

Oakfields Education Unit

Woodlands House, Cranbrook Road, Kent, TN12 0ER

Inspection dates 22–23 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- All students make outstanding progress, in all year groups and in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Students develop a wide range of skills, including in literacy and numeracy. This helps them to make outstanding progress in their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have very high expectations of all students. They help students to develop their confidence and to enjoy their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants set work at just the right level for their students. They work well in partnership with the students' mainstream schools to set challenging targets.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are very skilled at supporting students who find learning difficult at times. This means that students very quickly regain focus and concentrate on their learning.
- Students' behaviour in lessons and around the unit is outstanding. They work hard and concentrate very well in lessons.
- Students' safety is a very high priority for all staff at the school. They work exceptionally well to make sure that all students are safe and secure.
- The sixth form provision is outstanding. It is very personalised to each student and as a result all make outstanding progress.
- There is an excellent range of activities and subjects, personalised to the needs of each student. Students are able to continue with the subjects they have studied in their mainstream schools. As a result they make very good progress.
- The school is extremely successful in encouraging students to engage with the community through arranging a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, visits and outside visitors.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. As a result they develop a very good understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Leadership at all levels, including that of the headteacher and governors, is outstanding. Leaders provide a successful drive and ambition to keep improving the provision for all students. As a result re-integration to mainstream schools is very successful.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed four lessons, all of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. She also made a number of shorter visits to other lessons.
- The inspector met with students, parents, members of the health team and all staff working in the school.
- The inspector met with a member of the school's management committee (which provides governance of the school) and held a telephone conversation with the former school improvement partner from the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to staff at four mainstream schools that had students attending the unit.
- The inspector examined a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, its plan for improvement and students' progress information.
- A range of students' work was reviewed in lessons.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to provide evidence on parents' opinions. However, the inspector took into account the school's parental survey as well as 12 emails from mainstream schools and health professionals working with the school.
- Questionnaires from nine members of staff were also considered.

Inspection team

Jackie Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oakfields Education Unit provides a continuum of education for 24 students who have been admitted to the Kent and Medway Adolescent Unit (CAMHS Tier 4) at Woodlands House, which is a hospital treating a variety of mental health conditions. The health partner is South London and Maudsley NHS Trust (SLaM).
- Admissions are usually short term and entirely determined by SLaM. Some young people are admitted under the Mental Health Act and others are sectioned under the act during their admission.
- Students come from two local authorities: Kent and Medway.
- A day unit has been recently opened to meet the needs of up to six students.
- All students are dual registered at the unit and their mainstream schools.
- All students are designated as having special educational needs whilst admitted and are supported at school action plus.
- The school does not receive pupil premium funding. This is additional government funding for students known to be entitled to free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- At the time of the inspection all students in the unit were from White British backgrounds. The inspector considered evidence on the achievement of students from minority ethnic groups who have attended the unit in the past.
- The school does not use any off-site alternative provision.
- The headteacher supports schools in the local authorities through leading seminars on the work of the unit.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to support mainstream schools in developing their understanding of students' mental health problems so that the numbers of students rejoining their mainstream schools remain very high.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and other leaders share an uncompromising drive to improve achievement and personal development for all students during their stay at the unit. They have been extremely successful in this aim.
- All staff are highly ambitious for the students to re-integrate successfully into their mainstream schools. This is very carefully planned and, as a result, in 2013–2014 96% of all re-integrations were successful.
- Mainstream schools commented very favourably on the support and communication from the unit's staff. This was regarded as the key factor in the success of re-integration.
- The school's self-evaluation is robust and accurate. It informs a high quality school improvement plan that has measurable outcomes and helps lead to excellent provision.
- The management of teaching and its impact on learning are outstanding. The school's judgements on the quality of teaching are accurate. This is informed by rigorous monitoring by the school's leaders as well as the school improvement partner from the local authority. Middle leaders are highly effective and play an active role in school improvement.
- The local authority has provided high quality support for the unit through professional development. This has been especially important in successfully improving the support students receive to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Professional development for staff is highly personalised and based on an accurate analysis of need. Staff welcome the opportunities to share their learning with colleagues as well as students. This leads to outstanding teaching and learning over time.
- Systems for managing staff performance are well organised and relate fully to the Teachers' Standards. Salary progression only occurs when merited by good performance.
- The curriculum is outstanding. It is highly personalised to each student. All students study English, mathematics and science and, in addition, have a choice of interesting and motivating subjects that support their excellent progress.
- The unit employs outstanding specialist teachers in subjects such as art, yoga and pottery. This enhances the curriculum for all students very effectively.
- Links with the mainstream schools are very effective. Students receive work from their teachers in their mainstream schools, which is then marked by specialist teachers and returned for improvement. Therefore, students maintain their links with these schools.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. It is fostered by personal development lessons, a range of visits and a wide variety of activities in art, music and drama. There is a multi-faith room and a chaplain visits weekly to support students very effectively in their spiritual lives. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school works exceptionally closely with parents through regular meetings. Comments showed that parents are very happy with the quality of care and support provided for their children during their time in the unit.
- The school meets all statutory safeguarding requirements. Equal opportunities are ensured wherever possible and discrimination is not tolerated.
- The headteacher works with the local authorities to share her expertise in supporting young people with a variety of medical and mental health needs. This is being extended so that more schools can develop a much better understanding of how to support vulnerable students.
- Members of the health team at Woodlands House commented very favourably about the leadership of the school. In giving their views on the school, the team said that 'children would be lost without it'.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the management committee is a strength of the school. Governors very effectively challenge and support the school. They are fully involved in reviewing performance and setting the unit's priorities through discussion of the school improvement plan.
 - Governors are very well equipped to carry out their statutory duties, which they do extremely effectively. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They understand the variety of ways students' performance is measured. For governors, the key measure is the success of re-integration to mainstream schools.
 - Governors manage the finances of the unit exceptionally well. They have fought very hard to ensure the unit receives all of the funding to which it is entitled.

- Governors are fully aware of what is being done to reward excellent performance from teachers and teaching assistants. They are also knowledgeable about how underperformance is addressed effectively by school leaders.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. In lessons, regardless of the subject or year group, students' attitudes to learning are remarkably positive. This is a major factor contributing to their outstanding academic and personal development.
- Students work in an exceptionally positive way with both teachers and teaching assistants. Indeed, students make no distinction between teachers or teaching assistants. As a result staff and students develop highly effective relationships and this enables students to make outstanding progress.
- Students respond very well to the clearly established routines in the unit and as a result their learning progresses very well. Even when students are upset and need to take time out they quickly return to the classroom to continue their learning.
- Students are polite and willing to engage in conversation with visitors, even though, for some, this is very challenging.
- Students socialise well at lunchtime with each other and staff. This can be challenging for them, but very clear expectations by staff, together with staff setting examples for students, enable them to do so very successfully.
- Staff support students very well in improving any behaviour that could be regarded as anti-social. On the very rare occasions when bad language is used staff immediately correct this explaining why it is not acceptable.
- Staff and students are confident that there is virtually no bullying in the unit. Students are exceptionally tolerant of each other's differences and all have very positive attitudes.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Very well established routines within the building ensure students' safety is at the forefront of the work of all staff.
- Visitors are very carefully briefed about the security for students and routines to be followed if alarms sound.
- Attendance at the unit is good. School staff collect students from the ward to ensure they attend lessons if they are able to do so, meetings and therapy sessions permitting.
- Very thorough risk assessments are completed for visits to the community, such as visits to the ice rink, as well as re-integration visits to the students' mainstream schools. As a result, such visits are very successful.
- Students abide by very strict e-safety protocols. They have a very thorough understanding of cyber-bullying, especially that related to social media. Part of the very effective admissions procedures explains this to parents and students.
- Parents in their responses to the school's discharge questionnaire agreed that students are very safe at the school. The respondents to the staff questionnaire were of the same opinion.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The excellent relationships between students and their teachers and teaching assistants lie at the heart of the school's success. Students respond very well to teachers' high expectations and as a result make outstanding progress.
- Staff set challenging targets for students. They use a variety of information to set work at the right level of difficulty for individual students and this supports excellent learning and progress. Students also make outstanding progress in developing their confidence.
- Teachers have very secure subject knowledge and this helps to ensure that all students make outstanding academic and social progress. Where additional expertise is required the school employs experts in subjects such as yoga, art and pottery. These teachers also develop very good relationships with all students.
- Teachers and teaching assistants very effectively support students in working by themselves. In one

lesson a Year 13 student worked exceptionally well at improving coursework following guidance provided by their mainstream school.

- The close liaison between the unit and students' mainstream schools is outstanding. As a result the students are able to complete the work provided by their schools, while attending the unit, to a very high standard.
- Teachers and teaching assistants assess students at the end of every lesson. This is very effective and informative as it logs progress in learning as well as the students' mental health during the lesson. If their mood is adversely affected by, for example, their medication, this is explained in the lesson log. Staff use this information to plan future work, ensuring that students continue to make outstanding progress.
- During all lessons teachers and teaching assistants constantly check progress and know when to intervene to support learning in a timely manner. This ensures that students make excellent progress during their time at the unit.
- Homework is set as appropriate to each student's medical needs. It is always set in consultation with the health professionals so that students are not unduly burdened. This is very important as it is a major factor in helping students successfully reintegrate to their mainstream schools.
- Students and their parents spoke very highly of the exceptional academic support they received through the outstanding teaching in the unit. As one student said 'I wouldn't be here without the help of the staff at the education unit.' Another student said that they were challenged and very well supported by the teachers and teaching assistants.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students arrive at the unit with a variety of complex mental health and medical needs. The progress they make during their time at the unit is measured accurately and effectively by staff.
- On admission the unit requests achievement data from the student's mainstream school as well as subject information. The unit also tests students for their ability in English, mathematics and science. This information is used to set work at the correct level, which means that students make outstanding progress in these subjects as soon as they start lessons in the unit.
- The most able students achieve very well as a result of the unit's high expectations for success, which results in these students being set challenging work.
- All groups of students achieve exceptionally well. Students from different ethnic backgrounds make equally rapid progress.
- Students' progress in literacy and numeracy is outstanding and developed through all the subjects they study while attending the unit.
- The school's tracking system and evidence from students' work show that the majority of students consistently make outstanding progress. In the very small minority of lessons where students do not achieve their targets this is the result of deterioration in their mental health, often as the result of changes in medication.
- Assessments for behaviour and interaction prove that students make very good progress in these aspects of social development between admission and discharge.
- Students take GCSE examinations and a variety of post-16 qualifications such as A and AS levels, BTEC and functional skills, often at their mainstream schools. Data provided by these schools show that students achieve considerable success. There are very few students who do not achieve any qualifications, but this is often related to their mental health difficulties.
- The main measure of progress for all students in the unit is the success of re-integration to mainstream schools. Students' health problems often have a connection to school so this is a very important measure of achievement. In 2013/14 96% of all integrations were successful. In the previous two years the success rate was 94% to 98%.
- In lessons observed during the inspection achievement was frequently outstanding and never less than good.
- Students' outstanding English poetry work was recently submitted for publication in an anthology. All work submitted will be published. This is an indication of the very high quality of their achievement.

The sixth form provision is outstanding

- The sixth form provision is outstanding. Students enter the sixth form with a variety of complex medical and mental health needs. The school’s tracking system shows that learning and progress are consistently excellent.
- Teaching in the sixth form is never less than consistently good and frequently outstanding. As a result students make very rapid progress and enjoy their learning. They quickly develop the capacity to work on their own as the result of appropriate support from staff in the unit. Teachers in their mainstream schools contribute to this outstanding progress by providing and returning work with very clear guidelines as to how to improve the quality of the work.
- Students in the sixth form show outstanding attitudes to their learning. They say that teaching is very effective and really value the outstanding work of the staff in the unit.
- The curriculum in the sixth form is highly personalised and links to the mainstream schools are very well maintained. This enables students to very successfully return to their schools. Students show they can participate fully in their schools by being prefects, taking part in school productions and progressing to university.
- As the result of very effective personal and social education, students in the sixth form understand and manage risk well. This plays a very important part in the outstanding progress they make especially in their social interaction with others.
- The leadership of the sixth form is outstanding, contributing to the excellent outcomes for all students.

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	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. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	135432
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	448038

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	10
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Philip Sayer
Headteacher	Julia Coles
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 July 2012
Telephone number	020 3228 3200
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