of purpose.
- Good productive links with a range of agencies support students well, both in their learning and in their personal development.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and any evident weaknesses have been tackled effectively. For example, areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. These and other improvements demonstrate that the unit has good capacity for further improvement.
- Although students have a say in decisions about their own education they do not have enough opportunities to take responsibility and do not contribute much to the community beyond the unit.
- Parents and carers are kept informed about their children's progress but they are not sufficiently engaged in supporting their children's learning and development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on improvements to students' attendance so that students are not disadvantaged by poor attendance.

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

- Provide good opportunities for students to take responsibility and contribute to the wider community.
- Engage parents and carers more actively in their children’s learning and development.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The attainment of students on entry to the unit varies but it is generally below average because of discontinuity in their previous education and significant barriers to learning. Most students respond positively to the learning opportunities provided and make rapid progress and achieve well, particularly in personal development, English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Students often have low self-esteem when they first attend the unit but quickly develop positive relationships with the staff and feel safe. Behaviour in lessons and around the unit is generally good and students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Any instances of inappropriate behaviour are managed well. Students know about the importance of keeping healthy and participate enthusiastically in physical activities. Students are involved in making decisions that affect their learning but there are not enough opportunities for them to take responsibility or to contribute to the wider community.

The attendance of most students improves while they are placed at the unit. Despite this improvement, attendance overall remains well below average. The excellent support and guidance that they receive, combined with high quality personal, social and health education, ensures that most students quickly develop the social and emotional skills that are necessary for successful reintegration to mainstream schools.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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	2
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

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good and teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of what students can achieve. They know the students extremely well and plan tasks and activities that meet their needs and aspirations and provide memorable learning experiences. Assessment is used well to ensure that tasks and activities are pitched at the right level for individual students and high quality questioning identifies what students understand. Teachers are particularly adept at identifying opportunities to build on students' responses to link different areas of learning. For example, in an ICT lesson, students were using the internet to research the cost of ingredients for making a cake. One student queried the cost of different types of eggs and this led to a discussion on the ethical issues of factory farming.

The high quality curriculum is structured so that students study the same range of subjects that they would experience in mainstream schools. There are very flexible curriculum arrangements that are highly responsive to the needs of individual students. An excellent and innovative personal, social and health education programme promotes rapid personal development. The unit uses a variety of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum and good use is made of the local environment. Partnership arrangements with other schools and centres ensure that students have access to activities that would not otherwise be available because of constraints imposed by the limited accommodation that the unit occupies. For example, during the inspection, students travelled to another local school to participate in a climbing activity that was both challenging and enjoyable.

Outstanding care, guidance and support underpin the work of the unit. Effective transition arrangements ensure that students get off to a good start when they first arrive and they continue to be supported on their return to mainstream schools. The unit is particularly good at identifying the specific support, care and guidance that students need. Thorough assessment procedures ensure that students who need specialist help are assessed for a statement of special educational needs and found places in appropriate specialist provision if appropriate to their needs. Students say that there is always someone to turn to if there is a problem and adults who work at the unit will listen to them and help them. Parents and carers are very positive about the support and guidance that they and their children receive.

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

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The unit is led well and the headteacher has developed a cohesive team that shares a common vision for the unit. Routine monitoring of teaching and learning and the daily exchange of information regarding students' progress ensure that leaders are kept informed about strengths and areas for development. Assessment information is used effectively to set targets that are realistic but challenging. The members of the management committee are well informed and able to challenge the centre to improve. They provide a good balance of challenge and support.

The unit has positive relationships with individual parents and carers and regular and frequent information is provided to inform them of students' progress and any particular issues that might arise. However, although they are well informed, not enough is done to help them support their children's learning and development or to have a say in broader home–unit issues.

Strong partnerships with education, health and welfare professionals and with other schools and organisations make a good contribution to students' well-being and personal development. Steps have been taken to challenge and support students who do not attend regularly and this has led to an improvement in attendance. However, there are a few 'hard to reach' students who have not responded and who continue to have very poor attendance.

High-quality practice ensures that students are kept safe and cared for extremely well. Staff and students have an awareness of safeguarding issues and all staff have regular training to an appropriate level so that standards in safeguarding are maintained. The unit adopts a realistic and proportionate approach to safety so that there are excellent opportunities for students to develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe.

This is a very inclusive unit where all students, regardless of their background or needs, are valued and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The unit knows its community and is seeking ways of strengthening community involvement in the work of the unit. Students are provided with a good range of experiences that enable them to engage and interact with people from faiths and cultures other than their own.

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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 met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Only a few parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire but those who did were overwhelmingly positive about the work of the unit.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grosvenor House 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received three completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 13 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	1	33	2	67	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	1	33	2	67	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	1	33	2	67	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	1	33	2	67	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	1	33	2	67	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	1	33	2	67	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	1	33	2	67	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	2	67	1	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	1	33	2	67	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



10 November 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Grosvenor House, Herne Bay, CT6 5BL

Thank you for making me feel welcome and for helping me with the inspection. I would particularly like to thank those of you who took time to talk to me about your experiences. I hope you will take time to read the full report that will be published on the Ofsted website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

Grosvenor House is a good pupil referral unit and I was pleased to see that you are cared for very well. Teachers go to great lengths to ensure that the work you do is matched to your needs and is set at the right level. Most of you told me that you feel safe and respected by the adults you work with. I saw that you get on well together most of the time. I was pleased that many of you have improved your attendance and are suitably prepared for the next steps in your education. I particularly enjoyed observing the climbing activity.

These are the key things that I would like the unit to do to improve further.

- Give you more opportunities to take responsibility and contribute to your local community.
- Support and challenge those of you who do not attend regularly so that you all attend as often as you can.
- Get your parents and carers working together to be more involved with the unit so that they are enabled to support your learning and development.

I am sure that you will want to play your part by attending regularly and supporting staff by helping to make the necessary improvements.

Yours sincerely

Robert Ellis
Her Majesty's Inspector

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